

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 a fantastic medium for infants to explore their developing coordination and physical movement. The way balls roll, bounce, and feel when held helps babies begin to understand motion, gravity, and how objects can move in space. Balls also encourage cause-and-effect learning as babies interact with them by rolling, tossing, and watching them move.

Domain	How Ball Exploration Supports Development
Physical	Encourages gross motor development through reaching, kicking, and crawling after rolling balls. Builds visual-motor coordination as infants track and anticipate movement.
Cognitive	Reinforces cause-and-effect understanding (ball rolls when pushed), object permanence, and emerging problem-solving (retrieving a ball that's out of reach). Supports spatial awareness development.
Language	Provides opportunities for language pairing with action ("roll," "bounce," "go!"). Repetitive labeling by caregivers strengthens receptive language processing and joint attention.
Social-Emotional	Ball games (like gentle roll-and-return) promote shared attention, turn-taking, and emotional attunement with caregivers, fostering the foundation for trust and secure attachment.

Unit: Ball Exploration

Focus Materials: Soft balls, textured balls, lightweight balls, rolling tubes

Books: Ball by Mary Sullivan, Have a Ball by Nancy Carlson

Songs: "Bouncing Up and Down in My Little Red Wagon."

Vocabulary: Ball, roll, bounce, soft, round, toss, catch, drop, grip, squeeze, spin, push, shake, big, small

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Week 1	Holding & feeling soft balls	Exploring textured balls	Holding & feeling soft balls	Water Play with Floating Balls	Rolling balls through tubes
Week 2	Dropping balls into containers	Exploring textured balls	Water Play with Floating Balls	Holding & feeling soft balls	Rolling balls through tubes
Week 3	Exploring textured balls	Holding & feeling soft balls	Rolling balls through tubes	Water Play with Floating Balls	Dropping balls into containers
Week 4	Rolling balls through tubes	Water Play with Floating Balls	Holding & feeling soft balls	Exploring textured balls	Dropping balls into containers

Unit: Ball Exploration

Suggested Activities

- **Holding and feeling soft balls:** Babies grasp and squeeze soft balls, building fine motor strength while exploring texture and shape.
- **Exploring textured balls:** Babies touch and mouth bumpy or spiky balls, stimulating the sense of touch and supporting sensory awareness.
- **Water play with floating balls:** Place lightweight balls in shallow water for babies to bat or scoop, blending tactile, visual, & motor play.
- **Rolling balls through tubes:** Babies watch or push balls through short tubes or ramps, building spatial awareness and curiosity.
- **Dropping balls into containers:** Babies drop balls into bowls or boxes, developing hand-eye coordination and cause-and-effect thinking.

Alternatives and Extensions:

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

- **Gentle bouncing with a yoga ball:** Place baby seated (with support) on a large yoga ball and gently bounce or rock, or sit on the ball with baby on your lap. This movement nurtures vestibular development and creates a calming, bonding experience.
- **Ball pit exploration:** Place babies in a shallow ball pit filled with soft, lightweight balls to promote whole-body movement, sensory input, and spatial awareness.
- **Mirror and ball play:** Let babies see their reflection while playing with a ball in front of a mirror, promoting body awareness and early social-emotional exploration.

