

Stages of Block Play

Stage	Description	Example	Children at this level
Discovery	Picking up, dropping, mouthing. Transferring them, packing and re-packing them		
Stacking 2-3 yrs	Making towers and rows of blocks		
Balancing and bridges 3 yrs	Initially three block bridges, progressing onto pathways and towers alongside the bridges.		
Enclosures 4yrs	Children begin to use the blocks to enclose space. Children now begin to associate the structures with things they know. 'Making a zoo' Now is a good time to introduce characters, animals and props.		
Symmetry and patterns	Children begin to line up blocks into patterns and arrays, developing mathematical skills		
Representational symbolic play 4 to 5 yrs	Use blocks to create detailed structures. May begin to plan and negotiate with others. Use blocks to make small worlds and story tell.		
Advanced representational 5+ yrs	More complex buildings with elaborate details. Children plan before they build and play cooperatively.		