

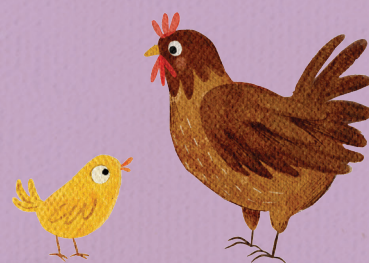


# 44 ACTIVITIES FOR KIDS THAT DON'T INVOLVE SCREENS

Written by Betsy Childs Howard

## MINIMAL PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

- **Let kids build a fort with chairs and blankets.**
- **Listen to an audiobook while drawing the story in pictures.**  
(LibriVox offers free audiobooks in the public domain. You can also borrow audiobooks from public libraries using apps like Libby and Cloud Library.)
- **Listen to *Adventures in Odyssey*.**
- **Listen to music while coloring.** Check out Bible memory songs like those from Seeds Family Worship or Slugs & Bugs.
- **Room time.** Give kids a set period of time when they must play in their rooms by themselves (perhaps start with 30 minutes and work up to longer).



## NO PREP REQUIRED

- **Teach your kids to play "Button, button, who's got the button?"**
- **Hold a "snail race."** A snail race is the opposite of a regular race. The last one to the finish line wins. The catch is that every participant must keep moving and never stop.
- **Take a bath with toys in the middle of the day.** This is an especially good option when kids are sick.
- **Play "Rock, Paper, Scissors."**
- **Play "Simon Says."**
- **Play "I Spy."**
- **Play Bible charades.** Each person takes a turn acting out a Bible story (without words) until the others guess it.
- **Look at family photo albums together.**
- **Do the "Hokey Pokey."**
- **Play "Name That Tune" by humming without words.** First to get the tune wins!
- **Fill a sink or dishpan with water and let kids play in it with toys.**






## PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES

- **Have a dance party!**
- **Play “Ring Around the Rosie” until you get dizzy.**
- **Create an indoor obstacle course with cushions and furniture.** Time your child and see how fast they can move through it.
- **Go for a walk.** You can turn a regular walk around the neighborhood into a game by guessing the number of cars (or mailboxes, or birds, or out-of-state license plates) you will see and then counting as you go.
- **Teach kids to limbo.** Use a yardstick or a broom as a limbo bar.
- **Play “hallway air hockey.”** Players at either end of the hallway aim to get the puck (or ball) past their opponent.
- **Make a “balance beam” on the floor with masking tape.** Small children will find it challenging to walk in a straight line putting one foot in front of the other. Once they’ve mastered that, try it backward!
- **Show kids how to pull each other around the house on a blanket “sled.”**



## TABLE ACTIVITIES

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- **Play tic-tac-toe.**
  - **Use scissors to make paper dolls or paper snowflakes.**
  - **Ask your child to make up a sequel to a favorite story.** If they aren’t writing yet, they could draw the story in pictures.
  - **Teach kids how to play “War” with a deck of cards.**
  - **Do a jigsaw puzzle or use a piece of cardboard to make your own puzzle.**
  - **Make paper airplanes.**
  - **Give your child a mirror and ask him to draw a self-portrait.**
  - **Decorate a box.** Save the box from your latest delivery and encourage your child to turn it into a house, a robot, or whatever else they think it looks like.
  - **Make a telephone using disposable cups and a piece of string.**
  - **Let your child design their own coat of arms.**





## REQUIRES SUPPLIES OR TOYS

- Play with bubbles.
- Draw with sidewalk chalk outside.
- Play with Legos. For fun, challenge kids to build something that doesn't come from a kit!
- Have a contest to see who can build the highest block tower that doesn't topple.
- Play with Play-Doh.
- Play with Kinetic Sand.
- Build your own mini golf course using horizontal paper cups for the holes.
- Play Uno.
- Play a structured game with Nerf guns.
- Work through a *Paint By Sticker* book.

Betsy Childs Howard is the author of *Polly and the Screen Time Overload* and *Arlo and the Great Big Cover-Up*.

 CROSSWAY

 Kids