

# Buying Toys

## for Children with Disabilities

### Buying Toys

Elements to Look For in a Toy 

#### Multisensory Appeal

- Lights, sounds, and movement.
- Contrasting colors, scents, and textures.

#### Method of Activation

- Provides challenge without frustration.
- What is the force required to activate?
- Number and complexity of the steps required to activate.



#### Where Will the Toy be Used

- Can the toy be used in a variety of positions, such as side lying or on a wheelchair tray?
- Is there space in the home, and will it be easy to store?

#### Opportunities for Success

- Can play be open-ended with no definite right or wrong way?
- Is it adaptable to the child's individual style, ability, and pace?

#### Current Popularity

- Is it a toy most any child would like?
- Does it tie-in with other activities like T.V., movies, books, etc?

#### Self-Expression

- Does the toy allow for creativity, uniqueness, and choice making?
- Will it give the child experience with a variety of media?

#### Adjustability

- Does it have adjustable height, volume, speed, level of difficulty?

#### Child's Individual Characteristics

- Does the toy provide activities that reflect both developmental and chronological ages?

#### Safety & Durability

- Consider the child's strength in relation to the toy's durability.
- Are the toy and its parts sized appropriately?
- Does the toy have moisture resistance?
- Can it be washed and cleaned?

#### Potential for Interaction

- Will the child be an active participant during use?
- Will the toy encourage social engagement with others?

Source:  
The National Lekotek Center  
[www.lekotek.org](http://www.lekotek.org)



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# Safety Tips



## General Toy Safety



- Stuffed toys should be washable.
- Fabric toys should be labeled flame resistant or flame retardant.
- Art materials should specify on packaging that they are nontoxic.
- Avoid toys with cords or long strings.
- Painted toys should be covered with lead-free paint.
- Avoid thin plastic toys that could break, creating sharp edges.
- Purchase a choke tube to test small parts for choking hazards.

## Opened Toys



- Immediately dispose of plastic wrappings and small pieces of packaging before they become dangerous play things.
- Read instructions for proper use and set up.
- Keep toys appropriate for older children away from younger siblings.

## Safety at Home



- Regularly check wooden toys for splinters and metal toys for rust.
- Properly store outdoor toys to protect from wear and damage caused by rain and snow.
- Repair or throw away any broken toys.
- Regularly clean toys with antibacterial cleaners.

## Links of Interest



**[www.sportime.com](http://www.sportime.com)**

Leading supplier of physical education equipment.

**[www.ableplay.org](http://www.ableplay.org)**

Free toy rating system and shopping guide based on type of disability.

**[www.lekotek.org](http://www.lekotek.org)**

Information regarding toys and play for children with special needs.

**[www.specialneedstoys.com](http://www.specialneedstoys.com)**

TFH offers a wide range of special needs toys.

**[www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov)**

US Consumer Product Safety Commission



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**[www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov)**  
Stay tuned for ISA's  
Safety Recall Program.