

December Themed “I CAN TOUCH” ideas

December brings a lot of new activities, traditions and can be very busy for families. Our children are trying to understand these new experiences – there is a tree INSIDE my house, *but I can't touch it*. Sparkling lights are on the tree INSIDE of my house, *but I can't touch them*.

Giving our children things they can touch and giving them time to explore can support when you have to say 'no touch' because something is breakable.

Materials Needed: Surprise Boxes

- **Empty boxes** – varying sizes of boxes.
- **Wrapping paper, tape, bows, and scissors.**
- **Items for inside the boxes** – you can add whatever you want to the boxes – blocks, a small car, different types of textures (pom poms, crinkle paper), a small toy—anything you already have.



Wrap the boxes or containers so that your child can 'practice' opening a wrapped present. Use items from around your house – anything can be a surprise! You can re-wrap the boxes over the month. We all enjoy opening presents, so having this activity happen a few times is a great way to reinforce the concepts, the language and build on the experience.

This activity also gives you a chance to have something safe for your child to touch when many things are out for decoration only.

This activity encourages language development by giving you opportunities to use descriptive language, action words, and silly sounds. Eye/hand coordination and fine motor development with unwrapping and opening the box. Big muscle, heavy work in trying to get tape and bows off of the Paper. Putting bows on your nose, your head, and sneezing them off is SUPER SILLY, and your toddler will think you are hilarious as well as learning body parts.

Remember – *when we model, and they imitate, that is the beginning of understanding communication. When we imitate our children, we tell them their ideas and choices are powerful, encouraging them to want to do more.*

Again – use your imagination, plan for what works best for your family and child and HAVE FUN!

The link below has examples of how to set up for this activity:

[3 Surprise Christmas Sensory Box Ideas For Toddlers - Mum's Creative Cupboard \(mumscreativecupboard.com\)](http://mumscreativecupboard.com)

Lesson Plan developed by AnnMarie Adams, Special Educator

Link and photo credit: [3 Surprise Christmas Sensory Box Ideas For Toddlers - Mum's Creative Cupboard \(mumscreativecupboard.com\)](http://mumscreativecupboard.com)

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December is full of so many new experiences for our children. Many of them are 'no touch' due to decorations, a tree in your house, lights, wrapped gifts. So many pretty and exciting things to explore – and yet, we say "No Touch."

To help our children developmentally understand that some things are breakable, and we cannot touch them, we also need to provide opportunities that they Can Touch. Having a tree to decorate is just for them, presents to unwrap as an activity (surprise boxes), or cooking experiences where they can participate.

As with all activities – *planning is critical, and adult supervision is needed.*

Materials Needed: Contact Paper Christmas Tree Activity

- **Contact Paper, scissors tape** – use tape to hold the piece in place, keeping the sticky side up for your child to access.
- **Space/location** – a place where you can keep this activity up so your child can explore the idea/activity for a while,
- **Decorations** – The options are endless with this idea. You can cut shapes out of construction paper, buttons, bells, use garland, small bows, pom poms, confetti pieces. Let your imagination and your child's ability level go wild!

How to: Your imagination can be endless with this activity, and it is excellent to do year-round. Make sure the sticky side is facing out so that your child will have success sticking everything on it.

Give your child time to play, stick, explore. They are going to be curious, maybe cautious at first. Model, touch, make silly sounds. Having your child imitate what you are doing is the beginning of conversations. You do (speak), they do (speak). If they initiate, you imitate them – WOW, what POWER!

Use different items to decorate with – practice eye-hand coordination. Add wrapping bows, pom poms, ribbon, buttons – whatever you have on hand, or you are inspired to do. Examples are available in the photos.

The link below has examples of how to set up for this activity:

[Christmas Stocking Sticky Wall Activity - HAPPY TODDLER PLAYTIME](#)

Lesson Plan developed by AnnMarie Adams, Special Educator
Link and photo credit: Happytoddlerplaytime.com



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Maybe you don't want to have a wall dedicated to 'tree decorating,' or perhaps space is limited-This doesn't mean you can't have fun; I CAN TOUCH tree activity. All of these items can be purchased at Dollar Tree, and you may find you have many of them in your home already.

For this activity, you could use different shapes – a snowman, a present, a snowflake, or even a gingerbread man or house.

As with all activities – *planning is crucial, and adult supervision is needed.*

Materials Needed:

- **Cookie Sheet or another metal pan** – Use what you have on hand.
- **Construction Paper**– to cut out the shape you will decorate. Remember – it can be anything. You do not have to do a tree.
- **Decorations, magnet sheets, or strips** – this is where Dollar Tree and the family junk drawer come in handy! You can purchase sticky back magnets in strips or sheets so you can cut them to fit any size. Once you have gathered your 'decorations,' add a piece of magnet to the back so your child can decorate. You can cut out a Christmas tree or an ornament, and you can have small bows, pom poms, confetti. A Gingerbread character can have buttons, bows, eyes, hair, etc., and a present can be decorated with different shapes, bows, buttons.
- **Scissors, Paper, tape, sharpie pen** – You will want to use construction paper for this activity – but if you have card stock, if you want to laminate it so it can be used next December again, feel free. Tape the Paper securely to the surface so that your child does not have to try to hold it in place.



How-to: Set up your work area so that your child has access to the materials (already prepped), and you can sit with them to model, narrate and encourage.

Give your child time to explore, play and imitate. They are going to be curious, maybe cautious at first. Having your child imitate what you are doing is the beginning of conversations. You do (speak), they do (speak). If they initiate, you imitate them – WOW, what POWER! Offering this activity a few times will allow your child to build on their experiences. You will notice that their play will change as they become comfortable and more experienced at the activity.

The link below has examples of how to set up for this activity:

[Magnetic Christmas Tree Activity - I Heart Arts n Crafts2+ AMAZING CHRISTMAS ACTIVITIES USING CONTACT PAPER - HAPPY TODDLER PLAYTIME](#)