

# Brush Up On Your Creativity: Learning How to Make Brushing Your Teeth Fun!



## 01. Make it special.

Create a routine to brush your teeth with your child. It is recommended to clean twice a day for two minutes each time. Your child will learn from you, so start setting a good example for them to follow.

Make the experience special by playfully using the toothbrush as a microphone or make funny faces in the mirror together.

Play games with each other. If your child is running away, use that for a quick game of hide and seek with the end-goal location in the bathroom. Another game could be "find the toothbrush" if your child likes to hide the toothbrush.

Watch a video. Those two minutes will fly by when watching one of the many kid-friendly, musical and informative videos on YouTube.



## 02. Customize it.

Have your child pick out their toothbrush. Maybe they'll choose one with their favorite character on it to give it personality. Having the company of Ana and Elsa from Frozen or Batman there with you can make the experience even better. Make sure the toothbrush fits comfortably in their mouth, easy to hold onto, has soft bristles made of round-ended material and an ADA seal of acceptance. Swap out toothbrushes every three months or when the bristles start to fray.

Decorate it with stickers, markers and crafty materials. You can buy toothbrush sticker packets or kits online or in stores. Use sparkles, glue, or felt to let your child reflect their personality onto their toothbrush.

Pick a fun flavor of toothpaste, such as strawberry, bubble gum or watermelon.



## 06. Let them be in charge.

Tell them it's their turn to do the brushing. Let them brush the teeth of a stuffed animal or doll while you brush their teeth. Mr. fuzzy bear needs to keep his teeth "healthy," too!



Explain the importance of proper dental care and good dental habits in a playful way. Make sure you let them know this is part of a routine, not an option.

Use the right amount of toothpaste. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends using toothpaste the size of a grain of rice for children under three and the size of a pea for children three to six years. The AAP recommends toothpaste with fluoride. Make sure you supervise your child since toothpaste with fluoride is not meant to be swallowed.

Talk to your child positively going to the dentist through a fun story. Let them know what to expect when they go in for their visit.

Keep sweet snacks and sugary drinks at a minimum.



## 03. Dance it out.

Music can make anything you do fun - even chores like brushing your teeth. Press play and dance to a fun song while you scrub the cavities away.

Put on a favorite song and keep brushing until the end of it.

You can purchase a musical toothbrush that plays music while your child is brushing their teeth.

You can also sing a silly, fun song to keep them brushing their teeth the whole two minutes.



## 07. Encourage.

Gentle encouragement will reinforce your child is doing something right. We all want to have acknowledgment for good behavior from time to time.

Positive words or acts of encouragement can include asking to see them smile after they've finished, saying you are proud of them and giving them an enthusiastic high five.



## 04. Tell a story.

Use your child's favorite TV show, movie, or book character to tell a story. Does your child love Sesame Street? Elmo has a two-minute video where he playfully shows your child how to brush their teeth.

Create your own story. Your child can be a superhero who needs to brush away the bad guys that cause cavities.



## 08. Download an app.

There is a variety of brushing apps for kids to learn how to brush their teeth and to make it fun. For example, "Brush DJ" plays two minutes of music. While the brusher races against the clock to get a clean mouth before time is up, "star teeth" allows kids to pick a character who encourages them while they brush.



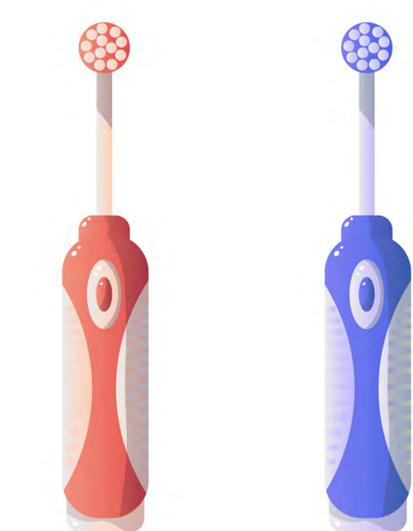
## 05. Reward.

Rewarding your child for good behavior motivates to continue participating in a healthy habit.

Allow your child to pick a book to read after brushing their teeth. Maybe they can choose the bedtime story for that evening.

Make a reward chart, and let your child add one fun sticker every time they brush their teeth. Let them see their excellent progress.

Buy them a small toy or coloring book to play with as a little reward.



## 09. Make adjustments, when needed.

Using cold water can be off-putting for some. Use warm water to change it up and see if your child will like that better.

Change up the toothpaste flavor and decorations on their toothbrush.

Try an electric toothbrush.



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