

Inside Adventure: When The Weather's Bad

Have you refurbished your house so that your child can stay active during rainy, cold, and snowy months? There are plenty of places to take your child when cabin fever sets in. Sign her up for weekly indoor activities or just go for a one-day visit when the mood strikes.

- Gyms and fitness centers: These offer a variety of calorie-burning fun including gymnastics, tumbling, indoor basketball, wrestling, kick-boxing or other martial arts, wall-climbing, track, badminton, volleyball, table tennis, and swimming. Don't forget indoor tennis.
- Dance studios: Kids are welcome in all kinds of classes including ballet, tap, modern, jazz, hip-hop, line dancing, ballroom dancing, yoga, free movement, and other music-dance combination classes.
- Indoor rinks: Ice skating and roller skating can provide hours of fun on a rainy day.
- Children's museums: These exist in most cities and provide interesting, educational, and fun activities that keep your kid on the move!
- Indoor nature centers or aquariums offer similar opportunities for movement.
- Restaurants with games: They're popping up all over. Choose those that offer the best energy burners, including laser tag and other fast-paced activities. Most have salad bars, so plan on light meals.
- A plastic tub filled with costumes, dress-up clothes, and accessories like crowns, wands, toy shields, armor, masks, vests, belts, shoes, hats, grass skirts, scarves, play jewelry, wigs, and so forth
- Boom box with various dance music tapes or CDs
- Microphone, drums, toy musical instruments, stage curtains
- Puppets, marionettes, magician kits, various stuffed animals
- Batons, small flags, pom-poms, streamers, hula hoops
- Foam mats and wedges, indoor tents, large building blocks or cardboard boxes, beanbag chairs, soft pillows, old blankets, sheets
- Hopscotch mat, action games like Twister, Charades, Simon Says, follow the-leader, paddle balls, indoor hall-toss games, beanbags, juggling balls, hacky sack
- Kid-safe dartboards or other target games
- Indoor basketball hoop and soft foam bails
- Jump ropes, skip-it, small kid-safe hand weights, exercise stretch bands

For younger children, try:

- Small pull-push toys or plastic wagons
- Toy household cleaning items such as brooms, mops, vacuum cleaners, and feather dusters
- Toy kitchen, restaurant, and accessories
- Indoor riding toys

Meanwhile, when you're gathered in front of the television watching your favorite show don't forget to stand up and do the "TV commercial boogie" whenever the ads come on. You'll be amazed at how much moving you'll do to the soundtracks of those endless commercials! And be sure to engage in collective booing when junk-food ads fill the screen.