



# Toys by category from age 1

TOY REPORT 2011

## Bath, Sand & Water

★★★★  
12 mos +

**MUSICAL BUBBLES OCTOPUS**  
VTECH  
ELECTRONICS  
CANADA LTD.  
80-113500



This musical octopus toy teaches animal names, sounds, and instruments while in the bath! By pressing one of his five legs, children can learn about the different subjects, and when some bubble solution (not included) is added, he will start blowing bubbles while they play. Kids love the bubbles, which are produced consistently, and with two different modes, there is a good variety of play. A suction cup also allows the toy to adhere to the wall, although it does not always hold well. NOTE: Four AA batteries required.

## Construction Toys

★★★  
12 mos +

**BLOCKS (MY FIRST GREEN TOY)**  
GREEN TOYS INC.  
0428100101

With an appealing eco-friendly angle, the blocks and packaging for this toy are all made from recycled materials. Fashioned from recycled plastic milk bottles, the 18 blocks in the set gives babies a chance to work on fine motor skills. However, these blocks are large and sometimes difficult for small hands to manipulate. While the block colours are rather dull, this toy wins high marks for being "green."

★★★  
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★★★★  
12 mos +

**BUILD N' DISCOVER STACKER**  
MEGA BLOKS INC.  
8266

This fun building playset comes with a rocking storage bucket that serves as the base of the stacker and even holds maxi blocks inside. The top stacking block is a rattle with a friendly face. The remaining stacking blocks have numbers on them to help teach numeracy skills. Older children enjoyed showing younger siblings how the toy worked. NOTE: The accompanying graphics that serve as visual aids do not match the number on the blocks.

★★★★  
12 mos +  


**LIL' BOAT**  
MEGA BLOKS INC.  
8286

This cute little boat, which actually floats, comes with a sailor and five blocks for simple bathtime building activities. It can also be used on land, but wherever it goes, its bright colours are attractive to babies and toddlers. The paddle wheel at the back of the boat is for decoration; it doesn't actually turn due to the pressure of the water.

★★★★  
12 mos +

**LIL' PINK BUS**  
MEGA BLOKS INC.  
8288


Kids can transport these building blocks in style! They flip open the lid to store the six included maxi blocks inside the bus or to play with the included female driver! Made of hard plastic, the bright pink bus rolls well on the floor, and it is fully compatible with other sets, so you can mix and match pieces. It will even hold up to four other toy figure buddies. Did someone say "road trip"?

## Construction Toys

<p>★★★★ 12 mos +</p>	<p><b>PLAY N' GO MUSICAL TRAIN</b> MEGA BLOKS INC. 6612</p>	<p>Choo choo! Choo... moo? The farmer and his animals hit the road with this farm-themed railway set. Children must push on the smoke stack to send the train as well as its colourful animal occupants chugging around the track. The train can move on the track as well as off, and the track comes with enough pieces to be rebuilt in many different ways. The track is easy to put together and children like the brightly coloured animals and farm theme. NOTE: Two AA batteries required.</p>
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## Developmental Toys

<p>★★★★ 12 mos - 3 yrs</p> 	<p><b>COOK AND PLAY POTSY</b> LEAP FROG 81135</p>	<p>***Children's Choice Award 2011*** "Ohhhhh, the nutrients!" Potsy is a pot that loves vegetables! This cute pot comes with a spoon and five healthy ingredients – corn, cheese, pea pod, broccoli, and a tomato. With two modes, learning and cooking, Potsy sings whenever its lid is lifted to add ingredients. With a focus on healthy foods, this friendly toy is never too loud, even when singing at full volume. The friendly voice matches the cute little face, making kids and parents alike fall for this charming toy. NOTE: Two AA batteries required.</p>
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<p>★★★ 12 mos - 3 yrs</p>	<p><b>COUNT &amp; SORT COCONUT TREE (CHICKA CHICKA BOOM BOOM)</b> MANHATTAN TOY COMPANY 210260</p>	<p>This toy encourages little ones to count and sort, placing the appropriate letter in the appropriate compartment and then stacking them up like the coconut tree in the book. The components are colourful and bright, and although the soft pieces makes stacking difficult at times, the tree is an attractive way to make learning about counting and letters fun. With only four letters covered, however, this set is best used as an introduction to the alphabet and counting; while that content may be aimed at older children, the design and materials of this toy are more appropriate for babies.</p>
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<p>★★★ 18 mos - 3 yrs</p>	<p><b>COUNT WITH ME HIPPO</b> VTECH ELECTRONICS CANADA LTD. 80-112400</p>	<p>As children toss three balls into this hippo toy's open mouth, the balls are counted or music plays (depending on the selected game) while lights in his cheeks flash. Pulling his raised arm releases the balls out of his feet and the game can begin again! This toy is stable and very cute, with bright colours and a fun-looking face. The sound effects feature positive voice responses that encourage more play and the quality of the sound (which has three different volume settings) is excellent. The lever that ejects the balls is stiff, however, and it does not always push balls out of the chute cleanly. The hippo also only counts to three; variation between the different tasks is lacking and children may lose interest. Still, a cute toy. NOTE: Two AA batteries required.</p>
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<p>★★★ 18 - 18 mos</p>	<p><b>COUNTING TIME MEASURING TAPE</b> VTECH ELECTRONICS CANADA LTD. 80-113200</p>	<p>This rainbow-coloured measuring tape has a belt clip (just like the pros) and a great chunky handle for easy measuring on the go! The fabric tape is easy for little fingers to pull out of the bright yellow base and features actual marked units of measurement. Three light-up buttons teach colours and tools (saw, drill, and wrench) using the sounds they make when they're used. The toy's number songs sing 1 to 10 to help teach counting, and the centre of the base lights up when the measuring tape is pulled. The measuring tape itself, however, only goes up to eight, and the songs do not have volume control. NOTE: Two AAA batteries required.</p>
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## Developmental Toys

<p>★★★★ 12 mos +</p>	<p><b>CRAZY LEGS LEARNING BUGS</b> VTECH ELECTRONICS CANADA LTD. 80-111200</p>	<p> <b>Energizer</b></p> <p>This cute pull toy teaches shapes, colours, numbers, and music! Momma bug has six shape sorter legs that are attached by stretchy cords, making them impossible to lose. The toy has two modes: learning and music. Babies press the spinning bug to hear phrases and sound effects and, in the music mode, they can sing along to a variety of songs. This toy is fun and easy to store too. NOTE: 2 AA batteries required.</p>
<p>★★★★ 18 mos +</p>	<p><b>FORM FITTER (SHAPE SORTER)</b> PLAYSKOOL 00322</p>	<p>A classic shape sorter without noise or flashing lights! The twist to this toy is texture; children learn to match the texture on the blocks with the texture on the sides of the purple box. The holes for the blocks are arranged in a smiley face and the neon green trap door is easy for kids to find when it's time to dump the blocks out. Babies love to sit on their parent's laps to play. When they get older, little ones like to use the form fitter as a prop in imaginative games.</p>
<p>★★★★ 12 mos +</p> <p></p>	<p><b>LEARNING FUN TOOL BOX</b> VTECH ELECTRONICS CANADA LTD. 80-113100</p>	<p> <b>Energizer</b></p> <p>This interactive, educational toolbox toy comes in bright, primary colours and includes four chunky plastic tools. The buttons teach shapes, counting to 10, colours and objects. A sturdy, chunky toy, the toolbox is easy to hold, works consistently, and encourages learning with positive feedback. All toy nails, screws, and bolts are attached to the toolbox so there is no chance of losing them and no choking hazard. Some children may need adult assistance in opening the toolbox lid. NOTE: Two AA batteries required.</p>
<p>★★★★ 18 - 30 mos</p>	<p><b>MUSICAL FUN CHOO CHOO</b> VTECH ELECTRONICS CANADA LTD. 80-112700</p>	<p> <b>Energizer</b></p> <p>Featuring three animals playing musical instruments in its cars, this train teaches children songs, musical instruments, and shapes. Pushing or pulling the train faster speeds up the melody. Children can also push one of the eight buttons to make sound effects, and the lights flash with the sounds. The different learning features are varied enough to engage children and hold their interest, and the entire toy is very colourful and cute. Although it lacks volume control, the sound quality of the toy is excellent, and the entire package is easy to store because all of the pieces fit on the train itself. NOTE: Two AA batteries required.</p>
<p>★★★★ 12 - 24 mos</p> <p></p>	<p><b>PUSH AND LEARN PONY</b> VTECH ELECTRONICS CANADA LTD. 80-111100</p>	<p>Fun and educational – this pony toy does it all! Used one way, this toy improves motor skills and language development, as children place colourful blocks into the pony's back when it calls out letters, shapes, objects and animals. If they do that correctly, the pony will play an applause sound. Or, if the pony's music setting is selected, children can learn new words and play sing-along. Finally, an optional pull cord can be used to push (or pull) the pony all over the house! The variety of interactive options means that children will be able to grow with the toy, trying out new modes as they learn, and the fact that the pony is wheeled makes it perfect for children just learning to walk. NOTE: Two AA batteries required.</p>
<p>★★★ 12 mos +</p>	<p><b>RUMBLIN TOW TRUCK OR 4X4 OR DUMP TRUCK</b> PLAYSKOOL 05051/05056/05057</p>	<p>When children pull the cord on these little plastic trucks, they can watch them shake and rattle as if they were full-sized vehicles. These toys are small, but with a chunky build that make them easy for little hands to grasp. Kids are immediately engaged by the toy's rumble, but that interest can wane once they realize that all the toys do is shake. Still, these trucks are colourful and fun-looking, and do inspire imaginative play. NOTE: The cord used to make the vehicle rumble does not always retract fully.</p>

## Developmental Toys

<p>★★★★</p> <p>18 mos - 3 yrs</p>	<p><b>SNAIL SORTER PULL ALONG TOY</b></p> <p>IMAGIPLAY</p> <p>40020</p>	<p>This quiet pull toy is a welcome addition to a busy household! With cheerful green and yellow child-safe paint and a pleasant smile, this snail sorter is a cute change from other shape sorters. The durable, eco-friendly toy helps to develop manual dexterity and cognitive development and helps to promote physical activity. When on the move, children enjoy listening to the shapes rattling inside the shell.</p>
<p>★★★★</p> <p>12 mos +</p> 	<p><b>TOUCH AND TEACH TURTLE</b></p> <p>VTECH ELECTRONICS CANADA LTD. 80-079800</p> 	<p>This turtle toy is a cheerful little guy that comes with a 16-page book to facilitate learning. Children can choose between three modes of play: letter mode, story mode and music mode, all designed to teach new skills. The colourful buttons light up, as does the turtle's hat, which asks questions about numbers, letters, shapes, animals or objects, depending on the mode selected and the page in the book. While younger children may experience difficulty answering the questions before the toy prompts them for the answer, kids have fun with this toy. NOTE: Two AA batteries are required.</p>
<p>★★★</p> <p>12 - 24 mos</p>	<p><b>ZOOM ZOOM RACER</b></p> <p>VTECH ELECTRONICS CANADA LTD. 80-112900</p>	<p>This racecar, piloted by a handsome, yellow doggy driver, makes cool racing sounds as it zips across the floor on its own. A durable toy, the car has attractive flashing lights and plays catchy songs for children to learn. Young ones find the car to be heavy, and some have difficulty making it go by pressing the dog. Still, a cute toy. NOTE: Two AA batteries required; automatic shut-off.</p>

## Dolls, Houses, & Accessories

<p>★★★★</p> <p>18 mos +</p> 	<p><b>1ST FOR ME BABY ALIVE 'SIPS &amp; CUDDLES'</b></p> <p>HASBRO CANADA INC. 19219/19141</p> 	<p>***Best Bet Award 2011*** This adorable baby doll drinks from her bottle, snuggles and giggles, just like a real baby! Children are drawn to her cute face and big, bright eyes and enjoy taking care of her and snuggling with her at night. The doll is a good weight for little ones to carry, and parents like that the noises it makes are not too loud. This durable toy is easy to clean, and the cloth bottle is attached to the doll's hand so it will never get lost. NOTE: Two AA batteries required.</p>
<p>★★★★</p> <p>12 - 18 mos</p>	<p><b>BABY SAM (BABY STELLA)</b></p> <p>MANHATTAN TOY COMPANY 143780</p>	<p>This soft baby boy doll comes wearing a cute onesie with a smiling green dinosaur. The doll is cuddly enough for bedtime and helps prepare children for new siblings. Durable and easy to clean, the doll is a good weight for small children, and they have no difficulty removing his onesie and changing his diaper. The soother has a strong magnet that ensures it stays in place, even when the doll is being carried. Children get a lot of joy out of this doll.</p>

## Games

<p>★★★</p> <p>21 mos - 3 yrs</p>	<p><b>PUZZLE DUO GAME</b></p> <p>DJECO</p> <p>DJ08160</p>	<p>This pack of two, ten-piece puzzles helps teach toddlers colours, fine-motor control and problem-solving skills, all while they try to piece together fun animal shapes. When they are done, little ones can use the animal shapes to play. The puzzles are cute and made from durable cardboard pieces, but the pieces do not always fit together well enough to be stable during play. Children are also not very interested in using the completed puzzles as toys; they prefer them simply as puzzles.</p>
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## Games

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★★★★  
12 - yrs

**WEE WEDGITS**  
IMAGABILITY  
300007

Squeeze them and stack them! Unlike their big, hard plastic cousins (with which they are compatible), the Wee Wedgits are made from soft plastic, but they can still be used to construct all manner of interesting things. Children can squeeze them and, because they nest together well, they stack very easily. The 30 pieces that are included in the set are brightly coloured and can even be used in the water! Children (and parents) who enjoy building really enjoy this toy.

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## Imaginative Play

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★★★★  
18 mos +

**LARGE FARM**  
PLAYMOBIL  
CANADA INC.  
6750

Young imaginations go to the farm, where there is a lot of work to be done! At sunrise, the sides of the farmhouse come down to reveal a family of three people and a menagerie of six animals. Of all the pieces, the horse and buggy and the elevator that really works are the most popular with children. The wide variety of pieces, bright colours and large rounded shapes make this set a hit with both boys and girls, and at the end of the day, all of the pieces can be kept inside the farm for easy storage.

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★★★★  
18 mos +

**LARGE ZOO**  
PLAYMOBIL  
CANADA INC.  
6754

\*\*\*Children's Choice Award 2011\*\*\* So many animals! With horses, zebras, elephants, sheep and more, children can imagine they are at the zoo, the farm or wherever their imagination takes them. The models are durable and attractive, with bright colours that catch the eye, and they are the perfect size to be grabbed by small hands. There are also enough pieces that two or more children can play, using the people, farm equipment and modular fence to create all kinds of fun.

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Not Recommended

**LITTLE PEOPLE WHEELIES  
STAND N' PLAY RAMPWAY**  
FISHER-PRICE  
CANADA INC.  
T4261

This toy was subject to a Fisher-Price recall in 2010. The Canadian Toy Testing Council pulled this toy from evaluation. Not recommended.

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★★★★  
18 mos - 3 yrs



**PLAYMOBIL 123 FARM  
ANIMALS/CART**  
PLAYMOBIL  
CANADA INC.  
6620

It's fun on the farm! This cute set, which includes the figures of a boy, girl, horse, cart, four animals and a number of smaller accessories, lets children enjoy imaginative play in a rural setting. The people can drive the horse cart, deliver a box of clover, visit the pear tree or just collect the included sheep, pig, horse and cow. Durable and easy to clean, the pieces are well-detailed and easy to grasp. There are lots of play options in this set, but it can also be combined with other 1-2-3 sets from Playmobil for even more possibilities.

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★★★  
18 mos +

**PLAYMOBIL 123 MEADOW**  
PLAYMOBIL  
CANADA INC.  
6757

Containing several cute animal figures, a mother and daughter, flowers, a tree and park bench, this set encourages children to let their imaginations run wild. The bright and colourful pieces snap together easily, making the kit an excellent introduction to Playmobil for younger children. NOTE: Best suited to young children; older kids find this playset less engaging.

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## Imaginative Play

<p>★★★★</p> <p>18 mos - 3 yrs</p> 	<p><b>PLAYMOBIL 123 PLAYGROUND</b> PLAYMOBIL CANADA INC. 6748</p>	<p>What you see is what you get with this bright and whimsical play set! Three Playmobil figures are matched with a red slide, a big purple flower, and a rocking yellow dinosaur. With the lovable bright colours and different activities, this durable toy is fun anywhere. It matches well with other Playmobil toys and offers quiet play that is easily put away. Younger children need some adult assistance placing the figures on the rocking dinosaur but, overall, the toy is a hit with toddlers!</p>
<p>★★★★</p> <p>12 mos +</p>	<p><b>PULL ALONG MUSICAL PIRATE SHIP</b> MEGA BLOKS INC. 6611</p> 	<p>Avast, little seadogs! Children can build this playset from the included components and then enjoy the wide variety of activities that it offers. If they want to use it as a pirate ship, they can pull it along and listen as it plays a buccaneer tune. Or, they can transform it into a secret hide-out for the pirates, complete with trap door, holding cell and, of course, a working cannon! The set comes with lots of different accessories, including a shark, and it is great for imaginative play. The sounds are not too loud, nor are the colours too bright, and it is very easy for little ones to pull along the floor. NOTE: Two AA batteries required.</p>
<p>★★★★</p> <p>21 mos +</p>	<p><b>WEEBLES MUSICAL TREEHOUSE</b> HASBRO CANADA INC. C-022E</p> 	<p>This cool treehouse features a slide, a ladder, and a wobbly deck, all surrounding a nicely-detailed tree with a bright red roof. Weebles can be pulled up the ladder with a conveyor system, use the slide, or just wobble around the treehouse itself. The playset also features songs and sounds that reward children during play, and it comes with two Weebles figures (one boy and one girl). While the playset has a carrying handle and is relatively compact, some younger children may find it is too large to carry. NOTE: Three AA batteries required; no volume control.</p>
<p>★★★★</p> <p>18 mos +</p> 	<p><b>WHEEL PALS JUNGLE JOURNEY</b> HASBRO CANADA INC. C-082A</p>	<p>Kids enjoy sending a monkey and a crocodile zooming on wheels through a jungle and down a wild waterfall ramp, but they must watch out for the trap door on the bridge! This playset has banana trees at the top that spin as the animals go by, and the brown wooden plank bridge gives way to the blue waterfall ramp. Children love that the animals are on wheels and integrate them with other wheeled toys for imaginative play. NOTE: Adult assistance is required for simple assembly .</p>
<p>★★★★</p> <p>18 mos +</p> 	<p><b>WHEEL PALS POLAR PARTY</b> HASBRO CANADA INC. C-082A</p>	<p>Chill out with a polar bear and a penguin – on wheels! Kids love to send them zooming down the blue ice slide, but watch out! A purple whale might pitch them off the track with a spray of (plastic) water. The slide can be rotated to change the direction of the animal's destination. The animals are quite cute, complete with a pink nose for the polar bear. Children enjoy incorporating them into other forms of imaginative play with other wheeled toys. NOTE: Adult assistance is required for the simple assembly.</p>
<p>★★★★</p> <p>18 mos +</p> 	<p><b>WHEEL PALS ROLLING ACRES FARM</b> HASBRO CANADA INC. C-082A</p>	<p>Get rolling with a cow and a chicken! Kids must start up top in the barn and then send the animals zooming down the hay slide and through the pop-open gate! This colourful playset uses realistic colours for the barn (red), the hay (yellow) and the animals. Children enjoy having the animals on wheels and incorporate them into imaginative play sessions with other wheeled toys. NOTE: Adult assistance is required for the simple assembly.</p>

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## Interactive Electronics

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12 mos +

### FUN SHAPES JEWELRY BOX

VTECH  
ELECTRONICS  
CANADA LTD.  
80-111500



**Energizer**

This toy features a snazzy pink box with a hot pink handle, and the lid opens to reveal comb, perfume, and lipstick accessories for educational and imaginative play. The jewelry box has two modes: an educational mode that teaches shapes, colours, and numbers; and a role-playing mode that encourages imaginative play as children apply their jewelry. Children enjoy having their own jewelry box, just like a grown-up's. NOTE: Two AA batteries are required.

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## Ride-on Toys & Wagons

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18 mos - 3 yrs

### 3 IN 1 ZEBRA SCOOTER

VTECH  
ELECTRONICS  
CANADA LTD.  
80-112603



**Energizer**

\*\*\*Children's Choice Award 2011\*\*\* Push it, ride it – and learn! This toy made of durable plastic grows with children, converting from a push walker to a ride-on toy, and finally to a scooter. It also features a number of activities, including sounds, songs, and five light-up buttons that teach colours and animals. There are lots of variety in the sounds and music, and children also enjoy other features, such as horn, walkie-talkie or compass. The volume is completely adjustable, and the different educational functions are easy to use. The toy can also be used without any of the electronic features. The great animal theme and appealing colours inspire children to enjoy many entertaining adventures. NOTE: Two AA batteries required.

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12 mos - 3 yrs

### 3-IN-1 FIRETRUCK RIDE-ON

MEGA BLOKS INC.  
8507



**Energizer**

Children can use this large, very attractive fire truck as a walker, a ride-on or a dump truck. The dump box, which comes filled with 10 mega blocks, lifts up smoothly, and whether it is raised or lowered, it locks securely into place. The truck is sturdy and an excellent size for both a walker and a ride-on, and it even comes with flashing lights and a siren that kids can operate. Children love the realistic sounds, and because they come with a volume control, so do parents! Converting the truck between a walker and a ride-on can be frustrating, and replacing the batteries on the siren is difficult, but kids don't care; for them, this toy is popular and fun.

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A good choice for a birthday gift, rated at \*\*\* and priced under \$25



A good choice for a travel toy, rated at \*\*\* and compact



A battery operated toy, rated \*\*\*