

Building and stacking

Rationale:

Stacking blocks, boxes or cushions into a tower – and then knocking them down – is more than a fun way to pass the time. It is a form of creative experimentation. Your child is learning through trial and error how to balance each item to keep the tower upright and thinking about how objects sit in space. Building and stacking also gives your child practice with hand-eye coordination and introduces concepts such as numeracy and comparison. Watching the tower come tumbling down can be fun, and the excitement is good incentive for her to keep trying.

Age range information

3-6 years

What you need

Your child can build and stack with blocks, or with everyday items around the house such as plastic containers, cups, cardboard boxes, small toys such as dominoes or dice, and even pillows or cushions.

How to do it

1. Clear a space large enough for the items you want to stack. It might be on the floor for big blocks or boxes, or at the table for smaller stacks.
2. Encourage your child to see how high she can build. Talk about what is happening – for example, ‘Can you fit another one on?’ or ‘That was a tricky one to balance. Well done’.
3. Describe position and size – for example, ‘You’ve put the big block on top of the small block’.
4. When the tower eventually falls, use it as an opportunity to encourage persistence – for example, ‘Crash! That was fun. Can we make it taller this time?’

More ideas

You could combine water play with stacking outside. Try stacking plastic containers and then pouring water over the top from a watering can or jug. Ask your child what it reminds her of. A waterfall?

Adapting for children of different ages

Large, regular blocks are easiest for your younger child to stack. Soft items like cushions and pillows are also fun and safe for your younger child to stack and knock over.

Your older child might enjoy the challenge of stacking irregular items, like cardboard boxes of different sizes, or building a larger construction like a wall or fort.



Recommended Reads by the National Library Board

Recommended Reads

- [Cubes](#)
- [Take a square](#)
- [Stack the Cats](#)