

## Activities and games to encourage and develop listening skills

- **'Go!' games**

The idea of these games is to encourage children to wait until they hear "Go!" before they do a named activity. For example, rolling a ball, pushing a car, kicking a ball, knocking down a tower, jumping off a step, ball and skittles.

- **Board games**

Board games are a lovely way to interact, develop language and encourage turn taking skills. Play a board game or do an activity. Each of you takes a turn to say, "ready steady go" before taking turns to do it.

- **Same and different sounds**

Listen out for different sounds produce by different sound making objects such as wooden spoons or plastic cups. Use one group at a time. Bang the same group of objects together and listen to the different sounds each group produce. Cover each group of sound makers with a cloth and ask the child to show you what you used.

- **Posting games**

Lay out pictures with different objects on them. Ask children to pick and post 2 and slowly build up to more pictures to you in a post box. (Cover a shoe box with colourful paper and cut out posting slot to make a fun post box.)

- **Musical Bumps**

Play music and children need to sit down or keep very still when the music stops.

- **Shopping List**

Say 'I went to the shops and I bought.....' You could start with working through the alphabet or think of any shopping items. Each takes turns and add one more item to the end of the lists and you will be listing a series of objects. Try and remember what the last person said to build on the spoken sentence. See how many you can remember between you. For example:

Start with something beginning with A (e.g. apple) Then continue by saying the previous item (apple) and then something beginning with B (e.g. banana).

Or

Player 1 -"I went to the shops and I bought a banana" Player 2 – "I went to the shops and I bought a banana and an ice cream."

- **Simon Says**

The adult gives an instruction and the child must only carry it out if the adult says Simon says before the instruction, e.g. "Simon says touch your nose". Take it in turns to give the instructions.

- **Name story**

Make up or change a story with your child's name in it. Read it once and explain to them, they need to put their hands up or stand up every time they hear their names.

- **Talk about a Picture or Photo**

What can you see? What colours can you see? Can you spot any shapes? Where is the picture? Do you like the picture? What is happening in the picture? Can you tell a story about the picture? What could happen next? There are example pictures below but these questions could be asked about any scene either in a picture, photo or real life.



This is also a lovely opportunity to get out old family photos or go through saved digital photos and discuss each one. Who was there? Where was it taken? What was the weather or season? What can you remember about that day? Using these photos can you make a simple family tree?

- **Pairs Game**

A large variation of the pair matching game. Take several paper plates and markers and write some letters, draw shapes, animals or other items. Turn them upside down and then start trying to find and match the pairs.

- **“What’s Missing?”**

Place a number of household items onto a tray. The more items, the more challenging the game so for younger children start with just 3-4 items and increase from there. Ask your child to have a close look at the items on the tray. Name them together (the more you discuss the items the more likely your child is to remember them). Ask your child to describe the shape and colour of each item too to help aid their memory. Cover the items with a tea towel. Ask your child to close their eyes and as they do you will remove one item from under the cloth. Ask them to open their eyes, remove the cloth and tell you what’s missing.

- **The Magic Cup Game**

Place three identical, plastic cups in a line on the table, rim down. Place a pom-pom or small ball under one cup, allowing your child to see which cup the small ball is under. Shuffle the cups around by sliding them across the table, switching their positions quickly back and forth and all around. Once you have stopped moving the cups ask your child to identify which cup the ball is now under.

- **DIY telephone**

A simple, homemade string telephone will engage children for hours. All they need to do is paint or colour two plastic cups, poke a hole in each of them and thread string through the

bottom. Pull the string tight between the cups. You can experiment with various speaking activities.

- **Dance Freeze**

Dance when the music is on and freeze when it stops. It's a great game for developing attention and listening skills.

- **10 different ways to play "I spy with my little eye..."**

- Colours - "I spy with my little eye something blue."
- Shapes - "I spy with my little eye something square."
- Numbers - "I spy with my little eye three of something." This would work best if you are in a room where your child can walk around and easily count objects.
- Letters - "I spy with my little eye the letter B." You could spy letters on road signs while you are driving or letters on a page while you are reading."
- Words - "I spy with my little eye the word go." You could spy words on road signs while you are driving or words on a page while you are reading."
- Spelling - "I spy with my little eye something that begins with the letter C." You could just give the first letter, spell out a whole word, or maybe even letter patterns inside the word like "ee."
- Phonics - "I spy with my little eye something that begins with the sound /s/." This is the same as using letters but instead you just use the letter sound.
- Rhymes - "I spy with my little eye something that rhymes with bee."
- Adjectives - "I spy with my little eye something smooth." This is another game that would be best played in a room where kids could feel the different textures.
- Measurement - "I spy with my little eye something that is small." Vary with different sized objects.

- **Singing Nursery Rhymes and Songs**

Singing is an excellent way to develop vocabulary, listening & attention skills.

**Please see some examples below:**

- <https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/curations/nursery-rhymes>
- <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/school-radio/nursery-rhymes-a-to-z-index/z4ddgwx>
- <https://allnurseryrhymes.com/>