

Understanding Position

Position words help children explore the concept of where objects are in relationship to something else. For example, a ball may be behind the chair, or under the table, or in the box. The dog may be on the blanket, outside of the house, or in the doghouse. These types of words are sometimes called spatial relations because they suggest the position of an object in relation to something else. Learning to understand spatial relationships helps children talk about where things are located.

Ideas to try

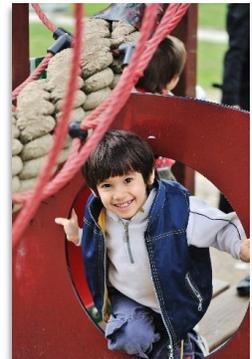
Use Position Words: Use position words as you talk with children, such as, “Find the ball under the table.” Some common position words to say with young children include: above/below, before/after, high/low, in front of/in back of, inside/outside, on top of/under, forward/backward, up/down, to/from and near/far. Children learn by hearing words over again. Use these words often to help them learn the meaning of each word.

Hide and Seek: Hide a toy in the room and give directions on how to find the toy using position words. For example, you might say, “Look behind the chair.” Give children blocks and have them think of places to hide their blocks. Have them use position words to help you find the blocks.

Put the Block ____: Give your children a large building block. Have them place blocks on top of, under, next to, inside, behind or in front of tables and chairs in the room. Give directions, such as, “I want you to put your block inside a box.” “You should put your block under a table.” Continue but have children tell you where to put the block.

Obstacle Course: Create an obstacle course where children have to climb over a cushion, under a table, around a cabinet, through a tunnel and so forth. Let children try the obstacle course and use position words to describe what they are doing as they make their way through the obstacle course.

Spatial Simon Says: Play Simon Says using position words. Have children follow instructions, such as “stand in front of the door,” “go out the door,” “come in the door,” “climb under the table,” “stand behind the table,” “stand next to the cabinet,” “put the ball inside the box,” etc. Let children take turns being Simon and using position words to give instructions.



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