

We Skoolhouse



Ready-Made Curriculum: Ball Exploration



A Practical Guide for Exploration

Each unit offers a suggested flow of experiences designed to support deep, meaningful learning through play. You'll notice intentional repetition—this is purposeful. Repeating activities builds memory, mastery, confidence, attention, and focus, forming the foundation for long-term learning.

The experiences are open-ended & process-driven, focusing on how children learn rather than what they produce. This allows for a range of learning styles & encourages exploration at each child's unique pace.

Flexibility Matters

Each unit includes a suggested daily activity guide to support your planning—but it's not meant to be followed rigidly or completed in a set order:

- **Follow the children's lead:** If they're deeply engaged, slow down. If interest fades, it's okay to pause and return later. Some children need time to warm up to new ideas—don't move on too quickly. Repeating an invitation over several days can spark richer engagement.
- **Move at your own pace:** Stretch a week into two, repeat activities as long as needed, and allow units to grow over time.
- **Revisit, don't rush:** There's no need to introduce a new unit each month. Returning to a familiar concept—like revisiting water after exploring texture or paint—deepens understanding and strengthens memory. Revisiting isn't starting over—it's going further.

This guide is about making space for curiosity, experimentation, and meaningful learning. Use it as a springboard—trust yourself, trust the children, and allow learning to unfold naturally.



Unit: Ball Exploration

Balls are one of the most universal and engaging materials for toddlers. They roll, bounce, spin, and invite children to move, chase, and test cause and effect. This unit uses balls of all types to encourage whole-body play, problem-solving, and exploration across space, surfaces, and sensory experiences. Through repetition & variation, toddlers build coordination, language, and early scientific thinking—one roll at a time.

Domain	How Ball Exploration Supports Development
Physical	Advances gross motor skills (kicking, throwing, squatting, chasing) and eye-hand coordination. Fine motor engagement grows through picking up small balls or placing balls into containers.
Cognitive	Supports early logic and problem-solving through experimenting with ball movement on ramps, down tubes, or across surfaces. Reinforces concepts like fast/slow, stop/go, near/far.
Language	Enhances descriptive and action vocabulary during active play ("roll it down," "catch the big one"). Participating in structured games supports comprehension of simple instructions and early dialogue skills.
Social-Emotional	Builds confidence, turn-taking, and emotional regulation. Group ball activities promote early peer interactions, shared enjoyment, and managing the frustration or excitement that arises during cooperative play.

Unit: Ball Exploration

Focus Materials: Various balls, ramps, baskets, paint, water

Books: A Ball for Daisy by Chris Raschka, and Ball by Mary Sullivan

Songs: "Take Me Out to the Ball Game!" and "Pop! Goes the Weasel" (use with bouncing balls)

Vocabulary: Ball, rolling, bouncing, throwing, catching, spinning, soft, hard, heavy, light, fast, slow, smooth, textured, rubber, foam, kick, drop, squish, aim

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Week 1	Sensory Ball Basket	Ball Basket Toss	Sensory Ball Basket	Ball Basket Toss	Roll to a Friend
Week 2	Roll to a Friend	Ball Basket Toss	Ball rolling on Ramps	Ball Rolling on Ramps	Ball Rolling on Ramps & Paint
Week 3	Ball Rolling on Ramps & Paint	Sensory Ball Basket	Balls in Water Table	Balls in Water Table	Ball Basket Toss
Week 4	Roll to a Friend	Sensory Ball Basket	Ball rolling on Ramps	Ball Rolling on Ramps & Paint	Balls in Water Table

Unit: Ball Exploration

Suggested Activities

- **Sensory Ball Basket:** Provide a basket filled with soft, textured, and light-up balls of various sizes. Toddlers can squeeze, roll, and explore the different surfaces using their hands and bodies.
- **Ball Basket Toss:** Set out baskets or bins and offer lightweight, toddler-safe balls for tossing. Toddlers experiment with throwing, aiming, and adjusting distance.
- **Roll (or Kick) to a Friend:** Sit with toddlers and roll or gently kick a soft ball back and forth. This encourages shared attention, turn-taking, communication, & gross motor control.
- **Ball Rolling on Ramps:** Set up wide ramps using cardboard, wooden planks, or foam wedges. Toddlers roll larger balls down and observe how they speed up, slow down, or change direction. A hands-on way to explore gravity and cause and effect through movement.
- **Ball Rolling on Ramps and Paint:** Set up wide ramps lined with paper and offer washable paint and balls to roll. Toddlers dip balls into paint or roll them through puddles at the top of the ramp, exploring motion and cause-and-effect through a full-body experience.
- **Balls in Water Table:** Add lightweight, floatable balls to the water table with scoops, cups, or colanders. Toddlers chase, pour over, and scoop the moving balls—engaging their senses while exploring water flow, floating, and movement.



Unit: Ball Exploration

Alternatives and Extensions:

Explore these simple variations to extend play, supporting repetition, variety, and deeper sensory learning:

- **Bringing Balls Outside:** Take various balls outdoors where toddlers can roll them down hills, across grass, or along cement. Outdoor space allows for full-body movement, exploring new surfaces, & engaging with the environment.
- **Catch and Drop with Laundry Baskets:** Provide laundry baskets and soft balls. Toddlers hold, drag, or set the baskets down and practice catching balls inside or dropping them from above.
- **Water Beads Sensory Table:** Fill a shallow bin with water beads and add small, round scoops or balls. Toddlers enjoy the slippery texture while exploring scooping and pouring.
- **Sticky Wall Target Toss:** Place contact paper sticky-side-out on a wall & offer soft Velcro balls or pom balls, building hand-eye coordination and concepts of force & direction.
- **Tunnel Drop and Roll:** Attach wide cardboard tubes or ramps to the opening of a tunnel or long box. Toddlers drop balls in and crawl through to find where they ended up—combining problem-solving with full-body play.
- **Ball Pit:** Fill a small inflatable pool or padded bin with soft, lightweight balls. Toddlers can sit, scoop, roll, and bury their hands or feet—engaging in full-body sensory play that supports proprioception and body awareness.

