**Activities for developing gross motor skills**

**Indoor gross motor activities**

Muscle-moving play doesn't have to take up a lot of space. Given just a little floor space, your child can still enjoy skill-building activities inside. Try:

* Dancing: either freestyle, following a routine (for older children) or through songs with movements, such as "Head, shoulders, knees, and toes," "I'm a little teapot," "The wheels on the bus," or "Popcorn," provides lots of motion.
* Use their imagination: children can use their bodies to become waddling ducks, stiff-legged robots, galloping horses, soaring planes or anything else they can think of.
* Pulling or pushing wagons, large trucks, prams with dolls in, or shopping trolleys, can be a motor-developing part of play.
* Building and navigating obstacle courses with furniture, pillows, boxes, and blankets will develop large motor skills.
* Large-scale [arts and crafts activities](https://www.verywellfamily.com/large-motor-skills-activities-inspired-by-art-1257387) stimulate both large motor skills and creativity. Your child could make a mural, create something through junk-modelling or do a painting on a large scale using the back of an unwanted role of wallpaper.
* Jumping on a mini trampoline or hopping from place to place on the floor (set up targets with masking tape or cardboard) can be a fun activity.

Outdoor Gross Motor Activities

If you are able to get outside, your children will be able to really challenge their muscles. They will enjoy:

* Walking around the neighbourhood or park. For variety, add in marching, jogging, skipping, hopping or even musical instruments to form a parade. As you walk, tell stories, look for colours, count or play games.
* Create obstacle courses with rocks, logs, or playground equipment.
* Balancing on a low beam or plank at the playground or a [homemade balance beam](https://www.verywellfamily.com/homemade-fitness-equipment-and-toys-1257170).
* Riding tricycles, scooters, and bikes.
* Throwing, catching, kicking and rolling large, lightweight, soft balls.
* Swinging, sliding, and climbing at a playground (if you are able to do so).

Gross Motor Skills Games

Some of these work best outside, but others work equally well indoors or out. Motivate major movement with games such as:

* Hit the target: Use hula-hoops or chalk to designate targets on the ground, and then have children aim and throw bean-bags or balls.
* Paper plate skates: Use paper plates to glide along on a carpet. Try to imitate speed skaters, hockey players or figure skaters.
* Jump the stream: Lay out two skipping ropes, or draw two chalk lines to represent the stream, and have children try to jump over it. Try making it wider in some spots and narrower in others for a few levels of challenge.
* Football: Instead of playing a real game, just let children enjoy kicking the ball and aiming it toward a goal or a large cardboard box or laundry basket turned on its side. You can try an [easy indoor version](https://www.verywellfamily.com/play-an-indoor-soccer-party-game-1256802) that uses crumpled paper instead of balls.
* Tag or other classic games such as Follow the leader, Mother may I, or Simon says.

Fine Motor Skills for Pre-schoolers

Children in this age range are also working on their [fine motor skills](https://www.verywellfamily.com/what-are-fine-motor-skills-2162037). Although these develop a bit later, they are crucial for important tasks like holding a pencil, cutting with scissors, using silverware to eat and other skills such as getting dressed. The following activities, and others like them, help children strengthen and learn to use the small muscles in their fingers and hands.

* Sand play: Pouring, scooping, sifting and building.
* Putting on puppet shows.
* Drawing on the pavement with chalk or any art project, like finger painting or playing with clay.
* Finger-plays: Songs such as "The itsy bitsy spider" that have accompanying hand movements.
* Cooking: Includes pouring, shaking, sprinkling, kneading, tearing, stirring and cutting with a butter knife.
* Lacing cards or stringing beads.
* Colouring and tracing with crayons, pencils or markers.
* Cutting with safety scissors.
* Manipulative toys such as blocks, puzzles, or dolls with clothes to take on and off.