

# Theme: Sports

## Gross Motor (Indoor & Outdoor):

See book by Judy Sierra, [Schoolyard Rhymes: Kids' Own Rhymes for Rope Skipping, Hand Clapping, Ball Bouncing and Just Plain Fun.](#)

Basketball – roll, throw, catch, kick, dribble, sit on it – compare different size balls and how they are harder/easier to roll, throw, etc.

Relays

Drop or throw balls into a container, such as a laundry basket.

Make a ball from crumpled paper to play indoor games.

Balance

Olympics – set up an obstacle course.

Miniature golf, bowling

What else can roll like a ball? Can you roll like a ball?

## Math Activities:

Count balls, baskets, bounces

Measure: distance, size, weight

Sorting

Add/subtract

Matching game (cards)

Concentration

Bar graphs

Football cards

## Science Topics:

Sink/float

Air

Soft/hard

Heavy/light

Texture

Physics – push, pull

How balls are used differently

Which shapes roll?

Which balls are faster?

Which balls bounce higher?

Force

## Small Motor/Manipulatives:

Stickers

Sport puzzles (wooden ones are great)

Cut out sports items and create lacing cards

Connect-the-dots (you can make some simple ones for drawing shapes of footballs, basket balls, etc.)

Make your own sports cards – make a matching or concentration game out of them.

## Snacks:

My son used to love to eat English peas – he called them “basketball peas.”

Remember the old speckled roasting pans? Bake a cake in one of them and decorate it like a football! (They’re also great for those Super Bowl parties!)

Have foods children might buy at the concession stand at a sporting event. Give the children play money to “buy” their snacks! They’ll love it! Especially if you have some old wallets for them to carry their “money.”

“S” – spaghetti, salad. Decorate sports-themed cookies. Melon balls. Meatballs. Hotdogs.

## Special Visual Aids/Room Set-Up/Field Trips:

Field trip idea: Visit a local ballpark. If you have a minor league baseball team, set up a tour of the ballpark. Have different sports players visit your program and talk to the kids about their sport.

Visit your local community center for swimming or other activity. Be sure to take a lot of adults!

## Songs & Fingerplays:

<http://www.preschooleducation.com/sfarm.shtml>

<http://www.perpetualpreschool.com/preschoolsongs.html>

<http://www.childcarelounge.com/Caregivers/fingerplays.htm>

<http://www.preschoolrainbow.org/preschool-rhymes.htm>

<http://www.sparc.org.nz/filedownload?id=193e7aff-131f-4e2c-8426-a7d2fb1f2046>

## Books:

My Football Book by Gail Gibbons  
Kick, Pass, and Run by Leonard Kessler  
Balls! (Elmo) by John E. Barrett  
The Berenstain Bears Play T-Ball by Stan & Jan Berenstain  
Froggy Plays T-Ball by Jonathan London  
Play Ball by Mercer Mayer  
Bear and Ball by Cliff Wright  
Play Ball, Amelia Bedelia by Peggy Parish  
My Secret Life as a Ping-Pong Wizard by Henry Winkler  
The Backyardigans: The Soccer Ball Mystery by Adam Peltzman  
Hit the Ball, Duck! by Jez Alborough  
Curious George in the Snow by Margret Rey  
Z is for Zamboni: A Hockey Alphabet by Matt Napier  
Max and Ruby's Snowy Day by Rosemary Wells  
Caillou Learns to Skate by Marion Johnson  
Clifford's Day with Dad by Norman Bridwell  
Froggy Learns to Swim by Jonathan London  
Five Little Sharks Swimming in the Sea by Steve Metzger

Do Princesses Scrape Their Knees? (Coyle)  
Dick & Jane Play Ball by Grosset & Dunlap  
Ball Book by Margaret Hillert  
Balls by Melanie Davis Jones  
A Beach Ball Has Them All! by Linzi West  
The Big Tee Ball Game by Larry D. Brimmer  
Fabulous Ball Book by Kathy Stinson  
Let's Play Ball by Gina Clegg  
Play Ball with Me by Lynn Reiser  
Good Sports by Jack Prelutsky  
Let's Play Sports! (Dora) by Alison Inches  
Duck on a Bike by David Shannon  
Winners Never Quit! by Mia Hamm  
Soccer Game! by Grace MacCarone  
Skater Girl by Jennifer L. Holm  
Clifford's First Snow Day by Norman Bridwell  
Maisy's Pool by Lucy Cousins  
Barnabas Goes Swimming

## Dramatic Play:

A Day at the Ballpark – have baseball caps for children to wear. Set up the playroom like a concession stand, a dugout, the stands, etc., and let the children pretend to be going to a baseball game.

Provide a variety of sports uniforms for children to try on

## Art:

Sports collage – if you can't find enough magazine pictures related to sports, cut out balls, use stickers, or find someone with a die cut machine to cut out several for you!

Rubbings

Hole-in-the-paper – Cut a sports shape in the middle of a piece of art paper and see what the children do with it.

Dip a golf ball or ping pong ball into paint and let children roll it over a piece of paper in the bottom of a cake pan.

Color over textures—mesh like a tennis racket, etc. Scrapbook stores have papers with great textures to represent different types of balls, etc.

## Circle Time Activities:

- Read books about sports, teams from the list above.
- Talk about vocabulary words; show words and pictures. Note the first letter of each word and its sound.
- Pull random pictures from a covered/painted coffee can; let the children identify what sport is being played in the picture.
- Sing songs and do fingerplays and action rhymes about sports.
- Introduce children to different types of balls used in various sports. Let children compare the balls.
- Talk about color, shape, size, and the game each ball is used for. You can play games passing the balls around the circle, playing hot potato, etc.
- Guess What? Put a ball into a pillowcase and let children try to guess what type of ball it is just by the size and feel of it. You can try other sports-related items, too, besides balls! Gear this game to the age and abilities of your children.
- Pick a day and invite all the children to wear their favorite team shirt to child care!
- Compare shoes used in different types of sports. Let children discuss likenesses and differences.