

How to Play by Yourself

Home alone? Bored? If you're bored and can't find anyone to come play with you, read the steps below to learn how to pass the time having fun by yourself. Draw something. Everyone has an imagination, but not everyone is good at accessing...

Method 1 of 3:

At home

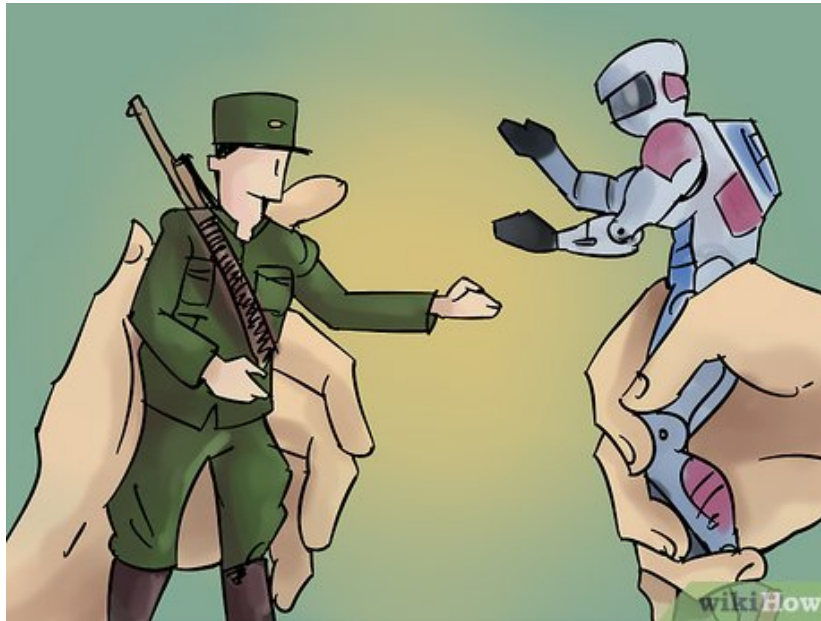
1.



Draw something. Everyone has an imagination, but not everyone is good at accessing it. One of the easiest ways to have fun by yourself while tapping into your imagination is to sit down at a table with pens, pencils, markers, or crayons and start drawing. Be sure to set out plenty of scrap paper, and don't hold back: just keep drawing and drawing until you hit on something you like. Expand it, add details (and color, if you have colored items), and keep building on it until you're satisfied.

1. You don't have to show your doodles to anyone else if you don't want to. Just recycle them when you're finished, if you don't want to keep them.

2.



Play with figurines. Playing with dolls, action figures, and other such figurines is a time-honored children's tradition the world over, and for good reason: It's a great way to pass time when there's nothing else to do. If you don't own toys, you can buy some, make some, or use decorative figurines. Assign each of them a name and title, and move them around to act out stories. Give them distinct voices and personality quirks.

1. Try using a crumpled blanket or stacked books to create 'scenery' for your characters. Perhaps one figure is a lone U.S. Marshal riding down a box canyon made of books, about to be ambushed by a desperado; maybe it's a witch on a broomstick, about to rescue someone from jumping off a bridge. The possibilities are endless.

3.



Dance. You're at home alone, so why not? Pick some music, crank the volume, and start shaking to it. You might be surprised how much fun it actually is. Mix things up by putting on music you don't think you could dance to (such as a slow piece of classical music) and try to dance to it anyway. Let your body

express the sounds and emotions of the songs. This is a great way to improve your mood and get some exercise, too.

1. Be sure the front door is locked before you go wild, unless you want someone who lives with you to walk in and see you dancing around crazily. The time it takes them to unlock the door is all the time you need to stop dancing and try to make your face look serious.
 1. Trying to look serious after dancing usually just makes you laugh even harder, but isn't having a good time the whole point?
2. Clear plenty of space before you dance. Once you begin to get into it, it's easy to lose track of where your body is moving.



Play one-player games. This includes one-player variants of social games. The best known one-player game is probably Klondike solitaire, a simple matching game played with cards. Other solitaire card games include Pyramid and Spider. Aside from card games, marbles can be played by yourself, as can checkers and even chess. Obviously, the challenge of such a game is limited, but the chances to learn and practice strategy are plentiful. You can also shoot hoops, throw darts, or practice trick shots in pool by yourself, provided you have the necessary equipment.

1. Solo marbles is as easy as setting an X of marbles inside a circle, and then taking shots from outside with a larger marble (the *taw*) and trying to knock out all the small marbles. It can be played indoors, provided you have tape for a square ring and enough smooth flooring to take shots.
2. There is a massive list of solitaire card games available on Wikipedia. Note that not every variant version of these games is actually explained.
3. Proprietary games, such as Magic: the Gathering and other collectible card games, can be played in solo matches in much the same way as chess or checkers. Playing decks against each other is a useful way to test strategies and deck balance.
4. Putting on music in the background is a great way to help time pass quickly while playing a solo game, as well as keep track of how much time has passed. Just make a note of the length of your playlist or album, and you'll know what time it is when it ends.

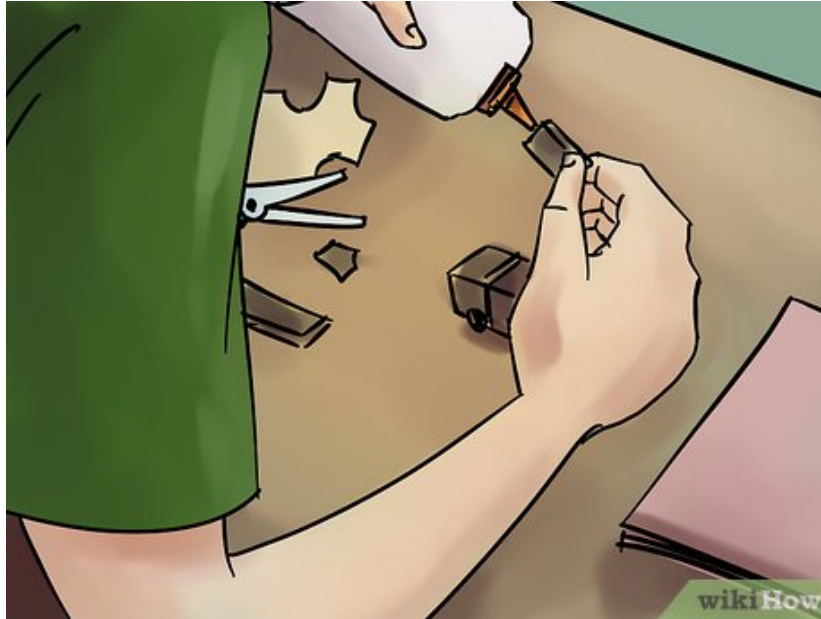
5.



Play video games. Today more than ever, video games are everywhere. Even if you don't own a console (such as a Wii or PS3) for playing games, there are many thousands available for your computer and phone. Most of these are designed for one player. Some pit you against other online players; a few are best in the company of friends (especially go-kart racing games and fighting games). Avoid these if you truly want to play by yourself, and look into action-adventure games and role playing games instead.

1. There are many free games available to play online. Try Yahoo! Games for a large selection of recent and classic titles, or <http://www.onemorelevel.com/> for a smaller, curated list that's easy to navigate and includes some lesser-known (but still fun) titles.
 1. Some free games allow you to pay money to unlock extra features or get an edge. Don't pay for anything unless you're 100% sure you want to. Remember, it's just a free Internet game.
2. Don't discount older game consoles. Many fun games were made for consoles like the NES, Sega Genesis, and original PlayStation. These games, and the systems that play them, can often be bought for a tiny fraction of their original cost from garage sales and thrift shops.

6.



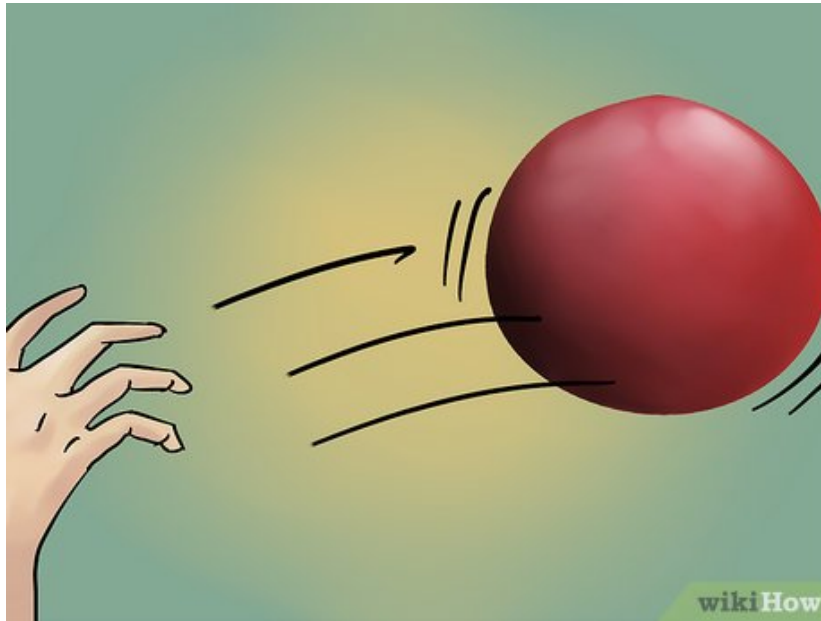
Use a hobby kit. If you have free time and no one to spend it with, why not build or make something for fun? Try gluing and painting a model plane or car, or building a model rocket from a kit and then launching it behind a nearby school over the weekend. Some craft stores even sell kits that allow you to make working robots, grow neon-colored crystals in water, and do a whole range of other fun and offbeat things. Most of these kits cost less than \$30, and are a great way to while away an afternoon.

1. Other kits include sand art, jewelry, and dreamcatcher kits. Shop around and see what's out there!
2. You can also make your own 'kit' by purchasing basic parts and keeping them in a box or bag together. Try making your own scented soaps or bath salts, beeswax candles, T-shirt designs (with decals and fabric paint), or even wine (if you're old enough).

Method 2 of 3:

Outdoors

1.



Play solo sports. With a bouncy ball, it's easy to play handball by yourself: just find a wall and bounce the ball off it at different angles, trying to keep it in play by swatting it back each time for another bounce. You can also shoot hoops at a park with a basketball, if nobody else is using the court. Practice your soccer (football) footwork by jogging across a field while kicking a ball ahead of you, or race yourself by running to a set point and back.

1. You can practice less traditional sports by yourself, too. Try keeping a footbag (Hacky Sack) in the air as long as possible, throw a flying disc (Frisbee) as far as you can, or play a solo game of horseshoes, if there's a public pit in your area.
2. If there's a public range in your area, archery is a great sport to play by yourself, since it's generally always a solo sport. Getting the basic equipment to play archery is a bit expensive, but you shouldn't have to pay more than around \$150, which is still a lot cheaper than the cost of getting into certain other sports.

2.



Explore. Whether by car, bicycle, or on foot, exploration can be a fun way to pass time in your neighborhood. Try picking a direction and just heading that way. For a more outdoorsy experience, go to a park with a wooded area, then throw a baseball or flying disc as far into the woods as you can. Follow it in and search for it, then repeat until you've crossed the woods.

1. Be sure to read signs carefully. Some parks don't allow foot traffic off of designated paths in wooded or brushy areas. Always respect the rules.
2. If you plan to explore outside of town, be sure you have a compass and a topographic map, and know how to use them. This skill is called orienteering. It's easy to learn and can save your life.

3.



Go down a hill. This is another popular pastime with children everywhere. By letting gravity do your work for you, you can enjoy fast movement speeds without having to exert yourself very hard. If you live somewhere with nearby snow, buy a sled or similar item and go sledding by yourself. If you have a city park nearby, find a hill there, lay sideways, and roll down the hill. (Be sure to check for dog poop first.)

1. You can bring a bicycle or scooter to go even faster, but be sure to watch out for others who might be in your way at the base of the hill, since it takes much longer to stop a speeding bike than it does to stop a rolling body.

4.



Sight see. Use a bike, a car, or public transportation to visit places of local interest and beauty. Take a camera (or camera phone) with you, and snap photos of every pretty panorama or interesting feature you notice. Even just traveling alongside streets can sometimes reveal pretty houses and yards to photograph. Try keeping a record of where you go each season, and coming back to the best spots every few months to see how they change with the passage of the seasons.

1. To turn your sightseeing into a game, note any unusual feature you find (such as a rare flower or a four-leaf clover) at one location, and then try to match it up with a photo of the same feature somewhere else in town. If you have an eye for detail, you could spend months finding and matching all sorts of things.

5.



People watch. One of the best ways to spend time outside is to sit on a bench near a busy street and watch people pass by. Note their outfits, faces, and body language, as well as what accessories they have and which direction they're headed. Try adding details to their lives, such as whether or not they secretly wear

crazy socks to work, or what they think of jazz music. Turn them into characters in your head. It's more fun than you might think from reading about it.

1. You can turn people watching into a game using the same method as you use for sightseeing.
2. Don't stare at people. The goal is to go unnoticed so you can continue to enjoy being outside and people watching. If you catch someone's eye, smile politely and look away. Consider bringing a cup of coffee or tea so you have something to shift your focus to quickly.

Method 3 of 3:

Stuck on a long shopping trip



Explore. If you're stuck on a long shopping trip, you're there with someone else who's doing things that don't interest you. Excuse yourself by telling the other person you're going to have a look around, and agree on a meeting place and time to get back together. Head off and distract yourself any way you can. Even when nothing seems interesting, you can usually find things to look at. Try reading nutrition labels or looking at brand icons in a supermarket, for example.

1. Don't forget, you can also go *outside* the building and see what the back lot looks like.
2. Be sure the person you're with hears and understands you when you set a place and time. Ask them to recite it back to you so you know you're both on the same page about the location in particular.
3. If you're young enough, you can usually get away with sitting down in a corner and actually playing with die-cast cars or other small toys inside a store. Don't expect to get away with this if you're a teenager or older, though.

2.



Play a pocket game. Between phones and handheld game consoles like the Nintendo 3DS, there are many games available to play on the go. Prepare ahead of time and bring along an alternate game or two in case you get stuck on one. If you can't find a good place to sit and play your game, check for benches outside the front of the building, or chairs in the back near restrooms and fitting rooms.

1. As with console games at home, don't forget that there are several older handheld systems available for relatively little money, most of which had many fun games made for them. You don't have to buy a top-of-the-line system to have fun.

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