

Build Family Mailboxes!

Does your budding writer love to get letters in the mail? Does he stalk the postman, hoping for something with his name on it? You can help him practice his writing skills, while ensuring he'll get an envelope or two of his own, by helping him build a mailbox for each member of the family.



What You Need:

- One shoebox per family member
- Safety scissors
- Tape
- Pencil
- Glue
- Paper envelopes
- Construction paper
- Crayons or markers, plus stickers, paints, or other decoration supplies
- Stamps or sticker (many post offices will give kids play stamps, just ask!)

What You Do:

1. Lay out the shoeboxes and the art supplies, and let your child know he's been appointed Postmaster General. His assignment? Make a unique mailbox for each member of the family, set them up in front of each person's room, and deliver the mail!
2. He can start by taping a lid securely onto each mailbox, and then covering the entire box with construction paper.
3. Once the paper is glued on, it's time for decoration! Whether he'd like to add stickers, draw pictures, paint designs, or all of the above, it's up to him to make each mailbox special. Be sure to have him write each person's name on their box as well (to ensure proper delivery!)
4. Once the creations are finished (and dry), cut a slit at the top of each mailbox that's large enough for a letter to slide through. Or, for a more authentic looking mailbox, cut a slit at the top of one of the two ends, then cut the two sides of the same end, so the mailbox can hinge open like the real thing.
5. Now that the mailboxes are ready, it's time to deliver! Assure your child that once everyone gets into the habit of exchanging notes, he's sure to get a steady stream of mail, but it's up to him to get the ball rolling. Ask your child to write a letter to each member of the family. He can choose what he wants to write about, or pick a topic from the list below. Remember, this doesn't have to be long—one or two sentences is enough. Be sure to help him create complete sentences, and use the correct format. He can round things out with a picture to accompany the letter.
6. Here are some suggested topics to get your postmaster started:
 - I'm learning a lot in kindergarten!
 - I love you so much because...
 - Something you did really made me happy.
 - One of my favorite things in the world is...
 - Let me tell you about something I did in school!
7. Once he's got his letter ready, he can stuff it into an envelope, address it (with the person's name), and "mail" it in the correct box. This is a great way to get reluctant writers in the habit. And when you're looking for something to round out that family scrapbook, relax. It's in the mail!