

**Don't disappoint your little one this Christmas morning!  
Make sure Santa has the right toys in his sack.**

## **The Best Toddler Toys - for Christmas 2006 ... and where to find them.**

25<sup>th</sup> November 2006

Hello and welcome,

Many of our readers have asked us, "***Which are the best toys this Christmas?***" so we have put together this free report to share with you. Here you'll find our selection of the best toys for your toddler this year.

If you have not already done so, do please sign up for our free Toddler Newsletter. That way you will be able to keep up to date with all our latest play ideas, toy reviews, safety tips and more.... throughout the New Year.

[Click here to get your free newsletter](#) .

Searching through the thousands of toys in the online toy stores can be a really disheartening and fruitless task. Choosing from our short list of the best toddler toys will ensure your toddler receives toys that are appropriate for their age and that are sure to provide them with real benefit throughout the next year - the Best Toddler Toys.

It should also give Mom a few more minutes for all those other pre Christmas preparations too!

So what makes a "Best Toddler Toy"? In our view, the top toys for a toddler must have the following qualities:

- Encourage play. Toys are all about play. The top toys attract and invite toddlers to play with them.
- Enduring playability. The best toys for a toddler should be capable of being played with in a variety of ways. For example, Lego bricks are not just for building – you can count with them, identify colors and even pretend they are food
- Educational. The best toddler toys encourage play that aids in a toddler's development. Toys which help toddlers learn and practice their developing abilities.
- Safe. Our first responsibility is to safeguard our children.
- Age appropriate. Too young for them and our toddlers will quickly become bored. Too old for them and they will be frustrated and the toy may well be dangerous.
- Quality design and materials. The best toddler toys last and represent great value

## All sorts of toys

We've broken down our list of toys into various categories:

- Toddler Educational Toys – toys that help two and three year olds develop
- Pretend Toys - the ability to pretend is a new and essential skill for toddlers to learn
- Toddler Play Equipment – indoor toys that allow active play no matter what the weather.
- Preschool Educational Toys – aimed at helping three to four year olds practice their ABC and counting skills
- Toddler Riding Toys – just as soon as they can walk they want to ride.
- Affordable Playground Equipment - make your backyard a playground



**Let me ask you a question...**

**(Before you ask me.)**

Which is the **very, very best** toy for a toddler?

- Is it a teddy bear or some other plush toy?
- Maybe building bricks?
- The Intergalactic Megablaster with additional sound? (I don't think so!)
- A Thomas the Train set? You know I love Thomas.
- A dolls house?
- A Bob the Builder costume?
- A bright red tricycle?
- A see-saw?

What would you say it was? (Clue: You have seen it many times).

In the tradition of Christmas quizzes I was going to leave the answer until right at the end of this report - but that's probably unfair. **So.....**

## The very best Toddler Toy is ...

# YOU!

You really are your toddler's very best toy.

No toy can come anywhere close to giving your child the play experiences and learning opportunities that you provide to your young child.

- ◆ You are their “ever willing” playmate and teacher.
- ◆ You suggest all sorts of new things for them to try and to do.
- ◆ You tell great stories and can speak in funny voices.
- ◆ You make all their other toys “come alive”
- ◆ You understand how your kids feel and what is fun for them.
- ◆ You encourage them when things are hard to understand or master.
- ◆ You make them laugh as well as drying their tears.
- ◆ You watch over them whilst they play and make sure they are safe.
- ◆ You provide first aid and refreshments!.
- ◆ You are the best...

And I'm sure you can add a whole lot more to this list. Oh, OK– your batteries never run down. (..well almost never).

So now you know that you are a toy too - and the serious responsibilities that places upon you. In a small way, we hope to help.

Not just by keeping you informed about toys in our reviews - but you'll also find lots of play ideas and tips at [Toddler Educational Toys](#) and in our [Free Newsletter](#) too.

We've recently discovered an excellent source of Toddler Play Ideas. We really like this ebook of activities and play ideas for youngsters which has been written by parents of toddlers.

[Click here to see these Toddler Play Ideas](#)

One of the great things is that you can see a sample of the ideas on their site.

We love the fact that you can download their pack of over 100 ideas immediately. Try explaining to your toddler that you've just found some great things to play – but they have to wait two weeks for the book to arrive!

We think [Toddler Play Ideas](#) would make a great gift for parents or grandparents (a basic survival pack when they are babysitting).

## A note about buying toys

Against each toy in our selection, we have suggested two or three online toy stores where you can buy these toys. Do please check these out by clicking the stores' logo.

You will find more information on the toys at these websites. You can also check out availability (many are best selling toys and will sell out before Christmas!) and compare prices.

Don't forget to factor in shipping costs when comparing prices. Some of these stores have special deals on Holiday Season shipping. If buying more than one toy, it can be better if you stick with just one store and so get the best overall deal on shipping.

We hope you find our selection useful. Enjoy the toys...

## Toddler Educational Toys

Toddler Educational Toys are designed to help youngsters learn and develop their skills.

In this section we've kept our selection to toys aimed at helping toddlers learn basic skills – shape recognition, colors, comparative size etc.

Toys which help with “Academic” skills are covered in our section – Preschool Educational Toys.

Here's our pick of Toddler Educational Toys:

### Hands Counting 12-piece Peg Puzzle - by Melissa & Doug



Peg puzzles like this one from Melissa & Doug are wonderful toys for children aged between 2-3 Years. Playing with this toy helps them learn basic numbers as well as practicing shape recognition and dexterity.

You can find this toy at the following stores. (Click logo to see)



### My First Railway Set - by Brio

Can a train set be an educational toy? We think so. Pieces to put together, carriages to count, colors to identify and all those pretend play opportunities too! Did anyone say “Thomas”?

This is a traditional favorite with two year olds.



You can see more about this toy at the following stores. (Click logo to see)



## Mega Bloks Fire Truck - by Mega Bloks



Toddlers just love this toy!

Your youngster can pretend he's a firefighter as well as play with the brightly colored plastic blocks.

How high can you build before there's a disaster? Counting, colors and fine motor skill practice are all provided for when playing with this fire truck.

The following stores offer this toy. (Click logo to see)



## Pretend Toys

Learning to pretend is a new-found ability for your toddler and one we want to encourage. Discovering how to imagine being in someone else's shoes is such an important skill.

The following toys are all designed to help your child pretend:

### My First Craftsman Workbench - by Little Tikes



Helping Mom and Dad with those home improvements is so appealing to young kids.

This workbench has been a popular toddler toy for some time.

There are lots of accessories that come along with this well-sized toy. They will never be short of tools or things to do.

This workbench is carried by the following on-line stores:(Click logo to see)





### Lifestyle Deluxe Kitchen - by Step2

Who wouldn't want to cook in this delightful children's pretend kitchen?

Step2 produce a whole range of play kitchens and we think this one is the best

The styling and sound effects of this toy kitchen really enhance the playing experience for your child and make them want to engage with this toy

You can checkout this kitchen at the following stores (Click logo to see)



### Pretend & Play supermarket checkout - by Learning Resources

There is so much to learn from playing at "shop". What do we need? Lets make a list. Can you find those groceries? Now we'll pay for them.

The checkout girl so polite and really helpful, wasn't she !

This realistic supermarket checkout will inspire your child to play and really engage them.



You can find this checkout at the following stores (Click logo to see)



## Farm Log Playset - by Melissa and Doug

Every toddler we know just loves farms and farm animals.



Now this attractive play set from Melissa and Doug allows your little farmer to set up their own spread in their playroom

As well as pretend play this toy lets your little one practice building and placing small objects as they construct their own farm yard. How many cows have we got now?



## Toddler Play Equipment

All these toys are for active toddler play indoors. With the winter upon us, your kids can still get physical exercise without having to go outside. Indoor play equipment like this allows young children to jump, climb and slide within the comforts of their own home and under your close supervision.

Here is our selection:



### Folding Carrot Slide - by Chicco

For those of you with limited play space this folding slide offers you the option of quickly and easily storing away your toddlers indoor play equipment when not in use.

This toy's cheery colors are bound to attract your little climber.

Carrots are good for you!

This indoor toy can be found at the following stores. (Click logo to see)





### WhirlyBounce Rider - by Little Tikes

This fantastic toy has to be seen to be believed. A whole indoor play ground in one toy – a bounce, a seesaw and a roundabout !

A little girl we know calls this toy - “Mr Bounce Whirly”.

Little Tikes make some superb active play toys and this is one of them.



You can see this rider at the following stores. (Click logo to see)



### Naturally Playful Woodland Climber - by Step 2

Step 2 are a renowned supplier of active play toys and with this climber they have excelled themselves.

The Woodland Climber is the perfect toy for a young child with a desire to climb. It offers a real variety of climbing challenges so your toddler will not tire of this toy.

It includes a very good slide and a large upper play deck. Lots of opportunity for imaginative play with this toy.

The following stores can supply this toy. (Click logo to see)



## Preschool Educational Toys

Here are toys for children aged from three years which help them with the more “academic” aspect of the toddler curriculum – reading, writing, math etc. Besides helping with these important subjects you will see that these toys are also tremendous fun.

### Count and Add Wooden Puzzle Cards - by Learning Resources Inc.

This toy is so elegantly designed that it demands to be played with.

A three year old will have hours of fun with this wooden puzzle – and at the same time learn to count and some basic addition.



Check out this toy at the following stores. (Click logo to see)



### 'I Can Spell' Alphabet Puzzle - by Tag Toys

As someone who really struggled with spelling at first, I really envy young kids who are lucky enough to own this wooden puzzle.

This is another beautifully made toy that our toddler will want to learn and play with.

Can you make your name ? What colors am I?

Your child will return to this toy time and time again.



The following stores can supply this toy. (Click logo to see)



## Math Mat Challenge Game - by Learning Resources.

It's not easy to devise a math/number game that will excite and keep the attention of an active young child. The Math Mat Challenge certainly succeeds in doing this.

Your three year old will have hours of fun with this exciting math puzzle – and learn whilst they play..

You'll find this toy at the following stores. (Click logo to see)



(Search for "math mat")

## Toddler Riding Toys

It seems that just as soon as toddlers have learned to walk - they want to ride. Toddler ride on toys have long being a popular choice. That's understandable because of the benefits they give to toddlers.

Toddler Riding Toys provide a great opportunity for young ones to exercise (indoors and outside) allowing them to burn up energy and develop their physical abilities.

These ride on toys for toddlers are also great spurs for imaginative play. They can pretend to be Mom driving to the office or Dad mowing the lawn or a firemen .. or a policeman... or a cowboy...

Around the age of three, toddlers are looking for more realism and authentic detail in their pretend toys and the riding toys available to kids today can certainly provide that.

Here's our selection of Toddler Riding Toys:



**Liberty Spring Horse. - by Radio Flyer.** After the Teddy Bear, there can be no toy other than the rocking horse that is so well associated with young children and their play.

This Spring Horse is an good example of a modern design of horse that rocks on springs.

Spring Horses like this are great for keeping a toddler in one place whilst allowing them some fun physical activity

We particularly like this horse because it adjusts as your child grows. This ensures that your child will have years of enjoyment playing with this riding toy.

The following stores offer this toy. (Click logo to see)



### Caterpillar Excavator - by Kettler.

Here's a good example of a push along toddler riding toy.

We are great fans of Kettler's ride-on toys. They are so well designed and constructed. These are really safe toys and very sturdy. They can withstand being worked hard by your toddler.

This Caterpillar Excavator is a wonderful toy for pretend play in the sand box or even in the snow. It's equally at home indoors picking up wooden blocks etc.

Check out this toy at the following stores. (Click logo to see)



(Search for excavator in Toys)

### John Deere Power Pull Tractor - by Peg Perego.

No, this is not a real tractor! But it certainly looks like one doesn't it



This realistic battery powered ride on tractor with trailer is sure to provide your toddler with hours and hours of pretend play.

Powered toddler riding toys like this tractor don't provide as much exercise as a push along or pedal ride on. But they certainly are a lot of fun!

You can see this tractor at: (Click logo to see)



## Affordable Playground Equipment

We are always looking for new toys and play equipment that will encourage toddlers to exercise and develop their physical abilities. If you introduce a child to exercise that they enjoy at an early age then they are less likely to turn into “couch potatoes” later.

Most toddlers we know are eager to take up any opportunity to run, climb, swing, slide and jump.

There is no better way to provide these opportunities than by creating a playground in your own back yard. This allows young kids easy access to physical play as well as ensuring that you are around to supervise and keep them safe.

These toys are more than toddlers gyms. They are also great at encouraging play. Do not be surprised when your playground changes into a pirate ship, a gingerbread house or a castle.

All the play equipment you will see here will provide a total playground solution for your children. We've focused on long lasting equipment which will provide years and years of playground fun and prove a very good investment.

### 8-in-1 Adjustable Playground - by Little Tikes

This award winning playground has so much for young kids to try and to explore.

We particularly like this toy because it is configurable. So if your child is becoming tired of the original layout you can rearrange it and have a brand new playground.

Little Tikes have a great reputation for producing well made, durable, outdoor play equipment. This high quality together with the in built adaptability contained in this playground will make sure your young child enjoys and gets good use from it for many years.



This playground is now available at: [\(Click logo to see\)](#)

**WAL\*MART**

### **Windermere Play Center - by Big Backyard.**

Can you imagine all the fun and exciting play times your child will have with this attractive wooden play center?

There is so much for them to do. Swings, climbers, a wooden play house and a huge curly slide. There is even a sand box for those quiet times.

This is a well constructed playground which will last and last.

You can check out this Play Center at. [\(Click logo to see\)](#)



### **Endless Adventures Variety Climber with Swing Extension - by Little Tikes**



Variety is the spice of life. Toddlers are always searching for new and exciting things to do – and all the better if they involve climbing, swinging and sliding .

This great play/swing-set offers a wide selection of outdoor play equipment and has so much for young kids to try and to explore. It provides lots and lots of pretend play opportunities too.

Excellent Little Tikes quality makes sure your playground lasts and lasts.

You can find this play set at the following online stores [\(Click logo to see\)](#)



## Tell a Friend

Thank you for reading our report on the Best Toddler toys for Christmas 2006. We hope you found it useful and enjoyable.

We've received lots of compliments from our visitors and know many of them have used our report as their toddler's Christmas toy wish list.

Thanks, your welcome.

Please feel free to send a copy of this report to your relatives or friends. Better still why not suggest they get their own copy. You can **copy and paste** this link into an e-mail to them.

[Best Toddler Toys – Christmas 2006](#)

Finally, all of us here would like to wish you and your toddler the very best of Christmases and we look forward to hearing from you next year. God bless you, every one.

*Kieron "Toy Shop" Howarth*