

5 Pretend Play Ideas Your Preschooler Hasn't Tried Out

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Pretend play is so important for our little ones. Kids' pretend play activities serve to activate imagination, and spark their curiosity for learning more about the world through their play.

Kids will create games on their own, but why not set up fun scenarios for your child to play out to pique their interests? Using simple props from around the house, it's possible to set up a dramatic play "set" that can serve as the stage for their early learning!



1. Construction Crew with Edible Sand

Put those play trucks and bulldozers to work with this fantastically fun pretend play idea! First, make the sand. Don't use boring store-bought sand, when you could create your own entirely edible sand that your kids will love to play with—and eat!

Sand recipes are easy to find online using brown sugar and cracker crumbs, so your kids can lick their fingers and eat their creations as they play. Break out the play dump trucks and bulldozers, and create a fun game out of moving and building objects, buildings, streets, and more with sand!

2. Pizza Play Shop

This fun game can be made with simple everyday items. The next time you order pizza, save the box! Using this and other items, you can create a pizzeria in your own house! Help your child to make a pretend pizza out of cardboard, construction paper, and felt, and set up shop in your own kitchen or living room. [Why cooking with kids?](#)

Your child can make the pretend pizza and deliver it to all the family members in the house! Using a pretend or inactivated phone, let your little pizza deliverer take orders for new pizzas to make. Make sure he or she delivers them while they're still hot!

3. Pet Vet Clinic

It's best to leave the family pet out of this one, but your child surely has plenty of stuffed animals that are in dire need of medical care! Find a room or area in your house to transform into a veterinary clinic, making sure to use an end table for an examination space.

Using play doctor tools, like a stethoscope or pretend doctor kit, help your child's vet clinic come to life. Be sure to have your child check each animal, heartbeat, eyes, ears, and tummy. Does the pet have a diagnosis or need medicine? Ask the "doctor" to find out!

4. Indoor Camping

Go camping inside the house with this fun pretend play activity! If you have a tent, set it up in the basement, or make one out of blankets and chairs. Find the perfect spot in your house to set up camp, and gather household items to set up camp. Build a pretend campfire out of paper towel rolls, placing a self-lighting candle in the middle.

Tell scary stories by the fire, sing their favorite songs together, and pretend to roast marshmallows over the fire. Get out the sleeping bags and sleep on the floor for the night, and your child enjoy spending an enchanting night camping with you without ever leaving the house!

5. Kiddish Carwash

Here's a fun idea that can be set up quickly, and is also great for younger kids! Using dining room chairs, line up at least four chairs in a row, so that kids would easily be able to crawl underneath. Using duct tape, take long socks, streamers, tissue paper, or

articles of clothing, and hang them from the bottom of chairs so they dangle down to the ground.

Have your child pretend to be a car that is going through a car wash! They'll love crawling underneath the chairs and "getting washed" as they crawl through their pretend car wash. Make it a play date, and kids can pretend to shine and dry the "cars" as they come out of the car wash, squeaky clean. Kids will get a kick out of their kiddie carwash and want to do it again, and again!

...don't stop there!

If your kids need something new to play, the above ideas will spark their curiosity, motivating them to explore different topics. Don't stop there—be sure to ask them for ideas for future pretend play topics to keep them excited and learning.

When your little one (or you) needs a break from all the pretend fun, don't forget about the multitude of free resources available online, like preschool printable worksheets. Variety is the key to learning, and armed with [fun family engagement ideas](#) and endless resources available to you, your child will never stop learning and growing!

