

10 Questions to Ask When Purchasing a Toy for a Child who is Blind

Questions	Yes	No	Suggestions
Is the toy safe and developmentally appropriate?			Think in terms of development rather than age when looking at the “age range” on a toy.
Is the toy durable?			What happens if you child throws the toy or uses it in unintended ways? Can you wash and clean it?
Is the toy multi-sensory?			Look for multi-colored toys or toys with high-contrast for kids with vision. Does the toy have lights, sounds, movement or scents? What about differed textures?
Is the toy a representation of a real object?			A toy truck is not a truck, a baby doll is not a baby. These toys can still be fine for blind children, but be sure to explain to your child the difference between the toy and the real object.
Is the toy adjustable?			Different kids have different needs, so the more adjustments you can make the better. Can you change the height, volume setting or speed of the toy?
Where will you use the toy?			Is the toy too big for your home and do you have space to store it? Can it be used in multiple positions, like lying down, sitting, standing or on a wheelchair tray?
Does the toy involve using both hands?			Toys that use both hands can encourage fine motor development and improve coordination.
Does the toy offer opportunities for success?			Many open-ended toys can be played with in multiple ways, with no wrong or right outcome. This can encourage exploration and creativity and avoid frustration.
Is the toy popular?			Kids who are blind are often given “special” toys and equipment, but it’s important to not overlook popularity amongst peers. Will having this toy make your child feel like “one of the kids”?
Can the toy be used in social play?			Social interaction can be difficult for some kids with visual impairment, so toys that encourage group play can be helpful.