



BLOCKS
 Prismatic balls wedged inside blocks help teach shapes and patterns. The build-and-destroy factor doesn't hurt, either. *Kaleidoscope blocks, \$32, Haba, rompstore.com.*

BABY DOLL
 More fine motor skills: The clothes snap, the hair goes up. Dolls also let your child explore happiness, power, and compassion. *Girl doll, \$56, Zid Zid, craftsburyskids.com.*

STROLLER
 A simple, beautiful role-playing toy that proves a kid this age doesn't need a lot of gewgaws and doodads—all those details are already in his head. *Doll pram, \$129, Haba, maukilo.com.*

RINGS
 Anywhere from 2 to 3, kids will finally be able to sit still with a project. Fractional rings foster some serious focusing. *\$29, Haba, fatbraintoy.com.*

SCALE
 There's no such thing as too much symbolic play—after all, aren't reading and math symbolic activities too? *\$46, Haba, Acorn, (718) 522-3760.*

