



Daily tips for Playful Learning at Home



Hot air balloons

This can be a fun activity to do outside on a nice day – it is one where the adults have to take a bit more of a lead and children can help so far as they can. Older children can play along too, and make their own balloons. Make sure you are in a safe space to play and don't carry on too long if your child loses interest. But it is a great way to explore science and think of some stories

What do I need?

- Sticky tape
- Cardboard tubes (such as inner of kitchen towel or toilet roll)
- Black bin bags
- Hairdryer (on Cool setting)
- Time to tidy up afterwards
- Safe outdoor space

If you don't have these, then you can use normal balloons and a bottle – instructions at

<https://media.jumpstart.com/JSWeb/uploadedFiles/sne/hot-air-balloon.pdf>

What will your child learn from this play?

- Fine motor skills
- Science and weather
- Vocabulary
- Safety and risks

Credit: adapted from UK Scouts,
<https://www.scouts.org.uk/activities/a-flair-for-hot-air/>

What do we do?

For bin bag balloons:

- Get the equipment together and explain to your child what the idea is. Judge how much they can do, and what they need to watch. If they get frustrated, give them a parallel task like decorating a "tail" to stick on the balloon
- If older children want to play along, they may be able to make their own balloon – but supervise the hairdryer stage
- Tie the bag handles together to make just a small opening with handles tucked inside
- Slide a cardboard tube into the bag opening (it helps fill the bag and protects it from melting)
- Hold the bag and fill with air using the hairdryer on the COOLEST setting
- Feel them start to tug away and let them fly when ready
- Have a chat about what's happening – why warm air, I wonder?
- Make sure you collect any litter when you are done

For normal balloons -

<https://media.jumpstart.com/JSWeb/uploadedFiles/sne/hot-air-balloon.pdf>

How can you take it further?

- If you have enough equipment, make more than one balloon and have a race!
- Maybe your child would like to find out more about balloons – have a look online
- Have a chat about where you would go if you had a hot air balloon – what would you see?
- On a wet day, there is a nice story on BBC iPlayer at <https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/b09x4q0p/bitz-bob-series-1-8-bobs-balloon-adventure>

Play & talk together
Be careful with too many questions

Pause and wait for your child to respond
Copy what they say and add to it