

Chart by Kirsten Haugen. Modes for adapting toys based on materials from the "Let's Play" Project at the University of Buffalo (<http://letsplay.buffalo.edu>).

Steps for Adapting Materials for Use by All Children					
	Blocks	Dramatic play	Art	Reading	Balls
Examples of Universal Design	Blocks with texture, sounds or color-coding by size	Costumes with large openings and simple closures	Scented playdough	Books with sound, textures, high contrast, and/or easy-to-turn pages	Choose balls with textures, tails, scents, sounds and/or lights
Ways to Adapt					
Build it up <i>Make handles, buttons, and knobs easier to use</i>	Experiment with blocks of different sizes and shapes	Use large handles and knobs; make sure doll cradles, etc. are at useable heights	Wrap crayons or paint brush handles with foam to make them easier to grip	Add page fluffers or tabs for turning pages	Inflate or deflate a ball as needed; add a tail
Stabilize it <i>Keep things from sliding or tipping so a child can focus on play</i>	Try blocks that stick together with Velcro® or magnets	Use clay to temporarily stabilize a pan on a toy stove so a child can stir	Drawing and painting on vertical surfaces helps kids position their hands more naturally	Use a book stand, clip board or bean bag snake to hold a book open and steady	Add water to an inflatable ball to slow it down and alter the play experience
Simplify it <i>Make a task easier or more obvious</i>	Use fewer blocks; start a tower for a child	Keep the space organized and predictable, even when changing themes	Work in stages, with fewer materials at a time	Add picture symbols to the page to correspond to the words	Try <i>slow</i> balls, such as those made of cloth; put a basket on the ground to play basketball
Contain it <i>Keep an activity within range; help a child know where to be</i>	Play with blocks on a table with a raised edge	Use different color flooring to designate the housekeeping area	Paint using bingo markers, squeeze bottles, or other no-spill containers	Provide a cozy place for reading — a bean bag chair, or even an indoor tent – to block distractions	Use a tether ball, or roll a ball inside a hoola hoop placed on the floor
Add sensory cues <i>Use color, sound, texture, symbols, or scents to make materials more useable or fun</i>	Some blocks have different colors and textures; some make sound when shaken	Add 3-D labels onto shelves where materials go – an outline of a shirt on the shirt drawer	Add clove or mint oil to playdough	Provide textures on the pages, or add a box of props; use removable highlighter tape to emphasize words or pictures	Try knobby or webbed balls, balls that light up or make sounds
Use alternatives <i>Incorporate special devices and equipment into daily activities</i>	Stack bean bags instead of blocks	Provide communication devices in dramatic play areas so children can add sound effects, comments and more	Use an ability switch to operate a spin art; paint a child's wheelchair tires and drive across butcher paper; roll painted marbles on paper in a box	A child can turn pages and listen to stories using electronic books; the words of a story can be recorded on a communication device	Play <i>catch</i> with a toy car or balloon instead of a ball
Encourage cooperation <i>Everyone does their best; everyone gets what they need</i>	One child can build a tower for another to knock down	A child who uses a wheelchair can be a truck driver, train engineer, etc.	One child can decorate paper with spin art; another child can cut out designs	The repeated lines of a story can be recorded into a communication device	Let a child push a ball down a ramp instead of rolling or throwing it; another child can catch it and set it up again