

# 50 FUN SUMMER

## Activites for Kids!

eat. play. experiment. create.

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OurBestBites.com





Short Cut Tye Dye



Candy Rainbows



Homemade Fruit Roll-Ups



Slime



Galaxy in a Jar



## Homemade Slime

1 teaspoon borax powder

1 1/2 cups hot water, divided

4 oz. (1/2 cup) Elmer's glue, clear or white (white glue=opaque slime, clear=clear slime)

Food coloring

Add borax powder to 1 cup of water and stir to dissolve. Set aside. Pour glue into a medium mixing bowl and add 1/2 cup water. Add a few drops of food coloring until desired color is reached and then stir to mix glue solution until smooth.

Pour the borax mixture into the glue mixture and watch the solids start to form. Stir for a few moments and then use your hands to gather the mass. The mixture will be very soft and wet.

Keep kneading until it firms up and feels dry. Discard excess liquid in bowl. The more you knead and play with the slime the firmer it will become. Store in a ziplock bag or air tight container and the slime will keep indefinitely.

## Edible Playdough

1 cup creamy peanut butter

2 cups powdered sugar

1/2 cup honey

Thoroughly combine all ingredients until smooth. A stand mixer works great! Use rolling pins and cookie cutters to play. Store in an airtight container when not in use.

## Candy Rainbows

Skittles

White plate

warm tap water

Place a ring of skittles around the outside edge of the plate, forming a circle. Slowly pour water in the center of the plate until the water reaches the skittles and just barely goes under them. Sit back and watch your rainbows form in the water! Try different temperatures of water and different kinds of hard-shelled sugar-coated candy and see what happens!

## Mint Chocolate Pudding Pops

- 1 small box instant chocolate pudding
- 1 3/4 cup half and half
- 10 Oreo cookies, crushed (about 1 heaping cup)
- 1/4 teaspoon peppermint extract

Blend pudding mix, extract, and half and half in a blender until smooth. Stir in crushed cookies by hand. Place in molds and freeze.

## Short-Cut Tie Dye

- Old, colored t-shirts, pants or shorts
- Spray bleach cleaner, gel bleach cleaner, or a Clorox bleach pen

While supervised by an adult, let kids spray or use the bleach pen to make designs on colored fabric. The color will disappear after it sits and then the shirt can be rinsed in cold water and laundered as usual.

## Muddy Buddies

- 9 cups Chex cereal
- 1 cups semisweet chocolate chips
- 1/2 cups smooth peanut butter
- 1/4 cups butter
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 1/2 cups powdered sugar

Measure cereal into a large bowl and set aside.

In a 1 quart microwave safe bowl, heat chocolate chips, peanut butter, and butter for 1 minute on high heat. Stir. Microwave 30 seconds longer or until melted and smooth. Stir in vanilla.

Pour chocolate mixture over cereal and stir well to coat all pieces. Add powdered sugar and stir until completely coated. Spread out on waxed paper or foil for about 30 minutes. Store in an airtight container at room temp, or in the fridge.

## Galaxy in a Jar

3-4 colors of acrylic or tempera paint (we like blues, purples, and pinks)

Plain plastic water bottle, glass jar with lid, or mason jar

Disposable cups

Cotton balls

Glitter

Water

Stretch out several cotton balls and place them in the jar. Sprinkle glitter generously on top of the cotton balls. Fill 3-4 disposable cups part way with water and add a couple squirts of paint, stirring to color water. Slowly pour one color in jar to saturate cotton balls. Add more cotton balls to jar, and more glitter, and then pour in different color of painted water. Repeat process and experiment with different colors and more or less cotton balls. When filled to the top, secure the jar with lid and it will look like a galaxy with stars!

## 2-Ingredient Bread

2 cups softened ice cream (experiment with different flavors!)

1 1/2 cups self rising flour (scoop flour into measuring cup with a spoon and then level.)

Optional add-ins: fresh fruit, chocolate chips, spices, extracts, etc.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Mix up all ingredients and put into a greased loaf pan. For an extra delicious (and pretty) top, sprinkle a little granulated white or brown sugar on top before baking. Bake for about 42-48 minutes, or until skewer or tooth pick inserted in center comes out clean.



## Homemade Fruit Roll-Ups

2 1/2 – 3 cups ripe or slightly over-ripe, diced fruit

Sweetener to taste: honey, sugar, agave, etc.

2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice

Optional: seasonings, spices, extracts to taste

Preheat oven to lowest temperature (140° or higher.) Puree all ingredients in a food processor until smooth. Pour onto a baking sheet lined with plastic wrap or a silicone baking mat (don't use foil, parchment, or waxed paper), and spread to 1/8" thick. Place in oven and bake for 6-8 hours, until center is not tacky anymore. Remove from oven and peel off of baking sheet. Cut into strips and roll in parchment or plastic. Store in airtight container or freeze.

Tips:

-All fruits will produce slightly different results. Strawberries and Raspberries are two of my favorites, that consistently produce good flavor and texture. You might have to experiment to find what works well. If you're going to make a giant batch, you may want to test one first to make sure it works well.

- The addition of sugar or honey enhances the texture and makes the fruit roll ups a little more chewy than if you leave it out.

- If using plastic wrap, it will shrink a little as the fruit dries, so be sure to leave a little extra around the edges. A silicone baking mat works the absolute best in my opinion.

## Peanut Butter Apple Nachos

1 crisp sweet apple

1 tablespoon chopped dark chocolate or chocolate chips

1/4 teaspoon coconut oil (or substitute canola oil)

1 tablespoon peanut butter

1 tablespoon toasted coconut flakes

1/2 tablespoon sliced toasted almonds

Core apple and slice into 1/4 inch slices. Arrange on a plate. Place chocolate and oil in a small bowl and microwave until melted and smooth. Melt peanut butter until soft and stirrable (able to drizzle with a spoon). Drizzle chocolate and peanut butter over apples. Sprinkle coconut and almonds on top.



2-Ingredient Biscuits



Homemade Magic Slushie



Creamy Fruit Mousse



Coconut-Lime Sugar Scrub



Glow-in-the-Dark Food



Dancing Milk Swirls





## Glow in the Dark Food

The secret to making things "glow" is Tonic Water, which contains quinine and glows under a black light. Tonic water has a bitter taste to it, so we suggest mixing it with a juice for a glowing drink or use it in jello and cut out into shapes. Then just flip off the lights and turn on a black light and watch it glow!

## Edible Finger Paint

3 tablespoons sugar  
1/2 cup cornstarch  
2 cups cold water  
Food coloring

Mix sugar and cornstarch together in a sauce pan. Add cold water and combine with a whisk. Cook on medium heat until the mixture thickens to a thin pudding consistency. I recommend stopping the cooking process a little before it's the consistency you'd like because it thickens upon standing. Once removed from heat, cool and then separate into bowls and color as desired.

Spread out big sheets of freezer paper or newsprint and let the kiddos go to town. Better yet, do it outside! Or use it in the shower/bathtub and just rinse it out when they're done!

## Soap Clouds

Materials needed:  
Original Ivory brand bar soap  
Wax or parchment paper

Place a piece of waxed paper, parchment (or even plastic wrap or paper towels) in your microwave. Place the bar of soap in the middle. Start microwave on high power and watch through the door to see the soap grow and expand! Watch the whole time and stop microwave as soon as it stops growing (generally before the minute is up). Soap clouds will break and turn to dust, so to avoid a big mess we recommend letting kids play with it in the bath tub where they can get nice and clean.



## Coconut-Lime Sugar Scrub

1/4 cup coconut oil

1/2 cup granulated sugar

Zest from one lime (use a fine grater or microplane)

Optional: Lime and/or coconut flavoring oils

Place oil, sugar, and lime zest in a bowl. Stir to combine, and if desired, add additional coconut oil to reach desired consistency. Add lime and/or coconut flavoring oils to taste (or smell).

You may store at room temperature for several weeks or in the fridge, where it will get firm. Use scrub to gently exfoliate skin. Rinse skin clean with warm water and then massage in oils left on skin for a soft, silky finish. Coconut oil is very soothing after a day in the sun!

## 2-Ingredient Ice Cream

4 cups heavy cream (only 2 cups needed for non-machine version)

14 oz can Sweetened Condensed Milk

2 tablespoons vanilla extract

Combine sweetened condensed milk and vanilla in large bowl. In a separate bowl, pour 2 cups heavy cream into bowl and whip until soft-medium peaks form. Slowly fold whipped cream into sweetened condensed milk mixture in 3 additions. Fold until well combined. Pour into container and freeze for at least 6 hours or until firm.

Try adding in fresh fruit, crushed cookies or candies, and different flavored extracts and spices after ice cream has frozen!

## Creamy Fruit Mousse

1 small (3 ounce) box fruit flavored gelatin, regular or sugar free  
1 cup boiling water  
8 ounces cream cheese, divided  
1/2 cup cold water  
8 ounce container Cool Whip, divided  
1/2 cup powdered sugar  
1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract  
1 small orange

Dissolve gelatin in boiling water. Place in blender and add 4 ounces (half of the package) cream cheese. Process until smooth. Add cold water and pulse blender to stir. Add half of the container of Cool Whip (about a heaping cup) to the blender and process just until combined and mixture is free of lumps.

Pour mixture into one serving bowl, or several smaller individual sized dishes. Refrigerate until firm, 3-4 hours. Either top with remaining Cool Whip or continue on with topping recipe.

To make topping, beat remaining 4 ounces cream cheese with powdered sugar, vanilla, about 1 teaspoon orange zest (more if desired) and one teaspoon of the orange juice.

Blend until creamy and smooth, and fold in remaining 4 ounces Cool Whip. Add more orange juice if needed for consistency. Dollop, pipe, or spread topping over chilled mousse just before serving. If you refrigerate the mousse with the topping on, it will harden, so it's best to whip it up just before serving. Makes about 6, 1/2 cup servings.

## Leaf Rubbings

Leaves  
Paper (nothing too heavy)  
crayons

Go leaf hunting and collect leaves in different shapes and sizes and textures. Place leaves on a flat surface and place paper on top. Remove the labels from the crayons and rub the broad side of a crayon over the top of the paper, making impressions.



# Homemade Magic Slushie

Ice cubes (about 2 cups, we prefer crushed ice)  
1 tablespoon kosher salt  
1 cup juice or soda (not sugar free or diet)

Place ice cubes and salt in a quart-sized Ziploc bag. Pour your juice or soda into a smaller bag and seal shut. Take your juice bag and place it in the ice-filled bag and seal. Shake and smash your bag for about 3-5 minutes. Wrap in a towel if it gets cold on your hands! Your liquid will eventually turn into a frozen slush and you can eat immediately.

# Dancing Milk Swirls

Milk  
Food coloring  
Toothpicks  
Liquid dish soap

Fill a bowl or plate with milk. Add a few drops of food coloring in different spots. Take a toothpick and dip one end in dish soap. Touch the colored areas with the "magic toothpick" and watch the colors dance and swirl!

# 2-Ingredient Biscuits

6 ounces (by weight) self-rising flour (1 1/2 cups)  
6 ounces (by weight) heavy cream (3/4 cup)  
1/4 teaspoon salt  
optional: any mix-ins, as desired

Preheat oven to 450 degrees. Line a baking sheet with parchment and set aside. Place all ingredients in a bowl and gently mix with a fork until combined. If dough doesn't combine, very slowly drizzle in just a bit of extra cream until it comes together.

Spoon or use a cookie scoop to drop rounds onto baking sheet, 2-3 inches apart, or alternately you can pat/roll the dough out and then use a biscuit cutter. Brush the tops of biscuits lightly with cream, milk, or water. Bake for about 10 minutes or until puffed and golden. Yields 8-12 biscuits depending on size. These are great for strawberry shortcake!




Mini Mason Jar  
Lanterns




Suck It Up



DIY Lava Lamp



Cookie Face



Diet Coke Geyser



## Suck It Up

M&Ms

A straw for each player

2 small bowls or plates for each player

Place a handful of M&Ms in 1 of each player's bowls. Set a timer for 1 minute. Each player needs to try and transfer as many M&Ms as possible from one bowl to another, using a straw to suck them up.

## Cookie Face

1 Oreo Cookie per person

Set a timer for 1 minute. Each player places an Oreo on their forehead. Not using their hands, the players need to slide the cookie down their faces and into their mouths

## Homemade Lemonade

2 cups sugar

1 cup fresh lemon juice (about 5-6 large lemons)

1/4 cup fresh lime juice

8-11 cups water, divided

Ice cubes

Combine 2 1/2 cups water and sugar in a medium saucepan over medium heat. Stir until sugar has dissolved and then simmer 5 minutes. Remove from heat and cool about 20 minutes. Add lemon and lime juice to the sugar syrup. Pour lemon base into a small pitcher or storage container and refrigerate until ready to serve.

When ready to serve, mix lemonade base with 6-8 cups cold water. Start with 6 cups and then adjust according to your taste. Try adding garnishes like mint, flavored syrups, or even jalapeño peppers!

## Hand-Tossed Ice-Cream

2 cups whole milk

2 cups whipping cream

1 cup sugar

1 1/4 teaspoon vanilla

Desired ice cream toppings and mix-ins (we used sugared strawberries, blueberries, and crushed or chopped Butterfingers, Twix Bars, York Peppermint Patties, Reese's PB Cups, and Skor Bars)

2 1-quart Ziploc freezer bags (it's important to use freezer bags)

2 1-gallon-sized Ziploc freezer bags

10 pounds ice

2 cups ice cream salt

Waterproof tape (like duct tape)

Water-resistant gloves (optional, but I don't think anyone would have minded a pair today!)

In a large bowl, combine sugar, milk, whipping cream, and vanilla. Pour 1/2 of the mixture into 1 quart-sized bag and zip shut, squeezing out all the air. Use duct tape to seal the opening and repeat with second bag.

Place each filled bag inside a gallon-sized bag and sprinkle 1 cup of ice cream salt around each smaller bag. Add as much ice as you can comfortably fit into the gallon-sized bag, squeeze to remove excess air, and zip shut. Maneuver the ice around to make sure there's ice on all sides of the smaller bag inside.

Bring the bags, ice, and rock salt outside because you'll need to drain some of the salty water and replenish the ice supply while you're tossing the ice cream. Put on gloves and toss for 15-20 minutes or until the ice cream is the consistency of soft-serve. Remove the smaller bag, rinse off the salt water, cut a hole in the corner, squeeze into individual dishes, and add desired toppings!

## Defying Gravity

1 balloon per person

Set a timer for 1 minute. Each player must keep their balloon has to stay moving for the entire minute without it hitting the floor, but they are not allowed to grip it.



## DIY Lava Lamp

Empty water bottles or jars  
Oil  
Liquid food coloring  
Effervescent antacid tablets

Fill a water bottle 1/3 full with water and the rest of the way with oil.

Add several drops of liquid food coloring.

When the color is settled at the bottom, drop in an antacid tablet and watch the colored bubbles rise to the top.

## Orange-Coconut Sugar Scrub

1/2 cup virgin coconut oil  
1 cup white sugar  
Zest of 1 orange (wash the orange well first)

Combine the coconut oil and sugar together. Add the orange zest and mix well. This works best if you keep a small amount in the shower and the rest in the refrigerator and then take it out as needed.

## Fizzy Sidewalk Chalk Paint

2 cups baking soda  
2 cups cornstarch  
2 cups water  
Liquid watercolor or food coloring  
6 plastic squeeze bottles  
Spray bottle filled with vinegar for each child

Combine baking soda, cornstarch, and water and distribute evenly among squeeze bottles. Add color to each bottle as desired and shake well. Paint the sidewalk or concrete with the bottles, then spray with vinegar to watch them fizz up! Spray with a hose to clean.

## Mini Mason Jar Lanterns

4-ounce glass canning jars  
Colored tissue paper in desired colors  
Mod Podge  
16-gauge (or slightly thinner) wire  
Pliers and wire cutters  
Tea lights

Remove the lids from the jars and tear off a square of the tissue paper you'd like to use. Paint a thin layer of Mod Podge over the jar and then just tear strips of the tissue paper and layer them onto the jar, making sure the paper is lying flat against the jar. When you've covered the jar with tissue paper, carefully paint the tissue paper-covered jar with another thin layer of Mod Podge and allow it to dry completely.

When the jars are dry, wrap some wire around the opening of the jar and then cut it so you have about 1-2 inches extra to work with. Wrap it around the jar, twisting the wire around the jar making sure it's secure but loose enough to slip another wire between this wire and the jar. Use the needle nose pliers to help twist the ends securely. Clip any sharp or long wires if necessary.

Cut another 6-8" length of wire and slip each end between the first wire and the jar, using the pliers to securely twist the wire, forming a handle. If desired, add 1-2 inches of sand to the bottoms of the jars before adding a tea light. Hang wherever you'd like (or skip wire part and use these as centerpieces or luminaries on sidewalks).

## Diet Coke Geyser

2-liter bottles Diet Coke  
Mentos (6 Mentos per bottle of Diet Coke)

Place the Diet Coke on a flat surface and remove lid. Carefully add Mentos, then run away!





Lego Excavation



Oobleck



Giant Bubbles



Time Capsule



Homemade Natural Lip  
Gloss



Fluffy Slime



Layered Jell-O

## Homemade Natural Lip Gloss

3/4 cup + 1 tablespoon coconut oil  
3 tablespoons grated beeswax or beeswax pellets  
1 1000 I.U. capsule of Vitamin E  
25 drops of flavor oils or 40 drops of essential oils (add more or less if necessary)  
Jars or tins

In a microwave-safe glass container with a spout, combine the coconut oil and beeswax. Heat on high for 30 seconds at a time, stirring after each heating, until the beeswax completely melts. You can either flavor all the lip gloss one flavor or pour the mixture into a few smaller containers and mix up smaller batches of different flavors. After you've added the desired flavors, pour the mixture into jars, tubes, or tins and allow to cool completely. Decorate as desired.

## Oobleck

1 cup water  
1 1/2-2 cups corn starch  
Food coloring (if desired)

Place the water in a medium mixing bowl. Add 1 1/2 cups cornstarch and mix. You may need to add up to 1/2 cup additional cornstarch for the mixture to be sometimes-liquid, sometimes solid. Add food coloring as desired and play around! Try experimenting with Oobleck's reaction to very loud music or placing items on them and seeing when or how they sink!

## Soda Balloon Inflator

20-ounce bottles of soda (Sprite is a great, fizzy choice)  
Pop Rocks candy  
Balloons

Place soda on flat surface. Add Pop Rocks to the bottle, then quickly top with a balloon and see what happens!



## Layered Jello

4 3-ounce packages of Jell-O  
1 14-ounce can sweetened condensed milk  
4 packets unflavored gelatin  
Water as directed

Spray a 9x13" pan with non-stick cooking spray and wipe out the excess with a paper towel. Set the pan aside.

Mix 1 package of Jell-O with 1 1/4 teaspoons of unflavored gelatin. Add 1 cup boiling water & stir to combine completely. Pour the first layer into the prepared pan & refrigerate in a completely level shelf of the fridge for 20 minutes. While the first layer is setting, mix 1 cup boiling water with the can of sweetened condensed milk in medium mixing bowl. Set aside.

In a small bowl, sprinkle 2 packets of gelatin over 1/2 cup cold water. Allow it to stand until the gelatin has absorbed the water and it becomes grainy. When it is ready, add 1/2 cup boiling water and stir until the gelatin is completely dissolved. Add the dissolved gelatin mixture to the sweetened condensed milk mixture and stir completely. Allow to come to room temperature.

When the first layer of Jell-O has set, carefully pour 1 cup of the sweetened condensed milk mixture over the Jell-O layer and return the pan to the refrigerator. Chill for 15 minutes or until set.

After you return the pan to the refrigerator, repeat the Jell-O step (1 package Jell-O + 1 1/4 teaspoons unflavored gelatin + 1 cup boiling water). Pour it over the milk layer, chill, repeat with milk, then Jell-O, then milk, then Jell-O. You should begin and end with Jell-O layers and have 4 layers of Jell-O with 3 layers of milk in between. If the milk begins to set up, place the bowl in a shallow pan and add some hot water to the larger pan/bowl to keep the milk mixture from setting up. When the last layer has set up, run a knife under hot water and then use it to carefully cut the Jell-O into cubes.

## Time Capsule

Find a secure box with a lid and fill with items that are relevant at that moment--a current newspaper where you live, a coin from that year, a snapshot of each child, a note from the kids to their future selves, popular items, a picture of your house, etc. Set a date in the future when the time capsule will be opened and put a notification on your phone (even if it's 15 years in the future, you can set an alert!)

## Homemade Sidewalk Chalk

Plaster of Paris dry powder  
Tempera Paint  
Silicone Mold  
Water  
Disposable Cups  
Plastic Spoons

Use a new cup for each color. Fill each cup with  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup water, then add  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup paint and 1 cup Plaster of Paris. Mix well. Pour the mixture into molds and carefully wipe the edges with a paper towel. Allow to dry for 24 hours. Carefully remove them from the mold (they won't be completely set yet). Let them dry outside the molds for an additional 24 hours. Then use however you want!

## Lego Excavation

Legos  
Loaf Pan  
Excavation tools (toothpicks, other kitchen tools, rock salt, etc.)

Partially fill loaf pans with water and freeze. Add legos, a layer of water, freeze, and repeat until the loaf pans have a few Legos frozen inside. Invert the pan and explain to kids that they need to carefully excavate the artifacts without harming them.

## Mango Colada

1 cup chopped mango (about 1 medium mango)  
 $\frac{1}{3}$  cup cream of coconut (NOT coconut milk)  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  cup pineapple chunks, including some of the juice or syrup  
juice from one lime  
crushed ice

Combine chopped mango, pineapple chunks and juice, lime juice, and cream of coconut in blender. While blender is running, add crushed ice until desired consistency is reached.

Pour drink into glasses (2 generous servings, 3-4 smaller servings).



## Fluffy Slime

2 cups white school glue (we've had the best luck with Elmer's)

1 cup water

8 cups shaving cream (pat it down as you're filling the measuring cup to make sure you don't have any air pockets)

2-3 tablespoons saline solution (make sure it has boric acid in the ingredients)

BORAX SOLUTION

1/4 cup hot water

3/4 teaspoon borax powder

Food coloring

Stir Borax Solution ingredients together vigorously until dissolved. Add 2 tablespoons of saline solution and set aside.

In a large mixing bowl, combine the glue and 1 cup water. Add food coloring. Mix until completely smooth.

Add the shaving cream to the glue mixture and gently stir until combined. Add the borax/saline solution mixture and mix until combined. The boric acid/borax is what gives the slime its cohesive consistency, so you want to make sure everything is mixed evenly. When you first add it, the mixture will seize up, but as it becomes more and more incorporated into the mixture, the slime will take on an amazing, soft, fluffy, marshmallow-y consistency. If you'd like a little more firmness, you can add up to an additional tablespoon of saline solution, but start small and add a little as you go.

Over time, the fluff will deflate. Store in an airtight container. Fluffy slime that is left alone in an airtight container will take on a really great, smooth, flat slime consistency after about a week.

## Giant Bubbles

1/2 teaspoon J-Lube (critical ingredients; order on Amazon)

2 tablespoons baking powder

1 gallon warm water

2 tablespoons glycerin

1 cup Original Dawn Dishwashing Liquid

2 wooden dowels

6-7 feet 100% cotton yarn

Very clean 5 gallon bucket

In the 5-gallon bucket, combine baking powder and J-Lube. Slowly whisk in warm water until smooth. Add glycerin, water, and Dawn.

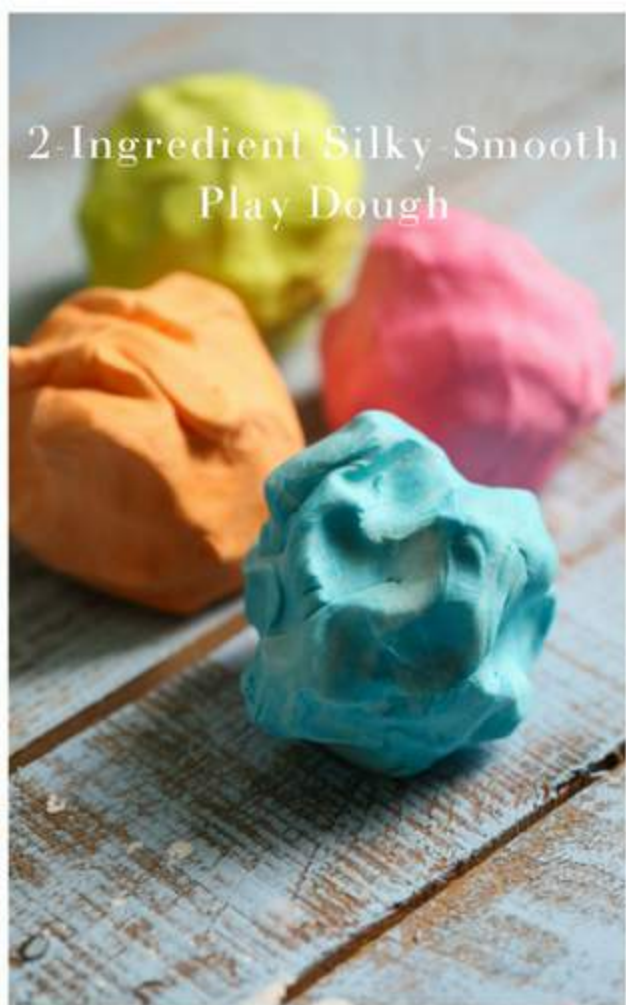
To make the bubble sticks, tie one end of the yarn tightly near the top of one of the dowels (you can notch it with a knife first to make it more secure). Run a line of yarn about 1 1/2-2 feet to the same spot on the other dowel and tie it securely. Tie the remaining end near the original knot, so you have a taut horizontal line on top and loose, drapey yarn on bottom.

Dip the yarn sticks in the water. When you pull them out, keep the sticks as far apart as possible and start walking backwards. Experiment until you get the hang of it, but you should get some huge bubbles!

Oven S'mores



2-Ingredient Silky-Smooth  
Play Dough



Homemade Lip Scrub



Homemade Butter



Stovetop Macaroni & Cheese





## Easy Banana Ice Cream

3 medium bananas  
Any add-ins you'd like

Peel bananas and slice into 1-inch pieces and freeze. Place frozen banana chunks in a food processor and process until smooth. If it looks crumbly, try smashing with a spoon and watch it turn to the consistency of ice cream! Add chocolate chips, or a spoonful of Nutella or peanut butter for a fun mix.

## Homemade Bird Feeder

Large pine cones (go on a hunt to find some or they can be purchased at a craft store) or dried corn cobs  
Peanut butter or shortening  
Bird seed (from a pet store)  
String or twine

Tie the twine tightly around the tip of the pine cone or on either side of the corn cob. Spread peanut butter all over the pine cone, then roll in bird seed. Hang in trees, on porches, or anywhere you think birds would like to visit.

## Strawberry Watermelon Slushy or Pops

2 cups cubed seedless watermelon  
1 pint fresh strawberries, halved  
1/3 cup sugar  
1/3 cup fresh lemon juice  
2-4 cups ice cubes

In a blender, combine the watermelon, strawberries, sugar and lemon juice; cover and process on high until smooth. With blender running, gradually add ice cubes until desired consistency is reached. Pour into chilled glasses and serve immediately OR freeze in popsicle molds.

# Homemade Rock Candy

1 cup water  
3 cups white sugar  
Food coloring  
Wooden skewers  
Clothespins  
Champagne flutes or tall mason jars or glass

Bring water to a boil and add sugar. Simmer and stir until sugar is dissolved. Remove from heat. Dip a skewer so it's covered about half way with the sugar solution and then roll in additional sugar. Lay flat and let dry completely. Place some food coloring in each of 2 jars. Once the sugar solution is cooled, carefully ladle it into jars. Use a clothes pin and lay it across the top of the jar. Use it to secure the skewer so it's holding it in the colored water. Let them sit for about a week for candy to form. Remove skewers from liquid and let dry completely.

# Homemade Butter

Heavy whipping cream  
Flaked sea salt or Kosher salt  
Optional: 1 clove garlic, 1 teaspoon minced fresh parsley, 1 tablespoon minced chives  
1 teaspoon fresh parsley, minced (optional)

Handmade: Fill a jar with a lid about halfway full with cream. Place the lid on the jar and shake until you get a buttery lump. Place the lump in a clean towel and twist the top of the cloth around the butterball, squeezing the excess liquid out. Salt to taste. If desired, add chopped herbs. Refrigerate.

Electric mixer/blender: Pour at least 1 pint of cream into the bowl of a mixer/jar of a blender/mixing bowl (to use a hand-held electric mixer). Blend/mix until the butter and milk separate. Pour into a towel-/cheesecloth-lined strainer. Twist the towel around the top of the butter and squeeze out as much excess liquid as possible. Turn the butter onto a clean cutting board/plate and salt to taste (keep in mind it will get saltier with time), mopping up any excess liquid with the towel or cheesecloth. If desired, add the chopped herbs and refrigerate.

1 pint of cream yields approximately 1 cup butter.



## Homemade Lip Scrub

- 1 teaspoon extra-virgin coconut oil
- 1 teaspoon honey
- 1-2 tablespoons sugar (raw or coarse sugar works great here)
- 1/2 teaspoon grapefruit zest
- 1 drop peppermint essential oil

Mix ingredients in a small air-tight container. To use, scrub over lips and gently wipe off. Can also be used on hands, feet, and face if desired.

## 2-Ingredient Silky-Smooth Play-Doh

- 2 cups cornstarch

About 1 cup hair conditioner (don't use the expensive stuff, but I recommend something that is either scent-free or a scent that you/your kids like)

Place the cornstarch in a large bowl. Mix in the hair conditioner with your hands--it will just start coming together and it will be pliable and very, very smooth. You may need to add more conditioner as you go. If you'd like, use food coloring to color as desired. Keep covered when not in use.

## Candy Bar Oven S'mores

- Large marshmallows
- Graham Crackers
- Reese's Peanut Butter Cups, chocolate squares, and/or Rolos

Break several sheets of graham crackers in half. Place the desired number of squares on a baking sheet and top each square with a marshmallow. Place the baking sheet in an oven and turn on the broiler. Broil the marshmallows for 2-3 minutes or until desired doneness is reached. Top each marshmallow with a piece of chocolate. If you want, you can pop the baking sheet back into the oven for another minute or so to melt the chocolate. Top with another graham cracker square and serve.

These can also be made the traditional way by toasting a marshmallow over an open fire.

# Nature Scavenger Hunt

Print a list of at least 10 items to look for. These could include:

Something fuzzy, 2 kinds of seeds, 2 pieces of man-made litter (and throw it away!), something straight, something round, something smooth, something rough, 2 different types of leaves, Something that makes noise, a chewed leaf, an awesome rock, something you think is beautiful, a pinecone, something green, a cool stick, something you think is a treasure.

Collect or take pictures of the items and then show and tell when everyone is done!

## Stovetop Macaroni & Cheese

12 ounces bite-sized pasta (I like Cavatappi, but elbows will work)

6 ounces medium or sharp cheddar, (must be freshly grated)

2 ounces fontina cheese, (must be freshly grated)

1/2 teaspoon grated onion

salt and pepper to taste

Up to 1 cup reserved pasta water

5 ounces cream cheese

2 tablespoons butter

Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. When it's boiling, add the pasta and cook al dente. When it's almost done cooking, carefully ladle 1 cup of the pasta water into a heat-safe bowl, mug, or measuring cup and set aside.

Drain the cooked pasta, return pan to stove, and turn heat to low. Place the butter in the pan and melt. Add the onion and cook for 30 seconds to 1 minute. Add the pasta and stir to coat the pasta with the butter. Add the cheeses (including the cream cheese) and stir until the cheese is melted. Add the pasta water, a little at a time, until a desired consistency is reached (you may not use all the pasta water). Season with salt and pepper and serve immediately (with additional shredded cheese on top if desired.) Serve as a main dish with a big green salad on the side or as a side dish (alongside rotisserie chicken makes a quick weeknight meal!)





# 20 OUTDOOR GAMES

For Families!

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[OurBestBites.com](http://OurBestBites.com)



## Octopus

This game of tag involves an Octopus who is IT and fish who need to get from one end of the yard to the other without being tagged. Once tagged, kids have to stay in place and try to tag others as they pass. This game is more fun with more kids. It can be played with older and younger kids, but grade school kids will like it the best.

## Ghosts in the Graveyard

Whoever is the "ghost" hides while the rest of the children count from 1 o'clock to midnight. The kids then link arms and walk around the house chanting "Star light, star bright, hope I see a ghost tonight" until the ghost pops out. At this point, it's a straight game of tag. The ghost has to try to tag someone before they make it back to safety. The first person tagged or the last to safety is the next ghost.

## Michelangelo's Madhouse

Whoever is "Michelangelo" takes each of the other players by the hands and spins around with them several times before letting them go. Each player then freezes as they land. This part doesn't really effect the outcome of the game, so kids can "fall" as silly as they want. After each statue is set, Michelangelo walks through his madhouse trying to get the other players to laugh without touching them. The first to giggle (or, if you prefer, the last) is the next Michelangelo.

## Red Light, Green Light

In this game, kids can only move when the person who is IT has their back turned. If IT is looking, you have to freeze. If IT catches you moving, you have to go back to the start. The first person to touch IT is the next IT.

## Helicopter (Jump Rope Game)

One person stands in the center and spins the jump rope around on the ground. The players have to jump the rope as it comes around. If the rope hits you, you are out. The last person standing is the next helicopter.



## Frozen T-Shirt Race

Soak a bunch of t-shirts in water, place them in plastic bags, and then stick them in the freezer overnight. The next day, hold a race to see who can "defrost" and put on a frozen t-shirt the quickest. This is a great choice to play on a sweltering day--you'll want to keep the chilly t-shirt on even after the race is over!

## Bean Bag Toss

Grab a ladder from the garage, and assign each rung a certain amount of points. (For example, 50 for the top, 40, 30, and so on, down to 10 points. They can be written on a piece of paper and taped to the ladder, or even post-it notes will work). Toss bean bags through the different rungs to earn points.

## Fishing for Marbles

Stick your feet into a tub of freezing water (a bag or two of ice in a kiddie pool will work) and try to pick up as many marbles as you can using only your toes.

## Picnic Basket Relay

Teams compete to see who can set up a picnic first (lay down the blanket, set up the silverware and plates, etc.). When one player finishes setting it up, they rush to get everything back in the basket, and then pass it off to the next player.

## Sandwich Mayhem

This relay-style game is a fun way to enjoy your lunch! Teams line up beside a table and work together to make a sandwich FAST (one person spreads the mayo, one person adds the meat, etc.). When the meal gets to the end of the line, the last person has to eat it.

## Water Jumping (Jump Rope Game)

Spin the rope while each of the others jumps five times with a cup of water. Whoever has the most water at the end of their five jumps wins.

## Kick the Can

One person (or a team of people if the group is large) is designated IT and an empty can is placed in the open playing field. With eyes closed, IT counts to an agreed upon number, and the other players run and hide. IT then tries to find and tag each of the players, always keeping a watchful eye on the can. Any player who is tagged is sent to the "jail," usually in plain sight of the can. The rest of the free players attempt to kick the can before being tagged out. If they can kick the can without being caught, they set all the captured players free. At least 5 people are recommended for this game.

## Ante-I-Over

There are two teams, one on each side of the barrier (typically a house roof, but any barrier that you can't see through will work). A player on the team that starts with the ball throws the ball over the roof to the other team, yelling "Ante-I-Over" to warn them that it has been thrown. If the other team fails to catch the ball before it hits the ground, then they will yell "Ante-I-Over" and throw it back. If the team that is thrown to catches the ball, then the player holding the ball runs around the building and tries to hit one of the members of the opposing team with the ball. Players are "safe" if they succeed in running around the building without being hit. If a player is hit, they then join the team of the player who hit them with the ball. Gameplay continues until one team has all of the players or there is just one is left.

## Birdie in the Cup

Everyone stands in a circle facing each other with one person in the middle. The person in the middle holds a cup with water in it. Every person must choose a color (in their head -- not spoken aloud). The person in the middle also chooses a color in their head, not spoken aloud. The person in the middle approaches each person one at a time in the circle and says, "I have a birdie in this cup. What color is it?" If the color the player responds with is the same color the person in the middle has chosen, the person in the middle splashes them with the water in the cup. The person who guessed the correct color now stands in the middle with the cup of water.



## Spud

This outdoor game is a lot of fun. Every player gets a number and crowds around the person who is "it" for that round. IT then tosses the ball straight up and the other players run away. As the ball reaches the top of its toss, IT calls out the number of one of the other players and then runs away also. The player whose number was called must run back and catch the ball (or chase after it if it is bouncing around). Once that person has the ball, they yell, "Spud!" Then everyone else must freeze. The person with the ball must try to hit one of the players with the ball. If they do, that new person gets a letter (first S, then P, then U, then D) and is now "it." If they miss, the person who threw the ball is "it" for the next round.

## Shadow Tag

In this fun version of Tag, you tag each other's shadow with your feet instead of tagging their body. It's best if this is played on a sunny day. The closer to noon, the harder it is!

## Traffic Cop

This game works best on a street with little to no traffic, or in a large paved area of some kind. You need bikes, wagons, pedestrians, scooters or whatever is available. One person directs traffic to make sure kids don't run into each other. It is more fun than it sounds, and helps kids learn about waiting to cross the street and about traffic safety.

## What Time Is It, Mr. Wolf?

One child is chosen to be Mr Wolf, who then stands at one end of the playing area. The other players stand in a line at the other end. Mr Wolf turns his back to start the game play. The players call out, "What's the time Mr Wolf?" and Mr Wolf turns and answers with a time (i.e. 3 o'clock). He then turns his back again while the children advance again chanting "What's the time Mr Wolf?" To which Mr Wolf will continue to respond until the players come very close. Once the line of players is close to Mr Wolf, he can respond to the chant with "It's dinner time!" at which point, he will chase the players back to the starting line with the aim to catch one of the them, who will then become Mr Wolf for the next round of the game. This is a great pool game too, just change it from "Mr. Wolf" to "Mr. Shark"!

## Human Knot

A group of 10 (give or take a few) is ideal for this game. All 10 kids stand in a circle, facing inward. Tell everyone to reach their right arm towards the center and grab someone else's hand. Make sure no one grabs the hand of the person right next to them. Next, have everyone reach their left arm in and grab someone else's hand. Again, make sure it's not the person right next to them. The kids need to work together to untangle the human knot without letting go of any hands. The goal is to end up in a perfect circle again. They can go over or under each other's arms, or through legs if needed! Encourage them to do whatever they want, as long as they don't break the chain in the process.

## Watch Your Step

Players have a balloon tied to each of their ankles and everyone runs around the yard trying to pop other player's balloons using their feet--whoever keeps their balloons intact the longest is the winner.