



Adults often worry that children will get bored if they don't provide activities or toys on their play street. But kids are usually excited about their road becoming a play space, and new play mates. They will amuse themselves, bringing out toys, bikes and things to share.

If you do decide to provide anything, keep it cheap and simple. Often the items that offer the best 'play value' are those that are open-ended and encourage children to use their imaginations. Here are a few ideas.

### Pavement chalks

No play street is complete without some chalks. Draw pictures; make a hopscotch; outline each others' bodies or shadows; play noughts and crosses; draw a target for throwing games; make a 'tightrope'; draw a finish line for scooter races; draw a train track or a chess board... the possibilities are endless.

### Get to know the ropes

Rope is cheap and – literally – very flexible. Children can be very inventive with this most adaptable piece of play equipment. Whether for skipping, tug-o-war or tying one another up in knots, rope is a most versatile material; a basic, simple play street essential.

**Bouncy children?** Yes they are, and without the need for castles! Bouncy castles can suck the life out of the rest of the street and reduce creative interaction. There are so many better options.

### Invent some games

Plastic bottles filled with water can double as cones/skittles; elastics, skipping ropes, balls, chalks or small beanbags can all be used as game props.

### Water water everywhere

If you don't mind the kids getting a bit soggy, a few buckets of water and some water squirters, water bomb balloons or plastic containers will have them entertaining themselves for hours.

### Inflatable balls

Blow up balls won't cause any damage but can be used for so many games - volleyball, football, catch, piggy-in-the-middle, dodge ball, target practice (with a cardboard box) and more.

### Recycled/waste materials

Bring out old boxes, pieces of material, cardboard tubes, newspapers, plastic pots or bottles and any other unused materials you have lying around. Add a bit of parcel tape and string, and children can let their imaginations go wild - dens, spaceships, boats, robots and go karts are just some of the creations that we've seen come to life on London streets.

