

CHAT BASKET

When your child is learning to talk, it can be really helpful to focus on just a small number of simple, everyday words or core words.

These are words like: more, go, stop, up, all done, again, help, open.

Focussing on some core words first is:

- Useful – Children can use them to ask, show, or tell people they want or need.
- Functional – Children can use them during play, snack time, dressing, books, and more
- Easier to learn – Repeating a few words often helps your child understand and try them.



EQUIPMENT

You will need:

- A small basket or box
- 5–6 simple, familiar items from around the house or toybox, such as:
- Ball, Bubbles, Cup or bottle, Toy car, Small book, Teddy or doll.

OTHER WAYS TO PLAY

Chat Basket Variations

Keep the core idea but switch up the contents depending on your child's interests. Themed Baskets:

Bath Basket – rubber duck, sponge, cup, boat
"Wash duck," "In water," "More splash!"

Snack Basket – spoon, cup, banana, cracker, bib
"More banana," "All done," "Drink please"

Treasure Hunt Talk: Hide 3–5 familiar toys around the room. As your child finds each one, model simple phrases using early words. "You found it!," "Ball go!," "In box," "Again?," "All done"

HOW TO PLAY

Sit with your child and take turns choosing an item from the basket. You can add a blanket or tea towel over the top to add the element of surprise. Take the item out slowly and label it.

Model short, clear phrases using early core words. Repeat the same words multiple times, and don't worry if your child doesn't say them yet. Remember, they are still learning by hearing them clearly and often. You might say....Examples of what you might say could be.

Ball → "Ball go!" / "Throw ball" / "More ball"
Bubbles → "More bubbles" / "Pop!" / "Up, up, up!"
Cup → "Drink" / "More drink" / "All done"
Car → "Car go!" / "Stop car" / "Again!"
Teddy → "Teddy up!" / "Teddy sleep" / "Teddy in" (box)

Allow your child to play with the items how they would like all the time repeating the word lots of times. You could roll the ball to each other, take turns blowing the bubbles, modelling Daddy's turn, Anna's turn Etc.