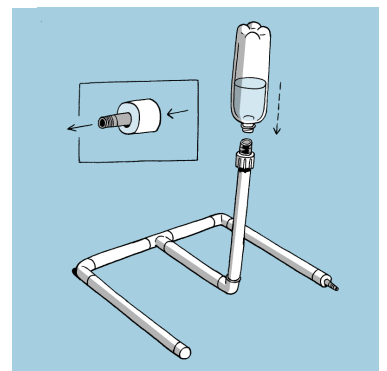
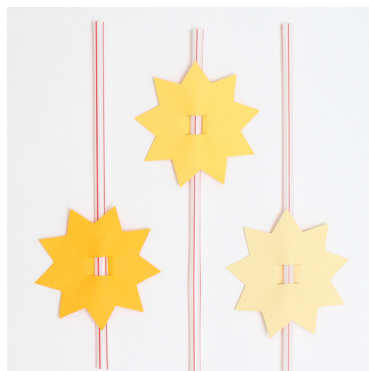
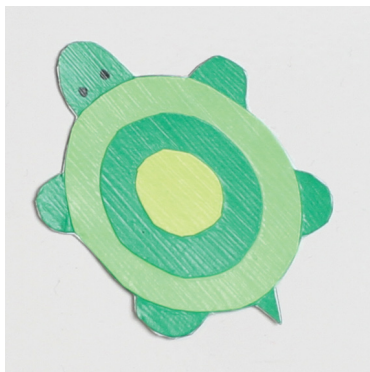


# QUIRK BOOKS ENTERTAINS YOUR KIDS!

20 Crafts, Recipes, Activities, and More



CURATED BY RAISING QUIRK



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## Thank you for downloading *Quirk Books Entertains Your Kids!* curated by Raising Quirk!

This summer, Raising Quirk's mission is to keep your kids from ever having to say "I'm bored." So we've rounded up our favorite crafts, recipes, games, and activities from Quirk Books titles and jam-packed them into our funnest, awesomest, and kid-friendliest e-sampler yet. From banana splits on a stick to a way-cool magic trick, you'll find plenty of new ways for kids and adults alike to have fun. Whether you're taking your family on the road or stuck indoors on a rainy day, we've got you covered.

Children don't come with an owner's manual, so Raising Quirk brings together advice, activities, entertainment, and, most important, other parents who still feel kinda like kids themselves. Our motto: We help cool parents raise cool kids. After all, parenting is a lifelong adventure, and we're all in it together. Consider us your online playgroup! Join us at [quirkbooks.com/raisingquirk](http://quirkbooks.com/raisingquirk).



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# COOKING

These yummy recipes are the ultimate in kid-approved summer snacking. Even better, they involve all the dipping, scooping, beating, cracking, and mixing that little hands crave. Maybe the next Iron Chef will be launched in your very own kitchen!



# HOW TO TEACH A KID TO COOK

from *Stuff Every Mom Should Know* by Heather Gibbs Flett and Whitney Moss

At some point between birth and leaving your house for the big bad real world, children need to learn to cook a few things. By involving them in simple steps of food preparation, you'll set them on the path to never going hungry.

## Tips:

**Make sure you have enough time.** Not every mealtime is the ideal co-cooking experience. Having company over? Need a perfect soufflé? Pick a different day.

**Create a safe environment.** A misshapen pizza or lumpy meatloaf is still edible. Don't sweat imperfection. Support the process by aiming low so no one's disappointed. And remember to keep smiling.

**Invite input.** Does your child want to add olives to lemonade? That's a great idea—in his own glass. Encourage suggestions for flavor combinations. If the food doesn't taste great, talk about what might have happened so you can both learn. Is it too salty? Too spicy? Help your child develop tastes as well as opinions.

## Kitchen tasks for kids:

**Break an egg.** Have your child do this into a small bowl first so you can more easily fish out broken shells or discard a bad egg without ruining the dish.

**Measure and dump.** For baking projects, use an intermediate bowl if your child is less than accurate.

**Whisk and stir.** Introduce the whisk and wooden spoon early in your child's life and prevent your own carpal tunnel syndrome.

**Tear lettuce.** Your child can own the salad by washing, drying, and ripping lettuce leaves.

**Spread the goo.** A safe spreading knife can handle butter, hummus, peanut butter, jelly, and a lot more!

**Set and clear.** Give your child the job of setting and clearing the table to teach him that these tasks don't just happen by themselves.



# ROBOT BITES

from *Noodlemania! 50 Playful Pasta Recipes* by Melissa Barlow

Robots...made out of macaroni and cheese! What's not to like?  
And if these 'bots try to take over the world, you can just eat them.  
*Makes 6 servings*

## Ingredients:

1 bag Kraft Homestyle  
Macaroni & Cheese

Ingredients called for on bag

2 eggs, beaten

1 cup seasoned breadcrumbs

Cut veggies, olives, and  
pretzels for decorating

Marinara sauce for dipping

## Directions:

- 1.** Prepare the macaroni and cheese as directed, but discard the enclosed breadcrumbs. Let cool slightly and then scoop into an 8-inch square or similar size rectangle storage container. Press down to make compact; make the top even and smooth. Refrigerate for 4 to 6 hours or overnight.
- 2.** Preheat oven to 425°F. Line a cookie sheet with foil and then spray it with nonstick cooking spray. Set aside.
- 3.** Remove the storage container from the refrigerator and cut the cold mac and cheese into about 8 to 10 squares and circles. Quickly dip and roll each shape in the beaten eggs, making sure all the sides are covered. Next, roll in the breadcrumbs to coat completely and then place on the prepared cookie sheet. Repeat until all the shapes are coated.
- 4.** Bake for 10 to 12 minutes, or until slightly sizzling and golden. Remove from oven and cool slightly.
- 5.** Decorate with cut veggies, olives, and pretzels to make your robots. Serve with warm marinara sauce for dipping.









# BANANA SPLIT POPS

from *Pops! Icy Treats for Everyone* by Krystina Castella

This king of pops is based on the classic flavors of a banana split, and they're all here—pineapple and strawberry toppings included.

The banana is a hidden surprise.

*Makes six 8-ounce pops or eight 6-ounce pops*

## Ingredients:

⅓ cup strawberry topping  
½ ripe but firm banana (cut crosswise) for each pop  
1½ cups strawberry ice cream  
⅓ cup pineapple topping  
1½ cups vanilla ice cream  
⅓ cup chocolate fudge  
1½ cups chocolate ice cream  
Whipped cream  
¼ cup chopped walnuts  
6 or 8 maraschino cherries  
6 or 8 oz. paper cups  
6–8 pop sticks

## Directions:

- 1.** Use paper cups as molds. Divide the strawberry topping among the paper cups. Stick the banana halves onto the pop sticks. Stand the bananas in the paper cups with the sticks pointing upwards. Freeze for 1 hour.
- 2.** Remove from freezer. Add a layer of strawberry ice cream and then pineapple topping, packing the ice cream and topping around the bananas to hide them. Freeze for 1 hour.
- 3.** Remove from freezer. Add a layer of vanilla ice cream and then chocolate fudge. Add a layer of chocolate ice cream. Freeze for 6 hours.
- 4.** Peel off and discard the paper cups. Top each pop with whipped cream, walnuts, and a cherry. Enjoy your banana split on a stick!





# LITTLE-BITTY FUDGE PUPPIES

from *Tiny Food Party! Bite-Size Recipes for Miniature Meals*

by Teri Lyn Fisher and Jenny Park

Fudge puppies are a traditional fair food: toasty waffles dipped in chocolate and topped with whipped cream, crushed nuts, or other toppings. Now you can make them snack size—perfect for little hands. Dip them in crushed banana chips for added sweetness and crunch.

*Makes 24*

## Ingredients:

1½ cups sweet banana chips

1 cup dark or semisweet  
chocolate chips

24 mini waffles,\* toasted

About 1 cup whipped cream

*\*Mini waffles are available in the frozen-foods section of most supermarkets and grocery stores. They come in regular, whole wheat, cinnamon, and blueberry variations, to name a few. If you're a serious waffle lover, consider investing in a mini Belgian waffle maker.*

## Directions:

1. Place banana chips into the bowl of a food processor and pulse until coarsely ground. Alternatively, place chips in a plastic zip-top bag, seal it, and smash with a rolling pin. Pour crushed chips into a small shallow bowl.
2. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Melt chocolate chips in a double boiler over medium heat, stirring occasionally until smooth. (If you don't have a double boiler, you can use a heat-safe metal or glass mixing bowl that fits snugly on top of a saucepan. Add water to the pan, making sure the water level isn't high enough to touch the bowl. Bring to a simmer and then place the bowl on top to melt chocolate.)  
  
*Tip: Be careful not to let even a drop of water into melting chocolate or it will seize up and become unusable.*
3. Partially dip each waffle into the melted chocolate, gently shaking off excess, and then dredge in the crushed banana chips until well coated.
4. Place waffles on the prepared sheet and let chocolate set for about 30 minutes. Serve fudge puppies with whipped cream on top or on the side.

### BRIGHT IDEA

*Pop finished fudge puppies into cellophane baggies for gifting or packing into coolers or lunchboxes.*







# CRAFTING

Kids don't need to be at summer camp to try their hand at arts 'n' crafts. Especially when the projects aren't boring busywork. These adorable easy-to-make crafts will put those camp-made lanyards to shame.



# BOTTLE-CAP FRAMES

from *Microcrafts: Tiny Treasures to Make and Share* by Margaret McGuire,  
Alicia Kachmar, Katie Hatz, and Friends

What kid wouldn't want to print their favorite pictures on the inside of a bottle cap? Follow these instructions to frame anything from hand-lettered notes to magazine tear-outs, drawings, and vintage photographs. The result makes a great necklace, fridge magnet, earring, or pocket-size picture that kids can keep or trade with friends.

## Supplies:

A favorite image  
Card stock  
Clear packing tape  
Metal bottle cap  
Paper punch (optional)  
Hand punch or hammer and awl/nail (optional)  
Craft glue  
8- to 10-mm jump ring (optional)  
Necklace chain (optional)  
Needle-nose pliers  
Small magnet or earring-post blanks (optional)

## Directions:

1. Select a special image to frame. If using a digital image, use photo-editing software to size it to the diameter of your bottle cap. Glue or print the image on card stock, trimming around the edges.

*Tip: A 1-inch circular paper punch is great for popping out round images that will fit in a bottle cap. Or just cut carefully with a pair of scissors.*

2. Seal the image by covering the front and back with a protective layer of clear packing tape.
3. Make a hole in the center of the top ridge of the bottle cap, using the hand punch (available at craft stores and some department stores) or a hammer and nail. (Note: If you're making a magnet or post earrings, skip this step.) When punching metal, watch out for your fingers, and file down sharp edges around the hole. Young kids will need help with this step.
4. Glue the image into the bottle cap. Allow to dry completely.
5. Turn your frame into a charm by adding a jump ring (available at craft stores). Use pliers to loop the jump ring through the hole in the cap; now you can easily thread it onto a necklace, earring wire, or key chain. Alternatively, you can apply glue to the back of the bottle cap and adhere it to something flat, like a magnet or earring post.







# STARBURST STRAWS

from *Craft-a-Day: 365 Simple Handmade Projects*  
by Sarah Goldschadt

Whether it's homemade lemonade or a cool glass of water, a refreshing beverage is a must-have during the dog days of summer. This project, an easy one even for young kids (if you help with the cutting), will encourage active tykes to stay well hydrated.

## Supplies:

Pencil  
Parchment paper  
Yellow, light yellow, and gold card stock  
Scissors  
Craft knife  
Straws

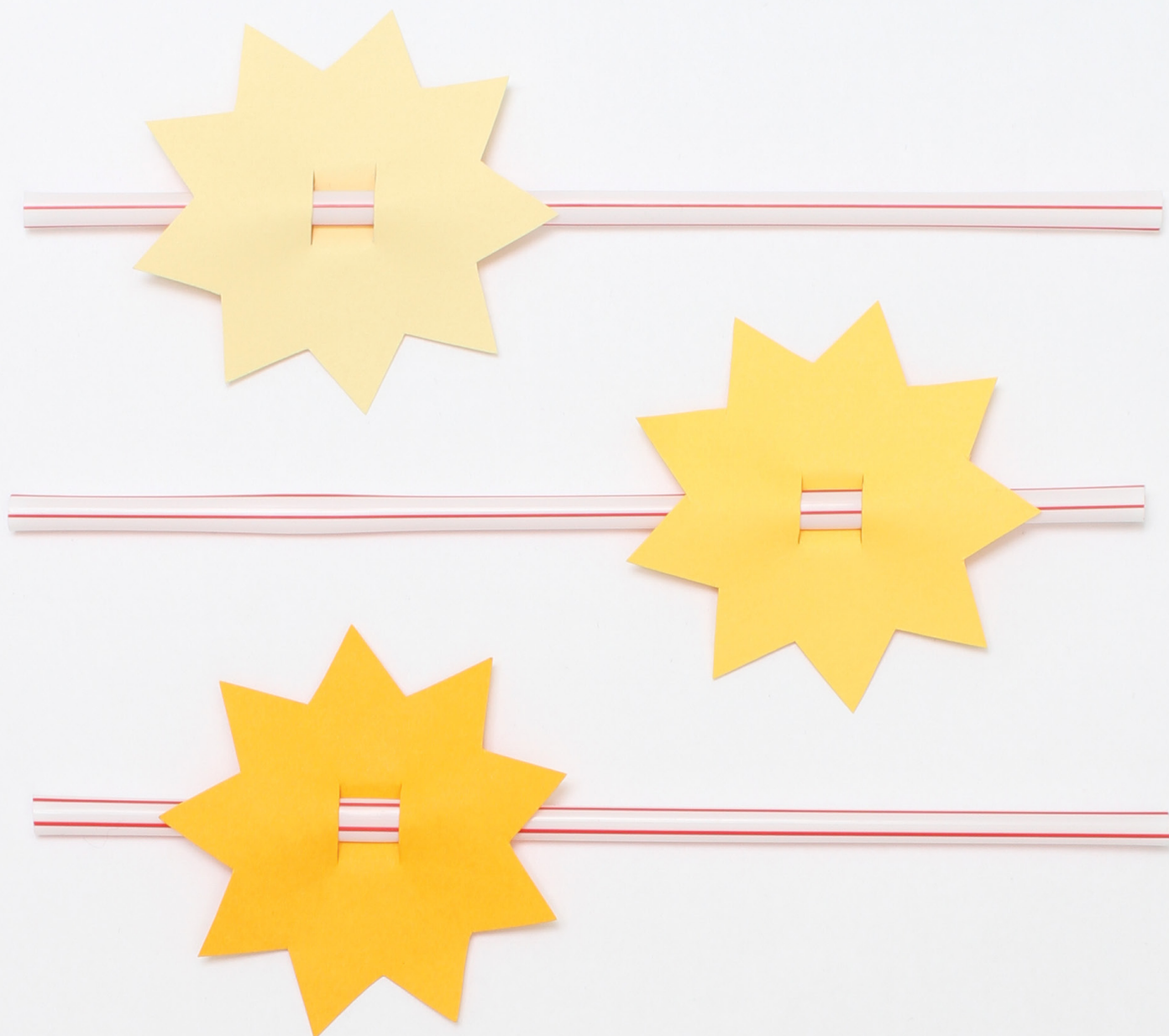
## Directions:

- 1.** Trace the starburst pattern (on next page) onto parchment paper with a pencil.
- 2.** Cut the starburst out of the parchment paper and trace it onto the yellow, light yellow, and gold card stock.
- 3.** Cut starburst shapes out of the card stock.
- 4.** Use a craft knife or pair of scissors to make two parallel ½-inch slits in the center of each starburst. Insert straw through slits.

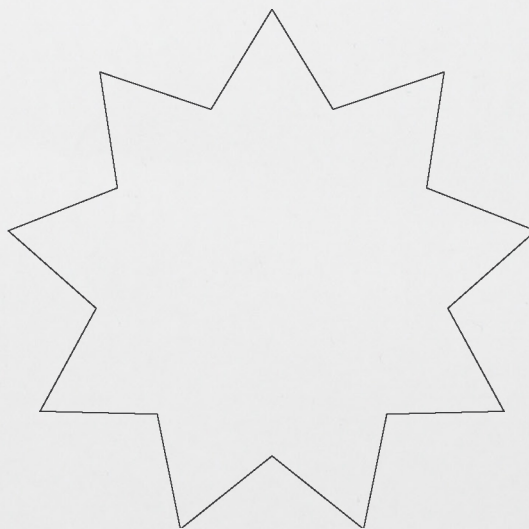
### BRIGHT IDEA

*Your kids can use this pattern to make other projects, like wall art, gift tags, cards, or mobiles. Add glitter and a stick and you've got a magic wand.*





**Fig. 1**  
*Starburst Pattern*





# TURTLE MAGNET

from *Craft-a-Day: 365 Simple Handmade Projects*  
by Sarah Goldschadt

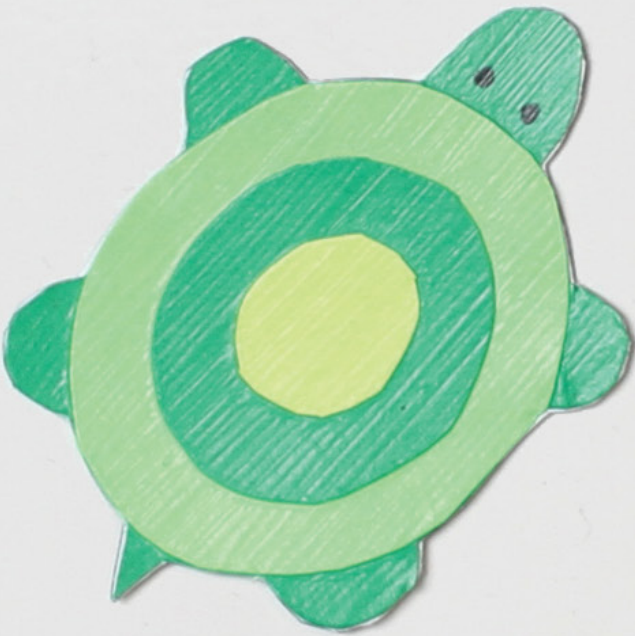
Kids love turtles...and the same pattern used to make this magnet can also be used to create cute paper turtles they can glue, tape, or stick almost anywhere. Kids who like to sew can trace the shapes onto felt, sew the pieces together, and stuff the softie with whatever you choose (fiberfill, beans, etc.).

## Supplies:

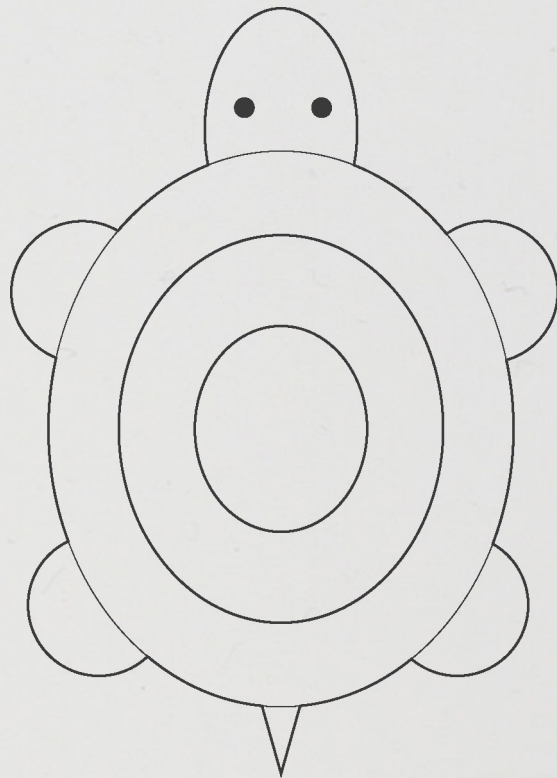
Pencil  
Parchment paper  
Scissors  
Green, light green, and lime green card stock (or any three complementary colors)  
Glue stick  
Black marker  
Decoupage glue (for example, Mod Podge, available at craft stores)  
Paintbrush  
Magnet paper (available at craft and hobby shops)

## Directions:

1. Trace the turtle pattern (on next page) onto parchment paper with a pencil. Remember to make separate cutouts for the body and each layer of the shell.
2. Cut the shapes out of the parchment paper and trace them onto the card stock. Cut the turtle shapes out of the card stock.
3. Draw eyes with a black marker.
4. Adhere shell shapes to the body with decoupage glue. Brush a layer of glue onto the magnet paper and adhere turtle to it; brush a thin layer of glue on top to seal.
5. When dry, trim away the excess magnet paper.



**Fig. 1**  
*Turtle Pattern*





# GET YOUR KID TO CLEAN UP

from *How to Con Your Kid: Simple Scams for Mealtime, Bedtime, Bathtime—Anytime!* by David Borgenicht and James Grace

Homes with small children will always be a little messier and a little more cluttered. The trick is: How can you engage your children to be a part of the solution? Whether it's the aftermath of a craft project or general bedroom chaos, these simple tactics will turn the tide toward tidiness.

## Laying the Groundwork:

- ◆ Let your child play with only a few things at a time so that cleanup is not overwhelming.
- ◆ Create a routine around cleanup. Maybe it always happens after dinner but before dessert. Or maybe it happens Saturday morning before anything “more fun” can start.
- ◆ Give a five-minute warning before cleaning up. Some kids may need an actual countdown.
- ◆ Be as specific as possible. Don't say, “We need to clean up the playroom.” Ask your child to put the blocks back in the box and put the box on the shelf.

## Basic Cons:

- ◆ If your child goes to school or daycare, find out their cleanup routines and mimic them at home.
- ◆ Institute a “five-minute cleanup” every day: after mealtime, select a song (take turns picking) and play it while everyone cleans up one part of the house.
- ◆ If you have multiple children, or are attempting to clean up with a group of children, have them line up and pass the items from child to child along the line until each item reaches its proper home.
- ◆ Don't let your child leave a room messy. Establish a pattern in which a room must be tidied up before leaving. Turn it into a little melodrama—close the door and become a wizard who casts a spell on your child and who won't let him leave until the room is picked up.
- ◆ Make sure that everything being cleaned up has a set place to go. Whenever possible, label drawers and boxes with words and pictures so that cleanup is also a learning activity. Have a bin for random stuff—otherwise things stay cluttered, or items get misplaced.
- ◆ Praise, praise, praise—even if only a few items were cleaned up.



# OUTDOOR ADVENTURE

Even on a perfectly sunny day, it's sometimes hard to drag kids away from their screens to enjoy some outdoor time. But when you tempt them with these super-cool projects, you'll make a great case for the great outdoors.



# GET YOUR KID TO PUT ON SUNSCREEN

from *How to Con Your Kid: Simple Scams for Mealtime, Bedtime, Bathtime—Anytime!* by David Borgenicht and James Grace

The sun is shining, and you are about to enjoy the beautiful day when the words “no sunscreen” come right out of your angel’s mouth. A chase ensues. Sound familiar? Here’s how to unblock the sunblock block.

## Laying the Groundwork:

- ◆ First and foremost, let your child know that wearing sunscreen is not a choice. Before spending time in the sun, everyone must put on sunscreen.
- ◆ Plan to put on the sunscreen lotion before you get to your destination—ideally, when you’re getting dressed or just about to leave the house. That way, sand or dirt won’t get stuck in the lotion as you apply it. Plus, sunscreen works better if it’s had up to half an hour to absorb into skin.
- ◆ Let your child put it on alone—you can be the “helper” and rub it in.
- ◆ If you’re headed to the beach and have a difficult “customer” on your hands, consider purchasing a UV-proof bodysuit (sometimes called duck suits)—that way, you’ll have only face, hands, and feet to lotion up.
- ◆ Do everything in your power to ensure that the sunscreen does not get into your child’s eyes. It is incredibly painful and will create a Pavlovian response whenever you reach for the bottle. Allow children to hold tissues or a towel over their eyes during application.

## Basic Cons:

- ◆ Don’t refer to it by its real (boring) name. Call it a “magic lotion” and explain that it will act as a super shield, protecting your child from the sun.
- ◆ If you’re using a white suntan lotion that takes a while to rub in, turn the lathering process into an art project—on your child’s body. You can draw in the lotion with your fingers before rubbing it in.
- ◆ Use a natural incentive, if one exists: “When you have sunscreen on, we can go to the beach.” If the destination is undesirable: “When you have sunscreen on, you can pick the music in the car/read a story before we go.”
- ◆ Purchase a washrag hand puppet and use it to apply the lotion. It’s much more fun when the duck applies the lotion than when you do.



# PLAN A SCAVENGER HUNT

from *The Grandparents Handbook: Games, Activities, Tips, How-Tos, and All-Around Fun* by Elizabeth LaBan, with Nana Barbara Trostler and Grandpa Myron LaBan

Kids always love hunting for hidden treasure, and an outdoor scavenger hunt gives them a chance to explore, use their senses, get some exercise, and think creatively. If your hunt extends beyond the boundaries of your yard, you might enlist the assistance of neighbors to keep an eye on younger children and perhaps even provide hiding places for some of the items.

- 1.** Compile a long list of items for kids to find. These can range from a pinecone to an old toy doll to a Halloween mask (see list, right). Just remember that you want the kids to remain safe while hunting (avoid items that would require them to stand on a chair to reach, etc.) and that each item should be available and findable. Choose a mix of easy- and difficult-to-find items, keeping in mind the ages of the children taking part.
- 2.** Group kids into teams, or if you have just a few kids participating, let each one go on the hunt alone. Give each child a bag for gathering items.
- 3.** Tell the children what their boundaries will be. Be sure they understand that if they leave the designated boundaries, they will be disqualified. Similarly, decide now whether teams

must stay together at all times or whether they are allowed to spread out to save time.

- 4.** Line up everyone, bags in hand, so that each child starts out at the same time. Be sure they know you'll be around to answer questions and instruct them to be back at the chosen meeting place (for example, your home) at a specific time. Each player or team should have a watch or clock so that they can keep track of elapsed time.
- 5.** Once everyone is back at the meeting place, go through each bag to see what the children have gathered. Add up their points—one point for each item found—and declare the winning player or team. Give the winner(s) the honor of choosing a special treat or picking the next game.

## *Examples of fun hunt items:*

shiny rock  
cotton swab  
colored leaf  
checker  
funky sock  
treasured DVD  
playing card  
piece of fruit  
hand-written poem from you



# YAKIMA! CHOREOGRAPH A FIGHT SCENE

from *The Art of Roughhousing: Good Old-Fashioned Horseplay and Why Every Kid Needs It* by Anthony T. DeBenedet, MD, and Lawrence J. Cohen, PhD

This roughhousing game is named after Yakima Canutt, widely regarded as one of Hollywood's greatest stuntmen. He often doubled for John Wayne, and the two, working together, created many of the stunt and screen-fighting techniques still used today.

In this open-ended activity, you and your child (or multiple kids) turn the backyard into a movie set by staging a Yakima-style choreographed fight scene. Below are a few tips and techniques to consider incorporating into your scene; put the moves together however you like, improvising a story as you go. The key is to work together and practice the scene before you do the activity in front of the camera (or Mom!).

## Tips:

**Minimal contact.** Remember, you're not really fighting. If you're playing with multiple children of different ages, it's particularly important that everyone keeps this point in mind.

**Opponent recoil.** This concept is critical for making a play-fight scene believable. The more the person being fake punched and fake kicked recoils in a dramatic, exaggerated way, the better. This includes falling or crashing to the floor.

**Follow the child's lead.** Does the child want to be the outlaw or the marshal?

**Rehearse, rehearse, rehearse.** The more you practice, the more realistic it will look, whether you're posting the result online or performing it live for an audience of family and neighborhood friends. Be sure to practice your dialogue, too!

## Techniques:

**Slapping.** One performer should do a "slap clap" near the opponent's face for sound effects. Basically, that involves slapping your own hand after fake hitting your opponent.

**Punching.** Hooks are easier to fake than uppercuts or jabs because your opponent can simply recoil his head and body away from the punch (and away from the audience's viewpoint). Either the puncher or the punchee can pound his own chest to simulate the punch's sound.

**Kicking.** Two styles work well. The first is a mule kick: Turn away from your opponent and kick backward. The second is a knee kick: Grab your opponent's collar and pull him forward into your knee as you lift it while your opponent does a dramatic whiplash-esque recoil with his head.

**Pushing and pulling.** Do these moves a lot. When one person falls down, the other should pull him back up for more fun.

# NICK AND TESLA'S LOW-TECH (PRACTICALLY NO-TECH) BOTTLE ROCKET AND LAUNCHER

From *Nick and Tesla's High-Voltage Danger Lab: A Novel with Electromagnets, Burglar Alarms, and Other Gadgets You Can Build Yourself* by "Science Bob" Pflugfelder and Steve Hockensmith

Brother and sister Nick and Tesla have been sent to spend the summer at the home of their Uncle Newt, an eccentric inventor. While he's recovering from the effects of a recent invention, the kids create a homemade rocket using stuff from their uncle's laboratory.

## Supplies:

4 pieces of 10-inch-long PVC pipe, labeled  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch wide **(A)**  
2 pieces of 20-inch-long PVC pipe **(B)**  
3 90-degree-angle pieces **(C)**  
1 T connector **(D)**  
2 end caps **(E)**  
1 threaded end cap **(F)**  
1 bicycle pump (foot pumps work best) **(G)**  
1 tire valve from an auto parts store or garage **(H)**  
1 1- or 2-liter plastic soda bottle **(I)**  
Water  
Electrical tape  
PVC cement  
Drill  
Pliers  
Safety goggles

## Setup:

1. Drill a  $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch hole into the center of the flat side of one end cap. (Note: Younger children will need adult help with this step.)
2. Feed the valve through the hole from the inside of the cap. Use the pliers to pull the valve through the hole so that the cap sits in the groove at the base of the valve. It may take a little twisting and tugging.
3. Gather the pipe, angle, and connector pieces together and lay them out as shown in Fig. 2.
4. Follow the directions on the PVC cement to attach all the pieces snugly. (Note: Do this step outside. That cement stuff stinks!)
5. Let the completed launcher dry for as long as possible, preferably overnight.
6. The bottle goes over the vertical pipe in the middle (see Fig. 3). Wrap electrical tape around the threaded end cap until you get a

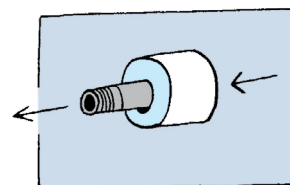


Fig. 1

*continued...*

## NICK AND TESLA'S LOW-TECH (PRACTICALLY NO-TECH) BOTTLE ROCKET AND LAUNCHER CONTINUED...

tight fit when you place the neck of the bottle over it. The tighter the fit, the more pressure the bottle can hold, and the higher your rocket will go!

- 7.** Go outside and make sure your launch area is clear of people and obstacles.
- 8.** Fill the bottle one-third to halfway with water.
- 9.** Turn the launcher upside down and twist the bottle snugly onto it.
- 10.** Turn the launcher right side up and attach the bicycle pump securely to the valve.

### The Final Steps:

- 11.** Put on your safety goggles and start pumping.
- 12.** Be ready for the pressure to send the rocket flying!
- 13.** If the pressure doesn't send the rocket flying, the seal at the neck of the bottle probably needs to be tighter. Add more electrical tape to the threaded valve and try again.

### DANGER! DANGER! DANGER! DANGER!

This how-to project involves potentially dangerous elements. Before you build the project, **ASK AN ADULT TO REVIEW THE INSTRUCTIONS.** You'll probably need their help with one or two of the steps, anyway. While we believe this project to be safe and family-friendly, accidents can happen in any situation, and we cannot guarantee your safety. **THE AUTHORS AND PUBLISHER DISCLAIM ANY LIABILITY FROM ANY HARM OR INJURY THAT MAY RESULT FROM THE USE, PROPER OR IMPROPER, OF THE INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THIS PROJECT.** Remember, these instructions are not meant to be a substitute for your good judgment and common sense.

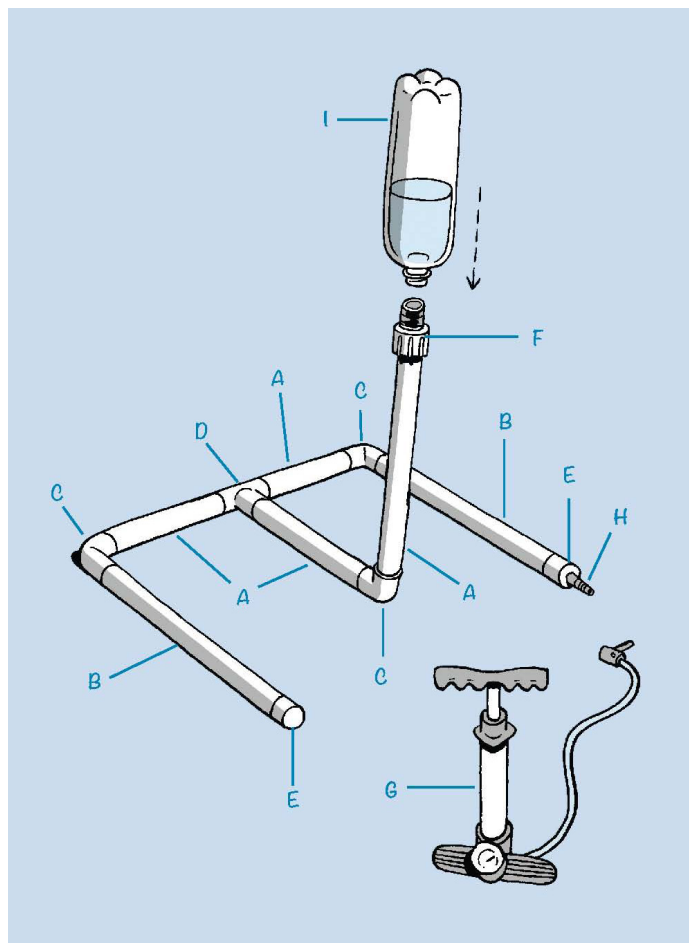


Fig. 2

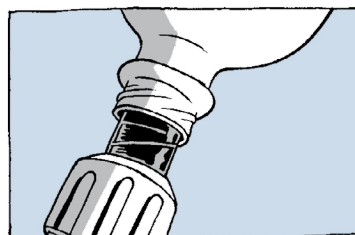


Fig. 3

# RAINY-DAY ANTICS

Just because a thunderstorm's keeping you and your kids cooped up doesn't mean you can't have a blast. Get out some giggles with these laughter-inducing activities—before you know it, you'll forget all about the yucky weather.



# GET YOUR KID TO PLAY ALONE

from *How to Con Your Kid: Simple Scams for Mealtime, Bedtime, Bathtime—Anytime!* by David Borgenicht and James Grace

As delightful as playtime with your child can be, there are moments when you need to attend to other matters. Especially if a last-minute change in plans pops up but there aren't any siblings or babysitters to call to the rescue. Here's how to encourage independent play in a young child.

## Laying the Groundwork:

- ◆ The key is to be realistic about your expectations. If you think you can make a four-course meal, do the laundry, write your dissertation, and catch up with a colleague, you are in for disappointment. Be happy with a few moments of solace.
- ◆ Whenever your child plays by himself, even for a few moments, hype the fact that he is doing something special and “grown-up.”
- ◆ Make sure there are toys for your child to play with everywhere in the house.
- ◆ When your child does play by himself, pay attention to the toys he chooses—does it naturally happen with art supplies, small cars, or blocks? When you need your child to play alone, have those toys on hand.

## Basic Cons:

- ◆ Encourage your child to play at the same thing you're trying to do. If you're making dinner, make the kitchen table his “cooking” area, complete with a mixing bowl, “ingredients” (you may need to forfeit some old rice or flour to this endeavor), and loads of utensils. If you're working on the computer, set him up with an old typewriter or a shoebox you have tailored to look like one.
- ◆ Play music. It soothes the savage beast—and it distracts the needy child.
- ◆ Tell your child that you have to do some work, but that you'll “get him started” on whatever he wants to play with. Or do something time-limited before you set him off on his own, for example, read a story or sing a song.
- ◆ Set up a tent or a fort. Kids love to crawl in and out of these spaces, and the secluded nature of a fort will prevent your child from noticing that you're not playing with him. Place lots of toys and books inside, and give him a flashlight for better exploration.
- ◆ Give your child a clear play objective to accomplish, one that will take a bit of time: “Can you build me a castle? See how high you can go!” or “Will you draw a picture for Grandma?”



# FUTALEUFÚ MATTRESS RAFTING

From *The Art of Roughhousing: Good Old-Fashioned Horseplay and Why Every Kid Needs It* by Anthony T. DeBenedet, MD, and Lawrence J. Cohen, PhD

Chile's Futaleufú River is consistently ranked the most dangerous white-water rafting spot in the world. In this move, you'll re-create a trip down the mighty waterway. Use extra caution to prevent crashing into a railing or flipping over on the way down.

1. Grab a toddler mattress, twin mattress, or tumbling mat and place it at the top of a staircase.
2. Jump on the mattress with your child and push off. Hold on to the mattress side handles for stability, but make sure to let go if you end up headed for a wall.





# PUT ON A COMEDY SHOW

from *Monkeyfarts: Wacky Jokes Every Kid Should Know*

by David Borgenicht

Is there a comedian in the house? Encourage your young jokesters to spend a rainy afternoon crafting some unique stand-up routines. To create an authentic comedy-club feel, find a brick wall to use as a backdrop, lend your kids your loudest sports coats, and punch up their punch lines with your best *ba-dum-TSH*. A child who doesn't want to tell jokes can be the emcee, introducing the performers and encouraging the crowd to enjoy the show. Here's some killer material to get them started.

## Opening Lines:

**What has wheels and flies?**

A garbage truck.

**What pet does everyone have?**

An armpet.

**What did the nut say when it sneezed?**

Cashew!

**What room has no walls?**

A mushroom.

## Monologue in the Middle:

**The Penguins and the Policeman:** A policeman sees a man walking down the street with four penguins. He says to the man, "Sir, are those your pet penguins?" "Yes," says the man. "Well,

you should take those penguins to the zoo!" says the cop. "Good idea," says the man. And off they go. The next day the policeman sees the man again, and he's still with the penguins. But they are all wearing sunglasses. "Didn't I tell you to take those penguins to the zoo?" says the policeman. "Yes!" replies the man. "I did! And they liked it so much that today we're going to the beach!"

## Closing Bits:

**Why are elephants so wrinkly?**

Have you ever tried to iron one?

**What did the hat say to the scarf?**

You hang around while I go on a head.

**Why don't monsters eat clowns?**

Because they taste funny.

## Encore Act:

**Good News and Bad News:** A doctor walks into the recovery room to talk to a patient he has just operated on. "I have good news and bad news," he tells the patient. "What's the bad news?" asks the patient. "The bad news is that we've looked at your X-rays, and you have to go back into surgery." "Ugh," says the patient. "What's the good news?" "I found the scalpel we were missing!"

**What do you call two people who embarrass you in front of your friends?**

Mom and Dad.

*continued...*



## PUT ON A COMEDY SHOW CONTINUED...

### Bonus Tips for Li'l Living Room Comedians:

*from Doogie Horner, stand-up comedian  
and art director at Quirk Books*

- 1.** Focused lighting is important! Stand under a lamp; turn off all the other lights in the room.
- 2.** Begin your comedy set with a casual, honest comment about your environment. It doesn't have to be hilarious. It'll help the rest of your set seem more conversational. Examples:  
  
"Thanks, it's great to be here in the living room."  
  
"Look at the size of this crowd! If it was any bigger they'd be sitting on the ottoman."
- 3.** If you're nervous, just remember that the audience wants you to succeed. They're on your side.
- 4.** Memorize the order in which you're going to tell your jokes; practice your set and time it. Keep it shorter rather than longer.
- 5.** Don't talk too fast!
- 6.** At the end, thank everybody for listening, and remind them to try the meatloaf.

# LEARN A MAGIC TRICK

from *Mysterio's Encyclopedia of Magic and Conjuring* by Gabe Fajuri

Would-be Harry Potters can get started on the road to wizardry by crafting this classic magic-act prop, then using it to amaze and astound audiences in living rooms and back porches everywhere.

## MAKE A MAGIC PITCHER

This versatile prop can be made with a minimum of expense, but it will repay you many times over. The effects it makes possible are many.

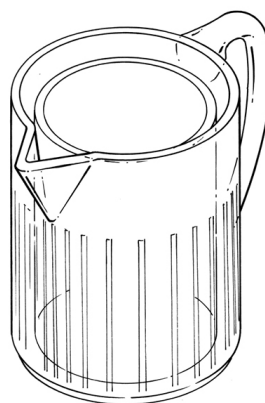
**Effect:** The magician pours a quantity of milk from a clear pitcher into a paper cone. “No one drinks evaporated milk anymore, do they?” the magician asks. “That’s because evaporated milk isn’t made anymore!” The performer wads up the cone into a compact ball of paper. The milk has vanished without a trace!

### Supplies:

- ◆ A clear plastic pitcher with a ridged, fluted, or patterned design on its exterior. The pitcher should be clear, but the pattern around it should be sufficiently “busy” to make seeing directly through its sides difficult.
- ◆ A second clear plastic pitcher, a carafe, or a large cup small enough to fit inside the first pitcher. It should be approximately  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch shorter than the larger pitcher and at least  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch smaller in diameter.
- ◆ Glue that firmly bonds plastic pieces together.

### Directions:

**Glue the two pieces together:** Spread glue on the bottom of the smaller vessel and place it centered inside the pitcher. When finished, you will have created a double-walled Magic Pitcher. Figure 1 shows a top view. Make sure the glue is dry before using the pitcher.



**Fig. 1**  
*Top View of  
Magic Pitcher*

## THE VANISHING MILK TRICK

**Preparation:** Fill the space between the inner and outer walls of the pitcher with milk.

**Performance:** Roll a sheet of newspaper into a cone. As you do so, you can chat about evaporated milk, or pretend to spot funny or interesting headlines in the paper as you roll it up. Read them off as a way to kill time and extend what might otherwise be a quick trick.

*continued...*



## LEARN A MAGIC TRICK CONTINUED...

Once the cone has been rolled, hold it in your left hand and, with your right hand, begin “pouring” milk into it. If you carefully tilt the pitcher into the cone, the liquid will run into the inner chamber of the Magic Pitcher as opposed to pouring out of it. Because of the pitcher’s double-walled construction, after the pouring, it will appear from the outside as if half of the milk has actually been poured into the cone. Keep pouring until at least half of the pitcher’s contents have been “emptied” into the cone.

For added realism, at some point during the proceedings, allow a small stream of liquid to flow into the paper. It will drip out of the bottom of the newspaper cone.

Set the pitcher aside, utter your most convincing magic words, and then crumple the cone into a ball. The milk has vanished!

# FUN ON THE GO

Summertime is the perfect time to explore the world beyond your backyard. Take your kids on outdoor adventures and banish backseat boredom with these endless games to go—all without so much as an “Are we there yet?”



# HOW TO KEEP A FAMILY HAPPY DURING CAR TRIPS

from *Stuff Every Dad Should Know* by Brett Cohen

*“Don’t make me turn this car around.”*

*—Every dad who’s ever lived*

When that idle threat doesn’t work, here are some ideas for keeping everybody (relatively) happy during the drive to...well, anyplace that involves being in a car long enough for a young mind to get bored sitting still.

## Tips:

**Plan ahead.** If the trip will be long, identify places to stop along the way: restaurants, coffee shops, roadside attractions, a playground, etc.

**Play a game.** Classic car games, like I Spy, the License Plate Game, and 20 Questions, keep your child thinking and engaged with the outside world.

**Play music.** Take turns selecting songs. To make it interesting, give passengers the power to veto one selection, allowing them to skip a tune they just don’t like. Alternatively, prepare a playlist featuring a mix of each person’s favorites.

**Plan a window scavenger hunt.** Before the trip, give each passenger a list of things to spot during the drive. Then take turns calling out the items as they’re spotted.

**Play a video game or watch a movie.** Yes, if your children are old enough, portable DVD players and handheld video game devices will keep them quiet for hours. Use sparingly, though...a road trip is a great opportunity for kids to see new sights and observe the world around them.

**Pack snacks.** Break out the nibbles at strategic times. Aim for foods that are safe to eat in a car, not too sugary, and easy to clean off upholstery. Hey, this is a great time to try making your own trail mix! We’ve got just the recipe [here](#).



# MAKE TRAIL MIX AND HIT THE TRAILS!

from *The Grandparents Handbook: Games, Activities, Tips, How-Tos and All-Around Fun* by Elizabeth LaBan, with Nana Barbara Trostler and Grandpa Myron LaBan

Kids love to mix things together. They also love having a plan and a goal. So give 'em what they want, and throw in some outdoor exercise, too. Gather your young trailblazers for a trail mix and hiking adventure. Here's the plan:

1. Begin by making a list of trail mix ingredients, letting the kids help. You can talk about mixing sweet with salty and crunchy with chewy. Explain how some of the items will give them a quick burst of energy, but others will give them energy for the long haul and let them walk farther. Choose at least one ingredient from each of the following categories:
2. Take a shopping excursion together to procure your provisions. Or, if time is tight, buy the ingredients yourself the day before the hike.
3. Invite the kids to help you measure equal parts of all the ingredients into a large bowl, use a big spoon to stir it all together, and then portion the mix into plastic storage bags. (Preparing the snack bags is a great opportunity for younger kids to practice counting.)
4. Seal the bags and instruct children to dance around the room and shake their bags so that the ingredients mix together!
5. With individual bags of trail mix and small bottles of water in hand, set out for your hiking adventure. Don't be too ambitious: Know what you can handle, but also what your children can handle. You can always hike to the nearest park bench or even to the backyard to enjoy the tasty trail treats.

**Dried fruit:** cranberries, blueberries, pineapple, banana chips, apples, raisins

**Nuts** (omit if any of the children have nut allergies): peanuts, cashews, almonds, hazelnuts, walnuts, pecans

**Salty snacks:** pretzel sticks, mini pretzels, goldfish crackers

**Sweet snacks:** chocolate chips, mini marshmallows, peanut butter chips (omit if allergies are an issue), butterscotch chips, M&M candies

**Crispy snacks:** dry cereals, granola

## BRIGHT IDEA

*If hiking turns out to be an activity your kids enjoy, plan regular excursions. Begin slowly and build up: Set short distance goals at first (one or two blocks, 5 minutes, etc.) and then increase the hike as children begin to gain stamina and confidence.*

*Be sure to tell children how much distance you will cover and give them landmarks to gauge how far they've traveled and how far they still have to go. This will let them feel in control of the hike and decrease the chances of a midhike meltdown.*



# HOW TO BUILD A SAND CASTLE

from *Stuff Every Dad Should Know* by Brett Cohen

Building a seashore château is the perfect sun-and-surf family activity: it's creative, it's satisfying, it's free, and everyone can participate in the fun. If you're planning any beach time this summer, follow this advice to create sand castles fit for a king.

**1. Gather and assess your tools.** You'll need a bucket or two in which to collect water and a shovel of some sort to move the sand. Though not necessary, cups or containers of varying sizes are ideal to give your castle an array of heights and shapes.

**2. Have a loose plan.** Before getting down to building business, draw lines in the sand to identify the placement of the main castle, smaller towers, and walls as well as the moat and bridges (if you're feeling particularly ambitious). This outline will disappear as you start to build, but establishing a loose framework gives everyone a starting point and a goal to work toward, no matter how it ends up taking shape. (Note that some children—

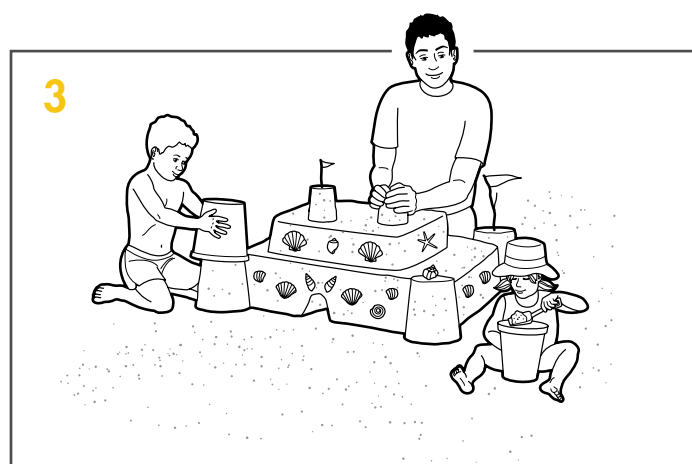
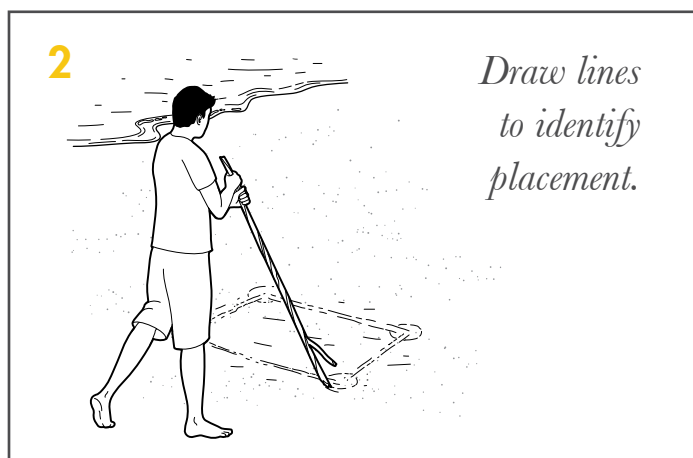
and adults—are happier improvising a creative vision rather than following a blueprint.)

**3. Build the main structure.** You can pile sand to form the main castle, creating a pyramid shape, or you can fill your largest bucket with wet sand and flip it over. (The consistency you want is not runny, goopy mud; it should be wet enough to stick together but dry enough to stay in place.) Be sure to pat the bottom of the bucket before gently lifting it up and away.

**4. Construct the towers.** Fill a smaller bucket or a cup with wet sand and flip it over to create the towers.

**5. Dig out the moat.** Using your hand or a shovel, remove the sand around the castle. Use the sand you dug out to form a wall with your hands.

**6. Decorate.** Gather shells, pebbles, sticks, and seaweed to adorn your fortress.



*Use sand that is just wet enough to stick together but dry enough to stay in place.*



# GAMES TO PLAY IN THE CAR

From *Gladstone's Games to Go* By Jim Gladstone

While driving to Grandmother's house—or any other destination far enough away to provoke cries of “Are we there yet?”—parents have long depended on the classic memory game known as “Grandmother's House” to keep small fries from going bonkers in the backseat.

## Object of the Game:

To memorize a string of alphabetically ordered words that gets longer each time a player takes a turn.

## How to Play:

Players speak aloud, rotating through the group, each adding an item to an alphabetically stocked picnic basket of one-word foodstuffs. For example:

Player 1: I went to Grandmother's house, and in my picnic basket I brought an apple.

Player 2: ...I brought an apple and a banana.

Player 3: ...I brought an apple, a banana, and a cookie.

## How to Win:

Players are eliminated when they suffer a memory lapse. On the next turn in the game above, for instance, if Player 2 can't remember what C stands for (or says “chicken” or “cake” by mistake), Player 3 gets a chance to recite the chain from the beginning. If Player 3 succeeds, Player 2

is eliminated and the others continue the game. If Player 3 also fails, Player 1 has the opportunity to eliminate both Player 2 and Player 3 by successfully reciting the full chain and adding a D word at the end. The last remaining player is the winner.

Note: For only this game, xylophones and X-rays are officially declared edible. (Even the magisterial *Oxford Companion to Food* has not a single entry under “X.”) In general, some flexibility is always suggested, especially when children and adults are playing together. It's swell that Dad knows about the Japanese noodles called udon, but consider letting little Suzy sneak an umbrella into the picnic basket. (It would come in handy in case of rain, after all.)

If you make it all the way to zucchini, the chain loops back around to “A.” Players must always repeat the full list on their turns, from the first “A” all the way into the second alphabet.

Because the rhythm of spoken words can be an aid to memory, players must always repeat the chain as a sentence rather than a straight list: “. . . flour, a grapefruit, and a hamburger,” not simply “. . . flour, grapefruit, hamburger.”

### *Variations*

Invent similar games around other categories:

#### **Geography**

Alabama, Boston, Canada, Denmark...

#### **Celebrities**

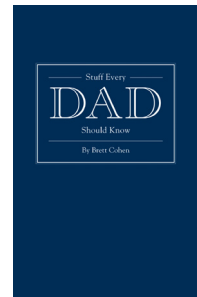
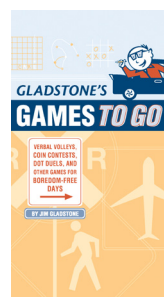
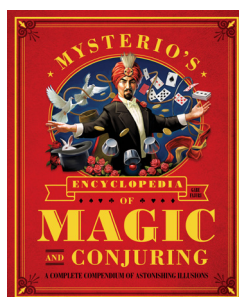
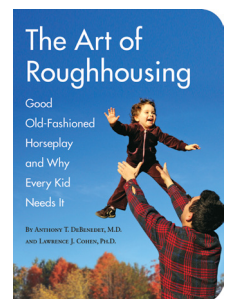
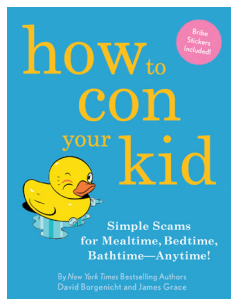
Alvin, Barney, Cookie Monster...

#### **Zoology**

Anteater, Bumblebee, Cat...

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