

The power of natural materials should always be put first in order to contribute to the didactic approach for complete child development. By being natural and challenging, these games do not burden the child, but rather create an environment that is healthy, safe, and developmentally appropriate. For this to be realized according to our goals, the most appropriate are Traditional toys and games.



There are many games that keep children's attention, develop creativity and imagination. The games can be played at home with parents as well as in kindergarten. We develop a love for nature. Through didactic games, children connect with the natural world and learn to respect and protect it.

Let's bring nature closer to children - they will bring the future closer to all of us.

Participating in the project:

Detska Gradinka Pehcevo, North Macedonia

Dječji vrtić Vukovar, Croatia

Vrtec »Otona Župančiča« Slovenska Bistrica, Slovenija

How to choose quality didactic games and toys?

Didactic games and toys are essential for the development of preschool children, as they encourage learning through play.

1. **Safety** – The toy should not have sharp edges or small parts that a child could swallow. Materials should be non-toxic and safe for contact with the mouth.
2. **Materials** – Natural and sustainable materials (wood, cotton, wool) that are friendly to the environment are preferred.
3. **Age appropriateness** – The toy should match the developmental capabilities of children (size, weight, functionality). Simple shapes, bright colors and different textures encourage sensory development. The toy should allow for different ways of use according to the child's level of development.
4. **Promoting development** – The toy should support motor skills (grabbing, assembling, pushing). Encourage imaginative play and creativity.
5. **Durability** – The toy should be durable and resistant to frequent use. Easy cleaning and maintenance are key.
6. **Ecological aspect** – selection of environmentally friendly materials and production processes. Minimal use of packaging, preferably recycled or biodegradable.
7. **Aesthetics and attractiveness** – The toy should be visually attractive, with pleasant colors and shapes. The design should be simple and understandable to the child. If the toy meets these criteria, it will be safe, useful and stimulating for children's development.



Didactic games and toys for preschool children



A guide for parents:

- How to choose a quality didactic game or toy?*
- How to teach children to relate with didactic toys and games?*
- How to spend quality time together?*



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It is important to teach the child the attitude towards the toy. It does not matter if child has broken toys and thrown in a corner. Let's teach him to take care of them. Just as he will learn to be conscientious about toy he will know handle with other things. Most kids these days have too many toys and they can't decide what to do with them. We recommend saving half games for later, when child gets bored. This also means your active approach. Try to give your child less toys and more play. Even though you are tired at least talk to him or sit next to him while he plays.

What about if you make a game at home together with your child

This is very good idea for how to make quality use of time at home. Which game you would like to make decide together with child. How to start: first make a game plan and prepare instructions. Decide a materials. Divide the work. Child should be as active as possible in planning and making the game because of this he will have more motivation with playing.

How to spend quality time together?

Toys are your child's words, and play is your child's language. Playing together helps you build a positive relationship and a sense of deeper connection. We suggest 30 minutes of playing together. If you don't have that much time, that's okay. What's important is how you spend your playtime together, not how long it lasts. Turn off cell phone and TV during your "special" time. Don't let anything distract you while you play together. Relax and have fun. And finally, remember that you are doing something very valuable for you and your child. You don't have to use expensive toys or games, you could use materials all around you.

Playing with unshaped materials stimulates a child's imagination, develops new skills and abilities, encourages creativity. By working in this way – using these materials – we recycle and teach children that something old or unnecessary can be made into new games and toys that will arouse in children the desire to try to combine as many objects as possible and make something completely new and different.



Teach children to relate with didactic toys and games - helping them understand how to interact with these tools in a way that supports their development cognitively, emotionally, socially and physically. Here are practical ways to teach children to relate with didactic toys and games:

1. Introduce the Purpose Through Play

What to do:

Start by playing with the toy or game yourself while talking aloud about what you're doing. Children learn by watching.

Example:

With counting stones: "Look, I'm putting one, two, three stones in this bowl. Can you help me find the next one?"

Why it works:

Children begin to see the function of the toy — not just as an object, but as a learning tool.

2. Praise the game, not the result.

What to do:

Focus on their effort, not only if they get something "right."

Example:

"I love how carefully you sorted the stones!"

"You tried really hard to make the bridge stand!"

Why it works:

Encouragement boosts motivation and helps children stay engaged.

4. Model Social Interaction and Sharing

What to do:

Play together and take turns. Model positive behaviors like patience, teamwork, and encouragement.

Example:

"Your turn to build the tower. I'll go next."

Why it works:

Children learn to cooperate and use toys as tools for connection, not just solo play.

