There are so many ways to spark children’s interest and learning. With these unique, open-ended activities using household materials, children (and adults) can explore concepts of science, math, art, language and so much more. Note that these suggestions will give you a place to start and can lead in many directions based on children’s interests. For additional Learning At Home ideas, visit our Family Resource page.

There are endless opportunities to create using cardboard.

► Build a fort, castle, rocket ship or wherever your imagination takes you. See our tips below for ideas on how to make an amazing fort!
► Using a pizza box or create a box with large lid similar to a pizza box, line inner lid with felt and then children can create characters out of felt to make a portable felt board.
► Create a home for stuffed animals or dolls.
► Make a marble maze (or ball for smaller children to avoid choking hazard) or a maze for people.
► Tape cardboard pieces on the underside of a table (coffee table is ideal) and have children draw and paint from a different perspective.
► Create instruments adding sting, twine, tape, rubber bands, paperclips, ribbons, and more.
► Build a space for matchbox cars whether it is a racetrack, a car wash or a garage using a box and stacked paper towel tubes.
► Punch holes or create slots and insert knotted yard or thread to create a loom, tying laces practice, or creative design canvas.
► Cut holes in the tops of two boxes, space them apart, and add beanbags for a fun-filled game of corn hole.
► Inspire an older child with this video of Caine’s Arcade. Watch it together and challenge your child to see what they can build!

How to Make an Amazing Fort

Anything that children enjoy doing becomes even more fun when inside a homemade tent!

► To build a fort, you can cut the box up in pieces and use Velcro pieces or duct tape to hold the pieces together in a new shape. Or you can simply provide a pile of sheets, large and small boxes, and even a few moveable chairs. Encourage your children to drape the sheets over the furniture to create a fort, home, or whatever their imagination envisions.
► Provide some quilts, blankets, or sleeping bags to create cozy spaces inside.
► Set up a stack of board games outside the structure and encourage children to play them inside.
► Put a basket of books and flashlights inside the structure.
► Add blocks, cars, dolls, and more to create a city within the structure.
► Set up clipboards with paper and provide markers or pencils.
► Write notes, slip them inside, and create a mail system between you and your children.
► Eat snack or another meal in the structure.