

Top Affordable Kids' Gifts That Aren't Apps or Video Games

By Carrie Spencer



We all want the kids in our lives to expand their worlds beyond the virtual experiences of video games, and apps for phones or tablets. Get creative when it comes time to give them something and look for learning experiences. The following suggestions from [How Children Learn](#) can help give your youngsters golden opportunities to explore the world.

Give an Experience

The best gifts for kids are experiences. Spend an afternoon together visiting a local museum. If you haven't in a while, look around online and see what your community has to offer. Many zoos and museums have [memberships](#) that make impromptu and repeat visits easier. Don't feel like taking in the whole museum? Do a wing today and another wing next month. The time you spend together learning new things is invaluable.

Go Retro With a Kid's Toolkit

The classics are classics for a reason. And while the screwdriver and hammer might get slight upgrades, the tools we use haven't changed much in decades. If something needs fixing around the house or there's a woodworking project you think your child might enjoy. With a children's toolset, you're spending time together as they develop motor skills and [fix-it skills](#).

Science is Fun

Gifts that help prepare your child for adulthood will also be a welcomed sight this holiday season. School-age children through the teen years might enjoy a 3D pen, like the [3Doodler Start](#) or Create+. A 3D pen could be the first introduction to engineering. Your young learners can literally draw what's in their imagination and bring it to life in three dimensions, starting at less than \$50. Other science and technology gifts to consider are a [telescope](#), microscope, or pair of binoculars.

Science gifts are not the only hit this holiday season. Children as young as 2 will enjoy cooking in the kitchen with Mom, Dad, or Grandma, using their very own child-sized cooking utensils. [Curious Chef](#) is one of a handful of companies that cater to the preschool food prep pro. A chef's setup complete with an apron and tools starts at around \$20, and there are many stocking stuffers for \$5 or less. There are lots of children's cookbooks with great recipes to get them started on a life of healthy eating. And you can supplement the culinary experience with an herb or [mushroom growing kit](#).

Backyard Play

Speaking of science, don't forget that your own backyard is also a great place to foster your child's love of learning and the outdoors! From catching butterflies to inspecting plants, nature can be a wonderful teacher. In fact, outdoor play offers a ton of [benefits](#), both physical and intellectual. So if that yard currently isn't adequately kid-friendly, search Angi for [backyard landscaping companies](#), then browse the ratings and reviews to get started.

Books Always in Season

While we think of reading as a solitary activity, when your kids are younger you can share the experience as you read together. Believe it or not, even older kids like reading together; you can take turns! Books, whether [audio](#) or paperback, are a wonderful gift that will not only impart knowledge but also open up new worlds in your children's imagination.

Okay, we admit it, we love video games and apps too. But for the kids who play them, they'll already have them. These ideas are all affordable, fun, and memorable. Give an experience and create new memories.

[How Children Learn](#) believes that children are our most precious resource. Protecting and nurturing this resource is an awesome responsibility shared by teachers and parents. Your thoughts are [important to us](#).

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