Drawing ideas for kids: 30 prompts for when they're bored

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Thirty drawing ideas and prompts for bored kids, from invent-a-creature to a map of a made-up island, plus a free spinner that makes thousands more.

When a child says "I don't know what to draw," give them a person, an action and a place: a dragon eating spaghetti on the moon. A silly combination does more than "draw anything". Below are thirty prompts, and Peabody's drawing prompt spinner makes thousands more. When they want to learn a drawing step by step, Learn to Draw shows each one a line at a time. All free through the end of 2026.

Ten silly prompts

1. A cat riding a bike under the sea.
2. A robot baking a cake in a castle.
3. A penguin flying a kite in the jungle.
4. A dinosaur having a tea party on a train.
5. A wizard skateboarding on a rainbow.
6. A frog playing the drums at the beach.
7. A tiny elephant reading a giant book in a treehouse.
8. A dragon planting a garden on the moon.
9. A bear juggling in a snowstorm.
10. Your teacher driving a bus through outer space.

Ten "invent it" prompts

1. A creature that's half giraffe, half fish.
2. Your dream bedroom, seen from above.
3. A robot that does one chore.
4. A new flavour of ice cream, and its shop.
5. A car for a dog.
6. A house for a family of mice.
7. A map of a made-up island with a volcano.
8. A machine that makes rain or snow.
9. A new animal for the zoo, with its sign.
10. Your family as animals.

Ten "look closely" prompts

1. Your shoe, laces and all.
2. The view from the window.
3. A leaf, as big as the page.
4. Your hand.
5. A cup on the table.
6. Your pet, asleep.
7. A tree outside.
8. Your favourite toy.
9. Fruit in a bowl.
10. Someone in your family, reading.

When they want to learn how

Step-by-step drawings start with shapes: a cat is a circle on an oval, a car two rectangles on two circles. The ten easiest things to draw start with a fish and a flower, and the drawing with shapes guide explains the trick behind all of them. When the drawing's done, a story to go with it is in Peabody's library.

A drawing jar

Write prompts on slips of paper, fold them and put them in a jar. When someone's bored, they pull one out. Children love adding their own, and a family jar fills up fast. Mix the three kinds above (silly, invent-it and look-closely) so the jar has something for every mood.

Draw together

Pick the same prompt and both draw it, then compare. Nobody's drawing is right: the fun is seeing how differently two people imagine "a robot that does one chore". It's also a chance for a grown-up to show that their own drawings are wobbly too, which takes the pressure off a child who thinks they "can't draw".

Keep a sketchbook

A small sketchbook with a date on each page becomes a record of how much a child grows. Look back at it together every few months: the difference between September and May is usually big enough to surprise everyone.

Questions grown-ups ask

Should I correct my child's drawing?

No. Draw beside them on your own paper, and describe what you see ("you made the ears really floppy") rather than judging it.

What do they need?

A pencil, an eraser and paper. A small sketchbook makes it easy to draw anywhere and to look back at how far they've come.

Does the spinner save anything?

No. It picks from word lists on the page; nothing is typed, saved or sent.

My child says they're bad at drawing. What helps?

Show them how drawings are built from shapes, and how many artists sketch the same thing again and again. Drawing gets better with practice, like anything else.

Free at peabody.kids/blog/drawing-ideas-for-kids