

Swings Slides & Sand

Oh My!

Thinking about becoming the best parent on the block by providing a play set for your kids? Backyard play structures have a whole host of benefits, from letting kids burn off energy in imaginative ways to reducing the number of treks you have to make to the local playground. In addition, there are a variety of options to choose from, each optimized for a specific situation.

Of course, when purchasing a play set, it's important to keep safety in mind. Play sets need to be installed properly, and maintained to ensure optimal functioning over time. With proper care, a play set will provide enjoyment to your family for years to come.

How Do Children Benefit from Play Sets?

Kids love few things more than to unleash their boundless enthusiasm climbing, swinging, and exploring new play structures, but the benefits go beyond ear-to-ear-grins and early bedtimes.

Health

According to KidsHealth.org, exercise gives children stronger

muscles, lowers the risk of obesity and Type 2 Diabetes, and can even improve their outlook on life. However, lectures on the life-long health benefits of physical exercise are likely to result in little more than rolled eyes. Play sets are a great solution, because they encourage physical play without making it feel like "work."

Socialization/Bonding

A child who socializes at a young age is more likely to succeed in school and later life, because cooperation is an essential life skill. Sure, playing blocks alone might seem like fun for a little while, but sooner or later kids learn that getting a buddy involved almost always ups the fun factor.

There are plenty of ways that kids can participate in cooperative play using a play set. For example, they can challenge each other to swinging or climbing competitions, or come up with imaginative scenarios to engage in (see below).

Want to find tips for how you can help your kids engage socially? Scholastic has a great [article](#) on the subject.

Creativity/Imagination

In addition to cooperation, creative problem solving is

a great thing for children to develop. Play sets can form the basis for all types of imaginative play. [NPR](#) has a great article about how being creative can help kids develop executive function, which in turn helps them to self-regulate their behavior. And who doesn't want kids with good self-control?

In order to encourage imaginative play, you can provide your children with fun props (just make sure safety measures are observed at all times). You can also invoke popular scenarios, such as "pirates" or "knights," or encourage your kids to pretend to be their favorite television characters.

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How Do Parents Benefit From Play Sets?

Kids aren't the only ones who get giddy over the idea of installing a new play structure. Aside from the fact that parents often wax nostalgic over their own playground memories, there are plenty of other positives to consider.

Stress Relief

Who wants to deal with the dreaded chorus of "I'm bored!" all throughout the summer months? An age-appropriate set is a great way to provide hours and hours of healthy entertainment for your kids.

Supervision

It's wonderful to live in the house that all the neighborhood kids come to play at (as long as you can keep a never-ending supply of juice boxes and cheese sticks on hand). You don't have to worry about your kids getting into trouble when they're playing in your own backyard.

Saving Time

Summer is a busy time for many families. As a parent, though, it's not a good idea to

get so caught up in your list of chores that you end up with cranky kids at the end of the day. Instead of taking another trip out to visit your local playground, you can simply unleash your kids on the one just outside your back door.

What Play Set Options Are Available?

Whatever your monkey bar wishes and swing set dreams are, there's a play set for them. Here are some things to keep in mind when exploring your options.

Materials

Play structures come in a variety of materials, including wood, plastic, and metal. The materials you choose will affect the lifespan, durability, and maintenance schedule for your kids' favorite new toy.

Themed/Prebuilt

If you want to simplify the process of purchasing a play set, you can always select from a variety of pre-built options. If you're brave, you can even involve your kids in the process, but don't be surprised if they get carried away and want one of each!

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Configurable Components

If you want to get creative, then making your own set is the way to go. In this case, you can design and build your own frame and decide which hardware and accessories are right for your kids. Everything from wooden "forts" to swings, and from [playground slides](#) to bars and other play accessories, are yours for the choosing. This gives you complete control over the colors and quality of add-ons that will make your play set truly unique and tailored to your needs.

How Do I Ensure My Children's Safety?

Safety is first and foremost on all parents' minds when it comes to their kids. With a bit of precaution, your kids can be as safe as possible, without having to resort to clothing them in bubble-wrap. If you're looking for more information, the [Outdoor Home Playground Safety Book](#) is a great resource.

Selection of the Play Set

It's important to choose a play set that's age-appropriate and skills-appropriate for your kids. For example, there shouldn't be any [swing set accessories](#) that aren't suited for the children who will be using the set. Also, don't forget to choose a set that will happily fit into your existing space. Measuring and taking into account any moving parts is a must!

Preparation

Make sure the play area is prepared with a proper foundation. There are a variety of ground-cover materials to choose from; doing research and speaking with a professional can help



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you choose. And it's a given that all hazards should be removed from the area before construction begins.

Installation

This is a situation in which you really, really want to make sure you don't forget to include all of the necessary parts. A friend experienced in set construction or even a professional installer can make sure your set is assembled properly, protecting your children from harm.

Usage

Chances are good that your kids will want to leap onto the set the second it's put together (if not before). However, it's a good idea to lay down some ground rules, and to make sure that children know the proper way to use the play set. Also, remember that even if the play set is in your own back yard, it's never a good idea to let children use it unsupervised.

Maintenance

Just like your home, your play structure needs to be maintained on a regular basis. During the course of periodic inspections, keep an eye out for damage or wear. Swing set hardware or other parts may need to be replaced.

Keeping the Play Set Relevant

Even the best of toys will gradually lose interest to children over time. Make sure that your new play set is always a focal point by helping your kids discover fun, new ways to incorporate it into play.

Upgrading Your Set

Everyone loves an upgrade, whether it's a bigger toy truck or sprinkles on top of

ice cream. If you choose a set that allows you to add or swap [playground accessories](#), you'll always have an easy way to change things up.

Guided Play

Your kids might run out of play ideas, and it never hurts to have a few new gems up your sleeve. Help them research new, imaginative play options, and don't be above joining in on the fun.

Customization

Let children make non-permanent "modifications" to

the set. Covering the set with an old blanket, adding outdoor pillows, or letting them decorate with sidewalk chalk are all great ways for kids to make a play set truly "theirs."

So what are you waiting for? Childhood is a precious thing. There's always room for having more fun and sharing more good times with your kids, and a play set will ensure plenty of both.

Contact Us!

If you have questions about a product, your swing set project or need any assistance placing an order, we're happy to help! Feel free to contact us by phone, email or fax.

Business Hours

Monday-Friday: 10am-4pm Pacific

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