

# 12 Bean Bag Activities



## 1. Bean Bag Balance

Bean bags are a great tool for balancing activities. There are many ways your child can practise their balancing skills. You can balance them on your head or on your feet, shoulders, hands or arms. Try carrying one on a wooden spoon without dropping it.

Try adding more bean bags (you could use rolled up socks) as the skill is mastered and see how many your child can balance on their head or other body parts at the same time.

## 2. Bean Bag Race

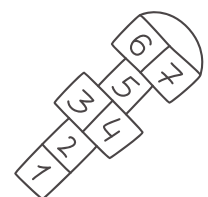
Have a fun race by balancing bean bags on your head and racing to the finish line. Your child can race with their siblings or friends. If it is just you and your child, you can race against each other or you can time each lap and encourage your child to improve on her time for each round. Make it a challenge by changing the rules – hop on one leg to the end, balance two bean bags on your head, race with a bean bag on a spoon etc.

## 3. Bean Bag Toss

This is a good activity for developing aim and hand-eye coordination. Set out some bowls/plates/hoops on the ground and have your children toss the bean bags at the targets. You could lay out various targets at different distances. You could even assign points to each target, based on where they are and the level of difficulty. Write the numbers 1 to 5 on cardboard and lay them in front of the targets, in order of difficulty. Then record your scores!

## 4. Hopscotch

Hopscotch is a traditional game that is a favourite for the multitude of gross motor skills it develops, as well as early maths skills as children learn to count while hopping on the squares. you could draw hopscotch in chalk, or use paper to map it out. Instead of using a stone or pebble, play hopscotch by tossing a bean bag onto the squares.

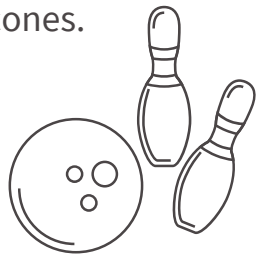


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## 5. Bowling

Set up some plastic cups, cones, empty plastic bottles or any other objects that can be used as pins. Throw or slide a beanbag along the ground to knock over the pins. This is a great gross motor game and can also be mixed with an art activity if you decide to get creative with the cones.



## 6. Catch

Playing a simple game of catch with a beanbag is an excellent way to build hand-eye coordination. Simple variations include:

- Toss a beanbag into the air and catch it.
- Count how many times you catch it without dropping it.
- Toss a beanbag to a partner.
- Take a step back after each toss and see from how far you can still catch the beanbag.

## 7. Bean Bag Hockey

Play hockey inside the house or on a smooth outdoor surface. If you don't have child-sized hockey sticks, use sticks, brooms or bats.

Use a beanbag as a puck or ball, and set up goals with tape.

Play this game alone with your child or divide up the family or friends into two teams.



## 8. Freeze Dance

This is a variation of musical statues game. Turn the music on and dance with your child while tossing the beanbag to and fro. When the music stops, you all have to freeze in position. This can be quite fun, especially if the beanbag is flying at you as you freeze. You may get hit on the head by a beanbag but you cannot move to catch it or duck because you'll be "out".

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## 9. Bean Bag Hide and Seek

Play hide and seek with the bean bag by hiding it around the house or garden and then sending your child to look for it. You could ask them to travel in different ways like hopping, crawling, jumping etc. You can also play 'hot and cold' by saying whether they are getting hotter or colder as they move closer to or further from the hidden beanbag.

## 10. Hot Potato

Sit with your child and pass the bean bag but try not to hold onto it for too long or it will burn hands! The aim is not to drop the potato. This is a fun gross-motor game that can also be adapted to get children crossing the midline and learning their left and right sides. Teach them to receive the beanbag from the left with their right hand, pass it to their left hand and pass it back to you.

## 11. Simon Says

Simon says is a great game for teaching listening and attention skills and can easily be played with a beanbag. You could ask your child to touch the bean bag on different body parts, balance it on their arm or leg etc.

## 12. Other tasks!

- Hop on one foot while holding the beanbag.
- Kick the beanbag along the floor.
- Balance the beanbag on your foot while walking.
- Crawl on all fours with the beanbag on your back.
- Walk backwards with the beanbag on your head.
- Hold the beanbag under your chin.



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