

Putting the Fun in Housekeeping

There are so many ways to spark children's interest and learning, and it can happen during all parts of your day! Here are some ways to engage your child in housekeeping while keeping it fun and allowing for casual learning. These suggestions will provide a start and can lead in many directions based on your child's interests. For additional Learning At Home ideas, visit our [Family Resource page](#).

Involving your child in caring for the home is a great way to teach them responsibility, build their confidence, and strengthen their life skills. [Click here](#) to learn more or see the box below for some ideas on tasks to delegate to children. Be sure to review contents and warnings on cleaning agents before supplying them to children for use.

- ▶ **Tidy up to music.** Select a favorite song as your cleanup tune. When it starts, everyone knows what to do!
- ▶ **Race against the clock.** Set a timer. Challenge your child to pick up items in one room or complete a task on your chores list before time runs out.
- ▶ **Make picking tasks fun.** Assign each job a number and then roll dice or pick from a stack of cards to unveil what each person will do.
- ▶ **Do your children have pedometers?** Take note of everyone's steps beforehand and then start cleaning! Create your own step challenge by seeing who moves the most during a cleaning session. Make a chart and compare everyone's numbers.
- ▶ **Turn cleanup into a sport.** Tape a shape on the floor for your child to sweep crumbs into or turn a laundry basket into a basketball hoop when sorting laundry.
- ▶ **Link household tasks to games.** With each job you or your child finishes, you can add a mark in a game of *Tic-Tac-Toe*, drop a circle in *Connect Four*, or place a token in a box in *BINGO*.
- ▶ **Add some dramatic play to cleanup time.** Your child can pretend to be a postal worker delivering laundry "mail" from room to room, a construction worker scooping up toys with a bucket truck, or a figure skater with microfiber "skates" to help sweep up dust bunnies.
- ▶ **Set up a scavenger hunt of encouraging notes.** Place a note on the pillow for your children to find when they make their bed. Or tape one on the broom handle that they will find when they go to sweep the floor. Look together to see how many your children have gathered by the end of the day.
- ▶ **Provide kid-sized cleaning tools.** Let children wear gloves and use mini dustpans. Put everything in a tote so each child has their own cleaning kit.
- ▶ **You may find that your children have a cleaning preference.** Embrace that by letting them choose how to help!

What Is Right for Children?

- ▶ Whatever you choose, start small, expect mistakes, and gently guide your child to success.
- ▶ Lots of sorting can happen when cleaning up. Have your children sort laundry by color or family member, match socks, or return flatware to the right spot in the utensil drawer.
- ▶ Have your children help with meals by setting the table, wiping up, sweeping crumbs, or perhaps helping load the dishwasher or dry plastic items.
- ▶ Engage your child in putting away toys and books, making beds, or selecting clothes for the following day.
- ▶ Care for living things by feeding a pet or watering a plant.
- ▶ When everyone pitches in — whether by sweeping or vacuuming, dusting, cleaning windows, folding towels, or bringing in the mail — it makes the day a little easier for all.