

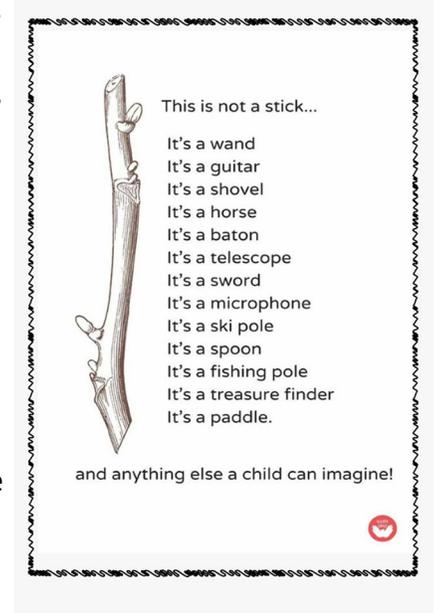
Outdoor Activities: Fun with Sticks

<https://childhood101.com/outdoor-activities-20-ways-to-play-with-sticks/>

When it comes to childhood toys more often than not, simple is best. Take the humble stick, for example. It's free, can be found just about anywhere, and can transform into almost anything a child wants it to. Plus, it's fun for us adults, too. Maybe that's why the stick was inducted into the Toy Hall of Fame in 2008!

Sticks are a great example of a "loose part," something that doesn't come with an instruction manual and can be used alone or combined with other items. Sticks encourage free play and using the imagination. No two times spent playing with a stick are ever quite the same.

I know what you're thinking (especially if you have little ones) – yes, sticks can be dangerous. Your best defense against scrapes, bumps and bruises is to teach some basic safety limits from the start. These may differ depending on the setting and the family, but should include using sticks in wide-open spaces (like yard or park), and not throwing or hitting anyone with the sticks.



Playing with sticks comes naturally to most kids, but if you're looking to offer your child a little inspiration, here are some ideas to get you started:



1. Turn a stick into a stirring spoon to mix up mud soup, scented petal potions or magic potions.
2. See how high you can build a stick tower by layering sticks on top of one another.
3. Tie on a length of fabric or ribbon to create a wind streamer.
4. Collect several sticks and sort them by length, width, shape, color AND texture.

5. Paint them (or paint with them) with bright colors, pastels, water, mud or whatever else you have on hand.
6. Draw a picture or write letters, words or names in the dirt, mud or sand.
7. Use as a pair as drumsticks on a tree or rock to make outdoor music.
8. Roast a marshmallow on a stick over a backyard campfire pit.



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