

# Vroom Tips™



These print-at-home tip sheets include a mix of Vroom Brain Building Activities™ for children ages 0-5. Share them, put them up on your fridge, or carry them around—whatever helps remind you that brain-building moments are all around you.

## Brain Building Basics™

We've made the science of early learning simple! Remember these 5 actions to help build your child's brain anytime. They're color coded for easy finding.

### Look

Children use their eyes to learn. See what catches your child's attention and talk about it. Or connect eye-to-eye, then smile, chat, hug, or make funny faces!

### Follow

Young children learn best when you follow their lead. Tune into your child's words, sounds, movements and ideas! Then respond with your own words and actions.

### Chat

Children's brains light up when you talk, sing, or make sounds back and forth with them. Chat about your day, food, and what's around you, or string sounds together for a fun conversation!

### Take Turns

Children learn from taking turns when you play, talk, or explore. After they go, take your turn. Then repeat: they go, you go, they go, you go!

### Stretch

Children's brains grow strong when you help them stretch their learning further. Keep a moment going: ask your child a question that starts with what, when, where, how or why!

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## It's All New

Almost everything is new to your child in their first year. So describe what you see. "There goes the yellow school bus. Beep beep!" Let them see, hear, smell, and even touch things, if possible. Notice what they're interested in and have a back-and-forth chat. "You see the big tree? What else do you see?"

Suggested Age

0 - 12 months

## Brainy Background



When you chat back-and-forth with your child, you help them begin to learn words. They're making connections between words and what they represent. This is an important language skill. By responding to their interests, you're prompting them to learn more.

#876

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## Gab and Go

When you're getting ready to go out, talk about what you're doing and how your child might be feeling. Maybe you could say, "We're getting ready to go to the store. You're wriggling and have a smile on your face. You seem excited. Let's go and see what we find there." How do they respond? Follow their lead!

Suggested Age

0 - 12 months

## Brainy Background



When you talk about their world, your child learns to connect what they're doing with words. When you talk about their feelings, it helps them understand their emotions and who they are. Following their lead helps them learn best.

#689

Learn more at [vroom.org](https://vroom.org)

## What Do We Hear?

When you're out with your child, talk about what you hear. It can be cars, birds, or sirens. Ask your child if they hear the sounds you do. Wait for them to listen. Touch your ears or theirs, or point to where the sound is. Then name another sound and wait for them to respond. Repeat what they do. Take turns being the leader.

Suggested Age

0 - 18 months

## Brainy Background



When your child hears words and other sounds, they're making connections in their brain; these connections will help them with talking and reading in the future. When you listen and respond to them, their brain is activated and engaged in learning.

#660

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## Read the Signs

Some days, there's no time to read a whole book. But we're surrounded by words that are ready for reading. So today, read every sign or billboard aloud to your child and talk to them about what each means.

Suggested Age

0 - 2 years

## Brainy Background



Doesn't matter if it's a book, a magazine, or a bus stop sign! It all counts. Reading to your child, anywhere and everywhere, helps them develop a rich, diverse vocabulary.

#627

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## Sights and Sounds

Describe to your child what you see and how it sounds. A car engine makes a loud noise like "vroom vroom!" Make the same noise every time a car goes by. What other objects do you see and what sounds do they make? Create a sound journey!

Suggested Age

0 - 2 years

## Brainy Background



When your child looks for new objects and listens for the sounds they make, they're making connections between sights and sounds that help them learn to observe and listen more carefully, which are all key learning skills.

#672

Learn more at [vroom.org](https://vroom.org)

## Window Watchers

Ask your child if they want to be a window watcher. Follow their gaze as you point out a window and chat about what you both see. Share where you're looking. Create names for what's out there and talk about what each thing does.

Suggested Age

6 months - 2 years

## Brainy Background



Chatting back and forth about what each of you sees makes this a fun learning moment. Naming things also helps your child increase their vocabulary.

#41

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## Here We Go!

With your child on your lap, pretend you're riding together on different things. First say, "We're on a horse. Neigh!" while bouncing up and down. Then say, "Now we're in a race car!" and move quickly from side to side. Watch their reaction to the motions and repeat the ones that they like.

Suggested Age

6 months - 2 years

## Brainy Background



Switching between different ways of moving gives your child practice with responding flexibly to a changing situation. You're helping them learn to focus on what's happening, a skill that is essential for learning and life.

#773

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## Name the Vehicle

Is your child trying to speak and imitate what you say? Try to build on this when you're out by pointing to vehicles that pass by and naming them. If you see a car, bus, truck or taxi, call it out. Involve them by having them point and name with you.

Suggested Age

15 months - 2 1/2 years

## Brainy Background



Not only is your child learning new words, they're learning to pay careful attention to the differences between cars and taxis, trucks and buses. This involves understanding categories and matching things that are the same and different—all important learning skills.

#700

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## Let's Ride!

As you ride in a bus, train, or car with your child, talk about the ride! You can say, "Here comes a bumpy road!" and talk about how it feels or sway back and forth as you say, "Here come the curves!" Talk about whether you're going fast or slow and how that feels. Let them try to describe the ride. Taking turns is fun!

Suggested Age

12 months - 2 1/2 years

## Brainy Background



As you talk about your ride, you encourage your child to think flexibly and switch between different ideas. This promotes creative thinking. When they experience what words like bumpy mean, they're more likely to remember and use them later.

#752

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## Today Is...

Describe to your child how the day is: "Today is bright and sunny. I can feel the warmth of the sun on my face," or "Brrr, today is cold! That's why we have coats on." Ask them to take a turn. Be sure to respond to their words or sounds.

Suggested Age

0 - 3 years

## Brainy Background



When your child hears you describe the weather and things associated with the weather, they're learning to make connections between what and why. These connections will help them develop critical thinking and communicating skills.

#678

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## Finger Telescope

Make a telescope with your hands. Circle your fingers and hold them to your eye and look at your child telling them, "I see you!" Show them how to make their own finger telescope. Take turns looking through the finger telescope and sharing what you see.

Suggested Age

2 years - 3 years

## Brainy Background



This simple game is not only fun, it gives your child the chance to pay attention to their surroundings and think flexibly as they see familiar people and things in a new way. Being flexible is a big part of problem-solving and making the most out of life.

#666

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## Animal Game

Here is a fun guessing game while waiting. Start with, "I'm thinking of an animal." Then give your child clues to help guess what animal it is. For example, "I'm thinking of an animal who lives in our house and is black."

Suggested Age

2 years - 3 years

## Brainy Background



Playing games like this help develop what scientists call "working memory." They are using working memory to remember names and details. It also turns waiting-time into a fun time for learning!

#698

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## Pretend Play

Here's a fun and easy way to add something new to your child's favorite song or story. Use a few familiar objects as you tell the story or sing the song. If you are outside, they can be leaves or rocks, or household items like a spoon or toy if you are inside. Pretend these things are part of your song or story. Ask your child for ideas too!

Suggested Age

2 years - 3 years

## Brainy Background



Using pretend play helps your child learn that one thing can stand for another. Making connections and thinking creatively are part of learning to read and communicate. What else can you do to build these skills?

#703

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## Lot or Little

Look at the world around you and call your child's attention to things you see like people, cars, buildings, or animals. Point to them and ask them, "How many do you see?" A lot or a little?" When they understand the rules of the game, invite them to take the lead. Then take turns!

Suggested Age

2 1/2 years - 3 years

## Brainy Background



Young children are born with a sense of numbers. Estimating is one of the first things they can do. Even though older children sometimes begin to believe they aren't good at numbers, playing "Lot or Little" helps them stay comfortable with this inborn sense.

#668

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## Window Watching

Look out the window for big things and little things. Take turns with your child, saying, "I see something big." And then name it. Do the same thing with something little. Ask them to go next and see how many things you can find together!

Suggested Age

2 1/2 years - 3 years

## Brainy Background



When you're "Window Watching," your child is practicing paying attention, focusing on an idea, and forming categories. These thinking skills are important for problem-solving.

#670

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## Truck Talk

When you're out for a walk or drive, point out all the different trucks for your child. See if they can guess what's inside by the pictures on the outside of the truck. Try to imagine together where the contents come from. Do the veggies come from a farm? Or the fish from the sea?

Suggested Age

3 years - 4 years

## Brainy Background



This kind of game helps your child think like a scientist by looking for clues in pictures. If they make a mistake, point them to a picture with a better clue. "See the apple on the truck? Does that help?"

#614

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## Colorful World

When you're out with your child, team up with them to find colors. Have them point to something and name the color. Then you name all of the things you can think of that are the same color. Take turns playing this game.

Suggested Age

3 years - 4 years

## Brainy Background



Thinking about the characteristics objects have in common (whether it's colors, shapes, or size) sparks connections in your child's growing brain.

#632

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## Listening Game

When you're out with your child, talk about sounds. When you hear a sound, tell them what you hear and chat about where you think it is. "I hear a bird and I think it is in that tree." Ask what they hear, and where they think the sound is coming from. Take turns being the leader.

Suggested Age

3 years - 4 years

## Brainy Background



When your child listens and names what they're hearing, they're paying attention and learning to connect words with sounds. This promotes language skills. By going back and forth together, you're reinforcing their learning.

#657

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## Color Walk

Going for a walk? Grab a paint brush, put a little water in an empty container, and take a color walk outdoors! Paint the flowers, leaves, or other colorful things as you go. Talk with your child about what they see. Enjoy the textures, colors, and shapes in your world and share your own joy and wonder.

Suggested Age

3 years - 4 years

## Brainy Background



A color walk helps your child focus on the world around them. They are building their brain by observing and describing their world. It also a wonderful way for you to slowdown and enjoy a walk together.

#696

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## Follow Me

Ask your child, "Can you do what I do?" Walk forward or backward, bend down, or reach up high. Talk with them about what you're doing like, "Touch your toes and touch the sky!" Then give them a turn to lead. Change the game and see if they can do the opposite of what you do.

Suggested Age

3 years - 4 years

## Brainy Background



When your child follows your actions, they learn ideas like up and down by doing them with their body. When you change the game, you challenge them to use self-control to stay focused and not go on autopilot. These are important skills for learning now and in the future.

#715

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## The ABC Game

When you're out and about with your child, play "The ABC Game." Take turns spotting each letter in the alphabet from A to Z on road signs, billboards, cars, licenses, and more! Write out the letters so they can match them with what they see.

Suggested Age

4 years - 5 years

## Brainy Background



The "ABC Game" helps your child practice making connections—where your child matches letters with what they see in the world around them. They're also learning letters, which helps them learn to read and write.

#691

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## Seasonal Stroll

Walking somewhere today? Talk to your child about the seasons. Is it cold or warm? What clues do you see that tell you what season it is? Snow? Flowers? Colorful Leaves?

Suggested Age

3 years - 5 years

## Brainy Background



Games like these help your child to think like a scientist because they're observing the world around them. Turn it into a conversation, building on what they say and observe.

#648

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## Sign Game

When you're out and about, point out simple signs and ask your child what they think they mean. If they get it wrong, remind them it's a good try, and ask them to keep trying. Point out clues! (There is a barber inside, so the sign says "Haircuts").

Suggested Age

4 years - 5 years

## Brainy Background



Helping your child look for clues about what words mean is an important step in learning to read, write, and communicate, as well as developing critical thinking skills.

#619

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## Fortune Teller

Talk with your child as you drive, take a bus, or however you get around. Ask them what they think will happen when they get where you are going. You could ask them who they will see, or what they will do when they get there. What will they do after that? Stretch the chat by continuing to ask what will happen next.

Suggested Age

4 years - 5 years

## Brainy Background



Talking back-and-forth like this is good way to help your child develop their language and communication skills.

#623

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## Follow the Leader

Walking somewhere? Turn your trip into “Follow the Leader.” Ask your child, “Can you do what I do?” while you pat your head. Then switch it up. If you pat your head, have them pat their stomach. Keep switching!

Suggested Age

4 years - 5 years

## Brainy Background



The game of same and opposite actions helps your child remember, think flexibly, and not go on autopilot. This helps them learn to pay attention and exercise self-control—essential skills for school and life success.

#639

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## Double Vision

Have your child look for doubles of letters or numbers on signs and license plates. You can say, “Can you find two E’s on one sign outside?” Take turns and see who can find the most.

Suggested Age

4 years - 5 years

## Brainy Background



Your child must pay close attention to their surroundings to find letters or numbers, and keep track of what they have seen and how many times. They also use self-control when they wait for their turn.

#707

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## Counting Cars

Before you go out, ask your child what color of car they think is the most popular. Invite them to count how many cars of that color they see along the way. At the same time, you look for a different color and keep track too. Then talk about what you found out together.

Suggested Age

4 years - 5 years

## Brainy Background



Your child is using critical thinking to do this, just like a scientist. They first come up with an idea (the popular car color) and then they test it out (counting the cars). They must use their memory to keep track of the number of cars and focus to tune out distractions.

#756

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