

A man with a beard and a young girl are sitting inside a tent made of a blue and brown fabric. The man is leaning over, smiling, and holding a small brown teddy bear. The girl is sitting opposite him, also smiling and looking at the bear. A small white lamp is visible in the foreground, casting a warm glow. The background is bright, suggesting a window or an open tent entrance. The overall atmosphere is cozy and intimate.

NYMetroParents

PRESENTS

Ideas for At-Home Fun

50

Whatever the reason, if you have little ones at home, there is a good chance you'll need to find some fun activities to keep the boredom blues away. Thankfully, you don't have to spend a lot of money or have a fully stocked craft area to maximize the fun—nor do you have to be a creative expert to keep the kids entertained at home. If you play your cards right, you might even be able to sneak in some extra learning and family bonding time!

Flex Those Crafting Skills

Not only are at-home arts and crafts fun, they are great for developing fine motor skills, sparking creativity, and bolstering self-confidence. What better reasons to make some art to brighten the day? So gather your supplies, sit with your kids, and craft together!

1

If you can't get to the beach to play with sand, [make some mess-free moon sand](#) to bring the sand play to you! All you need is baking soda, baking powder, and dish soap!

2

[Craft a dreamcatcher](#) to protect your kids from bad dreams with yarn, an embroidery hoop, beads, and feathers. Want to up the fun factor? Find other decorations for it around the house!

3

Explore science by [growing a string of stalactites](#) out of baking soda, straws, a pipe cleaner, and yarn.

4

Have fun with trajectory by [building rockets](#)! All you need is paper, modeling clay, straws, tape, and a water bottle with a sports cap.



5

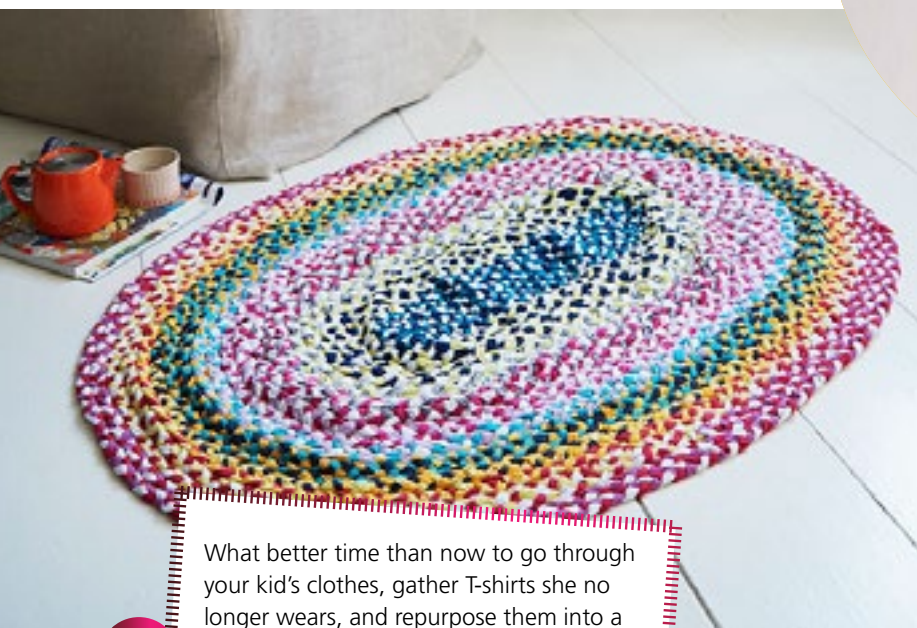
Save some cardboard boxes from the recycling bin for a [homemade ring toss](#).

6

Grab some flour, gelatin, corn syrup, and birdseed to [make a treat for your neighborhood's feathered friends!](#)

7

Go low-mess by making [pom-pom hand puppets](#)—then flex your imagination by creating your own story.



8

What better time than now to go through your kid's clothes, gather T-shirts she no longer wears, and repurpose them into a [braided rug for her bedroom](#).

10

Don't forget about man's best friend: Upcycle a T-shirt and make a [tug toy for Fido!](#)

9

This one's for your tween fashionista: [faux fur pom-poms](#). Need we say more?



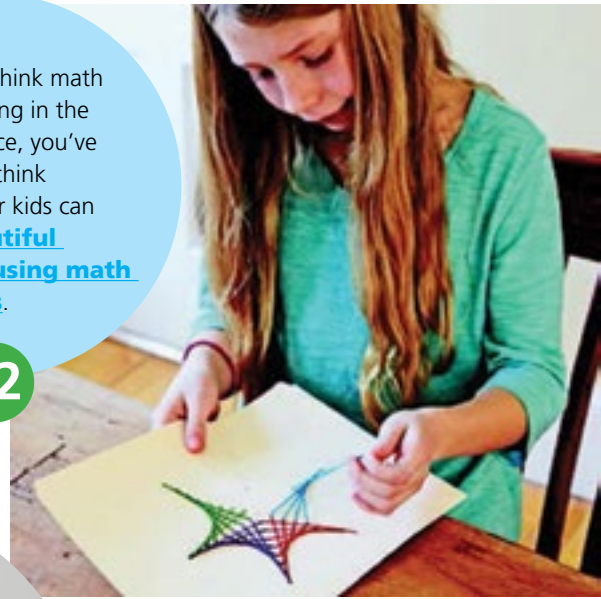


11

Nothing beats relaxing in a bath, except maybe relaxing in a bath with a [homemade bath bomb](#).

If you don't think math and fun belong in the same sentence, you've got another think coming! Your kids can [make beautiful string art using math techniques](#).

12

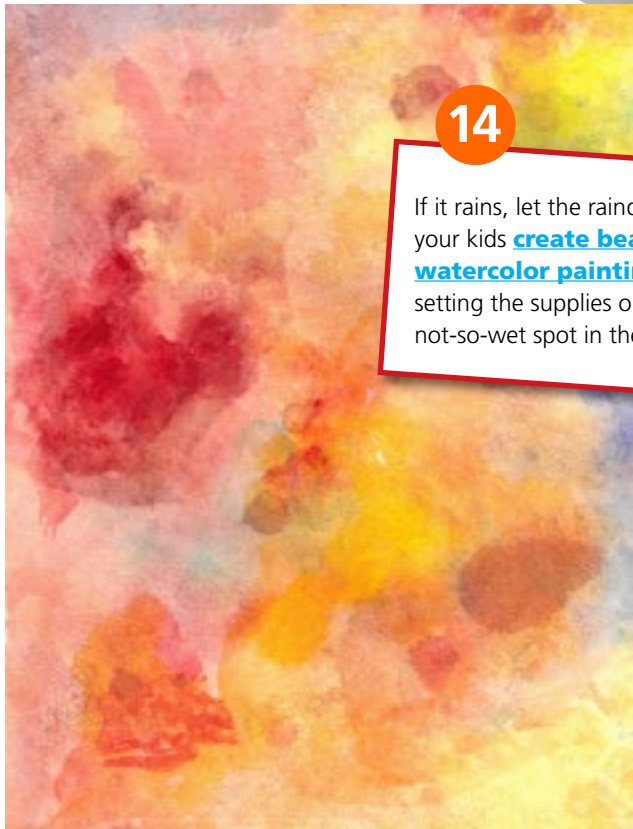


13

[Draw images on stones using permanent markers](#), keep them in a bag, and draw them out at random to build a whimsical little tale that will keep little ones enthralled. It's never the same story twice!

14

If it rains, let the raindrops help your kids [create beautiful watercolor paintings](#) by setting the supplies out in a not-so-wet spot in the yard!



15

Gather some clothespins, washi tape, and markers to make [a one-of-a-kind photo display](#), either on a shelf or attached to twine strung on the wall.





Snazz up your kids' boring old headphones using the friendship bracelet technique!

16

Make sensory toys filled with different dry goods to help your child explore textures, mess-free.

17



Pick up some permanent markers and white mugs at the dollar store and have your kids **personalize their cups** for a hot cocoa treat.

18



19

These snow globes aren't just for the holidays: Have your kids pick some figurines out of their toy stash for **a glittery globe**.

20

Evoke thoughts of summer camp by tie-dyeing T-shirts in a nontraditional way. **Learn how to tie-dye with food coloring** or—and this one is sure to get some energy out—freeze dye in ice cube trays, smash the cubes with a hammer, sprinkle the pieces on a shirt, and let the ice melt to reveal **a galaxy-inspired print**.

Get In the Kitchen

Take advantage of the time at home with the kids and teach them how to cook. Learning to cook teaches valuable life skills while also providing math, reading, science, and health lessons. Have your sons and daughters help read the recipes. Teach them how to read measurements and carefully follow the recipe. Discuss the nutritional benefits that different ingredients provide and what constitutes a healthy meal. But, don't forget to make it fun for them! Once you have them hooked in the kitchen, they'll want to come back for more cooking fun. Letting them think of their own snack and dessert ideas can also be a great bonding experience!

1

Go [beyond basic hot cocoa](#) and whip up a batch of peanut butter hot, peppermint, orange, or pumpkin hot cocoa. Bonus points if you serve this treat in your newly decorated mugs!



2

Sure, we all love nachos, but your kids will go crazy for [the fruit version](#) too!

3

Teach your kids how to mix up a batch of **your family's favorite pancake recipe**, and (if they're old enough, of course) how to flip them on the griddle.

5

Who says hor d'oeuvres are just for parties? Serve up some [party snacks](#) for a mini lunch buffet!

4

Maintain routine by having breakfast together each morning with the help of these four [quick and balanced breakfast ideas](#)!





6

This might be the one time you can get away with [eating pizza for every meal](#)—here's how to make it for breakfast, lunch, and dinner!

7

Use up the old bananas you have in the fridge by freezing them to make some super-easy, no-sugar-added [chocolate banana ice cream](#).

8

If you stocked up on mac 'n cheese...here are [12 ways to jazz it up](#) and make it healthier!

9

Give dinner a tropical twist by making [fish tacos with spicy mango salsa](#) that everyone will love!

10

If you're out of ideas one night, **create a cereal bar** (as recommended by one of our readers!) with "base" cereals to choose from and several toppings like fruit and nuts. Kids will love it, and cleanup is a breeze!





Around the House

If you don't have a craft closet with all the necessary supplies (we're jealous if you do!), there are plenty of low-fi, fun, and old school things your kids can do for fun around the house. And with the abundance of screens and stress of keeping the kids entertained all day, there are a few gems in here you likely enjoyed as a kid but forgot about.



1

If you have the benefit of private backyard (unlike most city folks), **grab a blanket, make a picnic, then lay back and watch the clouds go by.** Bonus points if you can find a dinosaur, car, or other shape!

2

Try this on for size. Let your kids raid their Halloween costume collection or step into your grown-up digs for a dress-up session. Take in the action and revel in some guaranteed Instagram hits—no one can resist cuties playing fireman or rocking Mom's high heels, after all. Even better? Organize a stage show ([DIY microwave popcorn](#) included) or help their role-playing along by getting in on the act yourself!

3

Create a scavenger hunt for the kids with mysterious clue notes, fun items hidden around the house, and, of course, prizes!



4

Ahhh, breathe during a **family yoga session**. The family that stretches together...



5

Kids not into yoga? **Have a spontaneous dance party!**



7

Create a cozy reading nook with pillows, cushions, blankets, and snuggly stuffed animals to get comfy in, then have everyone choose a book, read each one, and discuss them together. This doesn't have to be formal, let it be relaxed and fun.

6

Chores are a necessary evil, so **why not make them fun?!**

8

Play Would You Rather...? Kids love to choose between two bizarre options—and you'll get addicted to this game too. Would you rather investigate scary noises in the attic by yourself or sleep outside in a sleeping bag alone? (The best thing about this game: No props required.) Caution: This should be played under adult supervision.

9

Use a standard deck of cards to keep kids learning, especially if their school is closed. Games like "War" help kids keep math skills fresh—and the competition can get intense!



10

Legos. Need we say more?

11

Have a **family game night** with games like Monopoly, Chutes and Ladders, or Sorry that encourage following directions, using math and money, and more.

12

Make the most of screen time by **downloading some fun, interactive books and games** to smartphones and tablets. Bonus points if kids can play and learn in teams!

13

Get outside in the backyard for a **family camp out**—or star-gazing session—if it's warm enough!



14

If you have the ingredients on hand, **make s'mores in the microwave.** Kids will love seeing the marshmallows expand!

15

Enlist your kids to help **clean out their closets.** We know this one doesn't sound like fun, but it will be if you turn it into a fashion show! Then, when you do venture outside, [donate old clothes to a charity.](#)

17

Build a fort out of chairs, blankets, pillows, and couch cushions for a family movie night—you'll finally have time to catch up on the newest kids' movies and shows!

16

This one's an oldie, but a goodie: **Blow up a balloon** and challenge the kids to keep it in the air for as long as possible.



18

Another oldie but goodie: **Play hide and seek!**



19

Break out the **Twister** mat and watch everyone get the giggles!

20

Let them be bored. Boredom breeds creativity (after a little restlessness!)—so sit back and watch what they come up with. Keep your ideas to yourselves, Mom and Dad.

