

A Practical Guide



My Mini Monsters



Indoor Family Fun





Family Fun for Free!

The winter months might be breezy but life doesn't have to be all doom and gloom! We've figured out how to have tons of fun from the comfort of your home without breaking the bank. So get ready for some full on family fun from your sofa!

Friday Film Night

You will need:

- a video, DVD or just a TV
- paper/cardboard and felt tip pens
- popcorn

We all know that homework and chores come first during the week, so give the kids something to plan and look forward to at the weekend to get them through the week. Organise a movie night at home to keep the cost down and snuggle up as a family.

- 1) First things first, make a family decision on which film you plan to watch, whether there's one scheduled on TV or you take a trip to the nearest rental store, get everyone involved in the decision and have a vote if necessary. You could always pick two to avoid arguments!
- 2) Set the kids the task of designing and creating invitations for the movie night. Use paper and pens to state the date and time plus the movies choice(s) and hand out the invites to the lucky family members to be involved.
- 3) Next make the entry tickets for the big night with a detachable part to be dramatically ripped on entry to the 'cinema'. Adults could even pay an entry fee in chocolate coins!
- 4) When the agreed date and time comes round, prepare the popcorn and drinks, round up the troops and settle on the sofa for a night of fun and laughter with the family. The kids can be loud without disturbing the other cinema guests - phew!

(For true authenticity, try making the popcorn from scratch with real kernels. They're not only cheaper than store bought popcorn but you can control the amount of sugar or salt added yourself. You could even try adding some crazy toppings like chocolate chips, chopped nuts or dry fruit!)





Saturday Circus

You will need:

- *dressing up costumes (be inventive!)*
- *circus script (who plays who and what will they do?)*

- 1) Select a venue for the circus, such as your living room or a large open space in the house. Create a poster to advertise the performance, showing the time and place of the event. Put it somewhere that the whole family will notice it like in the kitchen, so that everyone knows to attend.
- 2) Spend the day preparing for your big performance. Define the roles of who will be involved: you might need a ring master, an acrobat, a clown etc. Roles can be doubled if there are fewer participants than characters. You could even involve a dog or cat to perform as a sidekick. Remember you don't need to be able to walk the tightrope like an acrobat, just show off the skills you do have!
- 2) Create your costumes for the circus. You don't need to spend a fortune on fancy dress, just use clothes you already have and use your imagination. E.g. dad's shoes will be perfect for big clown feet, in fact, most oversized clothes provide an instantly comical costume!
- 3) Write a short sketch to follow as your routine. Usually the ringmaster will address the audience first, then other entertainers will take turns to *WOW* the audience! Practice who will do what and in a particular order until its time to get ready.
- 4) Assemble the guests around the chosen circus ring and get ready for the show. Lay costumes out in order if changes are to be made, with face paints ready if needed. When everyone is ready, put on the performance of a lifetime! If you have a video camera why not make a home production of the show to watch back later?

Suggested circus roles and costumes:

- Ringmaster - top hat, suit jacket/school blazer, tights, tall boots, whip
- Acrobat - tights and leotard / shorts and t-shirt
- Clown - oversized clothes, big shoes, colourful tie, curly wig, bowler hat, face paints
- Circus animals - any pet who can do tricks (even just sit down!)



Sunday Afternoon Tea Party

The fun of a Tea Party is as much in the preparation as the party, so plan in advance! You could add a theme, such as a Teddy Bear's Tea Party, where all guests must bring their favourite teddy to join in the fun. Or simply use your favourite colour as the theme, with all the table settings and food being the same colour.

- 1) Start by creating invitations to all the guests of the Tea Party. You can use anything from colourful card to paper doilies, just write the date, time and location of the party on the invitation and decorate as you wish.
- 2) On the day of the Tea Party, prepare the menu including hot and cold drinks plus your favourite snacks - anything from sandwiches to sponge cake. Why not spend the morning baking cornflake cakes or cupcakes? (*Check out our [Monster Cupcake Guide](#) for the recipe!*)
- 3) Decorate your Tea Party location for the occasion, adding place settings to a blanket by the fire or laying the table ready for the guests.

Remember: Be creative, use materials lying around the house for inspiration and just enjoy yourself - everything you make yourself is unique, so there's no right or wrong way to do it!

Family Games Night

When television fails to entertain the family for an evening, its time to get the board games out! Dig out the old classics like 'Monopoly' and 'Pictionary' for some competitive fun or get your brains in gear with 'Scrabble' and 'Cluedo'.

For a full day of activities, why not make your own board game from scratch. Here's how to keep it simple:

- 1) Use a large piece of card as the board and illustrate with a winding path of colourful stepping blocks. Decorate around the game's path to create a theme or story as the backdrop to the game. You could even use toys or plasticine models as obstructions and focal points. Get creative, it's your very own board game!
- 2) Highlight the START and FINISH points and write category titles on various stepping blocks such as 'Joke', 'Dare' and 'Question'.
- 3) Borrow dice and player pieces from another game or use objects you might have lying around the house.
- 4) Play in the normal method of moving according to the throw of the dice. When landing upon one of the category blocks on the board you must tell a joke, do a dare or answer a question suggested by another player. If you succeed you have another go, otherwise you stay still!
- 5) The beauty of your own game is you can change the rules whenever you like. Maybe add some detours on to prolong the game or tie it into bedtime rituals like missing a turn to brush your teeth!

