

Alphabet Activities

The following activities are suggested to help your child learn the letters of the alphabet as well as the sounds which go with the letters. Learning to identify, write and recognize the sounds associated with the letters takes time and effort. We believe if you keep it fun and vary the activities, your child will cooperate and want to do these activities. The activities are designed to use various sense modalities (sight, sound, touch) and muscles (small and large) so learning the letters and remembering them becomes easier. If you spend a **few minutes** each day doing one or more of these activities, your child will learn to recognize and identify the letters, write them from memory and know the sounds that go with the letters.

Start with one letter at a time. Always do the upper and lower case letters (known as “letter partners”) together. Once the child really knows that letter, introduce another letter. Remember to always review the previous letters to make sure he/she still has it. **Review is essential** but it should be brief to let you know whether you can go ahead with a new letter or if you need to review previous letters again.

1. Make letters (upper and lower case) out of clay, play doh, silly putty, etc.
2. Using the whole arm, have child write or make the letter in the sky (sky writing). Have a visual model of the letter(s) present so that child does it correctly. The child can do it with his finger or hold a wand or piece of wood in his hand while doing this.
3. Using a chalkboard or easel, child writes letters with chalk or marker. This allows child to make the letters bigger and he/she can see the letters made with use of small and large muscles. With a well squeezed wet sponge, child can go over the letter (retrace) to wipe it.
4. Using a large flat baking sheet, pour enough sugar in so child can use his/her finger to make letters in the sugar. Do not throw the sugar away – keep for another day.
5. Cut out letters from newspaper headlines, magazines, posters, etc. The larger the better.
6. Make cookies in the shape of the letters.
7. On lined paper make the letters using yellow (any light color) highlighter. Then have child trace over it with pencil.
8. Using a “connect the dots” approach, make dots in shape of the letters which child connects to form the letter. After a few letters make spaces between the dots longer. Eventually, no dots are present and child is writing the letter using the visual model on the line above.
9. Get magnetic alphabet (upper and lower case letters) and keep on refrigerator. Periodically ask child to find upper case A, lower case g, first letter in the word ‘boy’, etc.

10. Use shaving cream, Funny color Foam (from Toys-R-Us), etc. and have child make letters in the foam.
11. Use fingerpaints to make letters with fingers or brushes. If possible, use a color that begins with the letter, ie- Bb...use blue or brown, Gg...use green or gray, etc.
12. Play matching games whereby child matches the letter above with 3 or 4 choices below.
13. Choose a letter and have child find and circle as many letters as he can in a paragraph or article in a newspaper or magazine.
14. In the car, play a game where the child has to find various things, i.e, find a red car, find an upper case S, find a gas station, find a STOP sign, etc.
15. Also in the car, choose a letter of the alphabet and take turns naming things that begin with that sound. M.....monkey, M....mommy, M....milk, etc.
16. Buy Jello jigglers which are the shapes of the letters, have child find a B and eat it or tell you the name of the letter or the sound before he/she can eat it.
17. For breakfast, make pancakes in the shape of the letter(s) or cut the bread (toast) in the shape of the letter.
18. In car, on line at checkout counter or anywhere, play "I Spy". I spy a word that begins with "m" (make sound). You begin and then let child have turn. Keep taking turns, Change letter frequently so that it is easy for child to find things that start with the sound you want.
19. Make a set of cards – half with pictures and half with the corresponding letter that starts the picture. For example a picture of a piano on one card and upper and lower case P on another card. Play "memory" game. Lay all cards face down. The first player turns over 2 cards. If they match (piano and Pp), player keeps the cards and goes again. If there is no match, the cards get put back face down and next player turns over 2 cards. The player with the most paired cards wins the game. Start with 3 or 4 pairs and increase as you feel child can do it fairly well.
20. Play "Go Fish" with same set of cards.

Remember that this is supposed to be **fun** and pleasurable to your child. Keep it short and keep it fun. If the child is resistant, perhaps take a break and come back to it later or the next day when he/she is more receptive. It cannot be stressed enough that your child should find these activities as **successful** experiences and not a test that produces anxiety. As always, share a good book together in your favorite chair.