



SUMMER-FALL-WINTER-SPRING FAMILY PLAY PLANS

Busy families often find it hard to set aside time for play, especially with the distraction of screens and technology.

TRUCE offers some seasonal, screen-free ideas to inspire your whole family — whatever their ages— to play together.



FALL FAMILY PLAY PLAN

Turn off the Screen & Turn on the CARDBOARD BOXES

Cardboard boxes offer endless opportunities for family playtime—both indoors and outside.

Cardboard boxes are simple, everyday items that can provide hours of family play. As families play together, children learn skills such as cooperation, turn-taking, problem-solving, eye-hand coordination, how to carry out a plan, and much more. And, of course, playing together is just plain fun for everyone.



Watch children as they play. This can help you figure out what they are working on and can help you know what to say and do.

You can add to the play by talking about what is happening: “I see that you have crawled into that box.” “That box is taller than you are.” Ask simple questions, such as: “What else can we make out of this box?” “Do you think that there is room inside the box for you and your brothers?”

PLAY VALUE—PRICE VALUE

Playing with cardboard boxes—an inexpensive, open-ended material—can offer a deeper, more creative play experience than many of the expensive, one-purpose toys sold today.



IDEAS FOR FALLTIME FAMILY PLAY WITH CARDBOARD BOXES

IDEAS FOR CARDBOARD BOXES



- Make a **vehicle**—a car, plane, truck, or rocket ship out of a box. Plastic plates can be the wheels and the steering wheel.
- Make a **box city**. Cover smaller boxes like little juice, cereal, jewelry, and shoe boxes with construction paper. Draw the windows, doors, signs, and other things found in a city.
- Provide **small figures of people and animals**, so that a box can become a zoo, a pet store, a dog house, or an apartment building.



- Tie a **rope** to the front of a box and let one child pull the other, as the box becomes a wagon, a sled, or a stagecoach.
- Tie several boxes together to **make a train**.
- Cut head and arm holes in a medium size box, allowing your child to become a **robot**.



WHAT DO THE EXPERTS SAY?

With nothing more than a little imagination, boxes can be transformed into forts or houses, spaceships or submarines, castles or caves. Inside a big cardboard box, a child is transported to a world of his or her own, one where anything is possible.

- National Toy Hall of Fame

MORE IDEAS

- Fill a cardboard box with **sand, pebbles, or dirt** and add small vehicles or figures of people or animals. You could make your own figures with pipe cleaners.
- Make **mailboxes** from cardboard boxes—one for each family member. Then send one another messages and drawings. Deliver the “mail” to one another’s mailboxes.



CARDBOARD BOXES AND “LOOSE PARTS”

Provide a cardboard box (the larger the better) for your children and then add some of these open-ended materials (“loose parts”) for the children to combine with their box play:

- Ropes
- String
- Flashlights
- Pegs
- Masking tape
- Scissors
- Colored markers
- Paint and paint brushes
- Glue
- Smaller boxes
- Play silks, scarves, pieces of material
- Cardboard tubes
- Cushions
- Empty yogurt containers
- Blankets, old sheets
- Carpet samples
- Wall paper sample book
- Utility knife (for adults to cut holes)

BOX PARTY

Invite friends and neighbors to bring a box to your house or yard. Provide some of the materials listed above and then create together.

TRUCE FAMILY PLAY TIP

Develop a family screen turn off ritual. Here are some ideas:

- Count all the screens that are on as you turn them off.
- See if you can turn off all the screens in a minute or less.
- Have a bin or basket where you put all portable screens during family play time.

