

# 5 Summer Games to Boost Your Child's Memory

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e've all heard about it: the dreaded "summer slide". School's out for a few months, but as a parent, none of us want our kids to sit around all day losing the gains they made over the school year. So what can we do to keep young minds sharp while school is out of session? This is where memory games come in handy.



Memory games for kids help little ones boost their brain activity, and sharpen cognitive skills to keep their minds focused and sharp. You might be wondering which games to get, and what you'll have to buy, but don't go shopping yet! Luckily, it's easy to make DIY memory games for preschoolers using everyday items and objects you probably have laying around the house! Here's 5 ideas to get started:

## Nature Memory Game

Here's an incredible way to combine a memory game and a nature hunt! After collecting items outside, make a fun memory game out of what you find! Have your child guess

where the matching items are, and take turns playing the game until all the pieces have been matched!

### What You'll Need:

- A collection of matching items found outside. This can include 2 flowers, blades of grass, leaves, stones, mulch, or anything you find outdoors that's safe to pick up and use.
- Plastic cups to collect the items and to disguise the items for the game.

### How to Play:

Explain the memory game to your child and tell her that she will need to find matching items to put in the memory game cups. Go outside looking for the items she'd like to collect, and don't forget to take two of whatever she finds!

Once she finds all the items for the game, head towards an open space. Hide the items underneath the cups, mixing them up as you arrange them on the ground.

## Paper Plate Memory Game

Using paper plates and markers or crayons, you and your child will make your own memory game!

### What You'll Need:

- A package of paper plates
- Markers, crayons, or paint.

### How to Play:

Don't forget to make a match for each image on a plate! Finally, lay out the paper plates face down (mixing them up as you go) on a large open space to make a giant game board.

Play the memory game trying to uncover matching plates. The person with the most matches at the end of the game wins! Best yet, your child will have a blast creating her own artwork to use in the game! This is the ultimate [DIY game for friends and families](#) on a budget!

## Sidewalk Simon

If you were a child in the 80's or 90's you probably remember the beloved memory game Simon. While you can still buy the game commercially at any toy store, why not get outdoors and get moving for this fun take on the popular game?

## What You'll Need:

- A driveway or sidewalk
- Sidewalk chalk in red, blue, green, and yellow.

## How to Play:

Draw a Simon game circle on the ground large enough to accommodate a jumping child to step on each color. You will call out a color and your child will jump to the color as fast as he can.

Create a sequence that your child will need to remember. Your child will have to memorize and recall each color called, and jump on the colors in that same order.

## The “What’s Missing” Game

Here’s a game perfect for toddlers. Using a toy or puzzle your child plays with frequently, plan to remove a few pieces and task your child to figure out what’s missing! When your child has solved the game, praise him and try again, removing and adding different pieces to make the game more challenging!

## What You'll Need:

- Any toy that has accessories and parts your child is familiar with. Mr. Potato Head works great for this! Also try wooden puzzle sets with a few pieces missing.

## How to Play:

Simply arrange the toy in an open space comfortable for you and your child. Lay out all the pieces or accessories in front of your child. Ask your child to view the toy and observe all the pieces and parts.

Then ask your child “what’s missing?!” While your child observes the toy and thinks about the missing pieces, he’ll be using problem solving skills to recall what parts he knows exists, but aren’t in front of him.

## DIY Uno

Are you out of [fun ideas on a rainy summer day](#)? Here’s a quick and easy way to reinforce learning numbers, while waiting out the rain inside the house.

## What You'll Need:

- Cards with large numbers, such as from Uno, Skip-Bo, or Phase 10.

## How to play:

Go through the deck and find matching numbers and colors. Choose the cards for the memory game (as usual, it's your preference to choose how many sets you think your child can solve), and shuffle them, laying them out face down. Take turns flipping the cards over to find the matching cards.

During gameplay, be sure to read out the numbers on the cards to reinforce number recognition as your child plays.

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Learning in the summer doesn't have to feel like school. Thankfully we can keep their minds sharp with learning games for kids. Memory games, like the activities above, are great for boosting brain function, and honing cognitive skills to keep their minds ripe and ready for endless learning, even during the summer months!

