

816-373-7900



2016 Noisy Toy List



2016 Noisy Toy list!

Oh the sounds of Christmas! Jingle bells, carolers, the laughter of friends of family, all are sounds that remind us it's Christmas. Of course on Christmas morning, there are the dolls that talk, the

fire engines with working sirens, toys that whirl, beep, whistle and screech. Every year the Sight and Hearing Association of St. Paul, Minnesota issues its Noisy Toys List. The mission of the organization is to enable lifetime learning by identifying preventable loss of vision and hearing in children. The list will confirm what many parents already know, that some of today's toys are outrageously loud.

Three of the twenty toys on the 2016 list had a measured output of over 100dB, which is just about the level of a rock concert. The noisiest toy measured was the WWE 3-County Crushers: Roman Reigns™ which measured a whopping 104.4dB when held at ear level, 93.6dB when held 10 inches from the ear. Remember, a lawn mower is about 105dB and construction noises like jackhammers and sandblasters are at about 115dB.

The Association offers some tips when buying or using toys for children:

- Listen to a toy before you buy it. If it sounds loud to you, it's too loud for your child.
- Report a loud toy. Call the Consumer Product Safety Commission at 800-638-2772 or the Sight & Hearing Association at 800-992-0424 or contact the SHA by e-mail at ReportAToy@sightandhearing.org.
- For older kids, put masking or packing tape over the speaker on the toy. This will help reduce the volume.
- Buy toys with volume controls.

Click [here](#) to view the 2016 Noise Toy List in PDF format (you need a PDF viewer to see this document).

**This is Why Your
Balance Gets Worse**

**Balance
Exercise:**

After 40



The system in your body that helps you keep your balance goes downhill after age 40, a new

study finds.

The study involved 105 people, ages 18 to 80, who underwent tests of their vestibular system, which is the system that helps people maintain balance and orient themselves. The system consists of several structures in the inner ear that monitor movements of the head, detect gravity and send signals to the brain.

In the tests, the participants sat in a chair on top of a platform that could generate small movements in different directions. They were asked to report when they perceived motion in a certain direction. The researchers measured the participants' "vestibular threshold," which is the smallest motion that the participants could perceive. Generally, the lower a person's vestibular threshold, the better their vestibular system is functioning.

The researchers found that the vestibular threshold in the people studied was increasingly higher after the age of 40. These thresholds increased up to 83 percent per decade after that age, the researchers said.

The participants also took a balance test, in which they stood on memory foam for 30 seconds with their feet together and their eyes closed. It turned out that those with a higher vestibular threshold were also much more likely to fail the balance test — by needing to open their eyes or take a step to maintain balance — than those with lower thresholds.

Since failing the balance test is linked with an increased risk of falls, the findings suggest that a person's vestibular function substantially impacts his or her risk of falls, the researchers said.

Using data on the number of deaths caused by falls each year in the United States, the researchers estimated that, conservatively, problems with the vestibular system after age 40 contribute to more than 57,000 deaths each year.

"This [finding] is alarming," the researchers,



Everything You Need to Know

*Credit: LiveScience
Rachael Rettner,*

*Senior Writer | July 8, 2016 06:57am ET
For the full article, visit [LiveScience](#).*

Balance exercises improve your ability to control and stabilize your body's position. This type of exercise is particularly important for older adults— as you age, your ability to know where you are in space, called proprioception, gets worse, which contributes to a decline in balance, said said Kelly Drew, an exercise physiologist with the American College of Sports Medicine.

But balance exercises can benefit people of any age, including people who have gained or lost a lot of weight or those who become pregnant, which can throw off your center of gravity, Drew said.

These exercises are also important for reducing injury risk. For example, if you sprain your ankle, you could be at risk for reinjury if you don't retrain your balance, said said Dr. Edward Laskowski, co-director of the Mayo Clinic Sports Medicine Center in Rochester, Minnesota. That's because when you sprain your ankle, the muscles around the joint stop contracting in a coordinated fashion, and this destabilizes the joint, Laskowski said. If you do balance exercises after the injury, it retrains the muscles to contract together, which better stabilizes the joint during movements and prevents reinjury, he said.

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from Massachusetts Eye and Ear hospital, wrote in their paper, which was published online Oct. 3 in the journal *Frontiers in Neurology*. "Given the rapid aging of the world's population ... the problem will rapidly grow much worse" unless existing efforts to improvediagnoses and treatment of vestibular problems, and prevention of falls, are accelerated, they said.

Original article on [Live Science](#).

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And most athletes can benefit from balance training to help them maintain balance during their sport activity. "[In] almost all athletic endeavors, you're going to be on one foot at a time while you're doing things," said Jason Schatzenpahl, a fitness specialist at the CU Anschutz Health and Wellness Center in Aurora, Colorado.

Examples of balance exercises include:

- Shifting your weight from side to side
- Standing on one foot
- Walking heel to toe
- Using a balance board or stability ball
- Doing tai chi, yoga or Pilates.

Benefits of doing balance exercise include:

- Prevents falls
- Reduces the risk of lower-extremity injuries, such as knee and ankle injuries
- Improves proprioception (the ability to know where you are in space)

We Would Love To Spotlight You

If any of YOU would like to be spotlighted inour Newsletters, please let us know! So many of you have had interesting lives. Traveled, written books, had incredible careers, lived in exotic places, served in the military, etc. We would just needto have your permission for us to post your story here. And of course we would like a picture of you as well!



Keeping Loved Ones With Hearing Loss Close This Holiday Season

Credit: [Better Hearing Institute](#)

Keepingthe people you love in the conversation and part of the celebration is one of the most meaningful things you can do this holiday season.

Even when surrounded by loved ones, a friend or family member's difficulty hearing can make them feel cut off. Too often, people with unaddressed hearing loss withdraw socially and experience sadness—even symptoms of depression—during the holidays.

Don't let that happen to the people you care about. Instead, lend inspiration and support.

If you're hosting a holiday party this year, consider these 9 tips to help ensure that your friends and family who may be struggling with untreated hearing loss stay part of the festivities:

1. **Be attentive:** Stay vigilant if you see that a family member or friend is quiet at a holiday dinner or party. Maybe they're having trouble hearing and need your help in bringing them back into the conversation.
2. **Turn down the volume:** Loud background music or the roar of the TV can make it especially hard to hear at the dinner table. Consider keeping the music and television off during mealtime.
3. **Keep the room well lit:** Providing good lighting will make it easier for those with hearing loss to see facial expressions and the mouths of those speaking. Also, be sure to shade any glare from windows that might make it difficult to see faces.
4. **Speak clearly:** Do your best to speak slowly and at a comfortable volume without mumbling or slurring your words. Project your voice, but don't shout. It's best not to chew gum, smoke, or put your hands to your face while speaking. Also avoid interrupting, which makes it harder to follow a conversation.
5. **Face the person:** Facing the person you are speaking with makes it easier for them to hear the words but also to see your mouth and facial expressions. It's also a good idea to get their attention before speaking by saying their name or gently touching their hand, arm, or shoulder.
6. **Rephrase:** Often people will repeat themselves if someone didn't hear them. Instead, consider rephrasing what you said. Oftentimes that makes it easier for the individual with hearing difficulty to follow the conversation because it may be a particular word or sound of speech that they're having trouble deciphering.
7. **Stay close:** When you're not sitting around the dinner table, be sure to stay close to those with hearing loss when speaking to them. It is much more difficult to hear someone from across the room and harder to see their mouth and facial expressions.
8. **Seek them out:** Sometimes the best thing you can do for someone who is having difficulty hearing is to seek them out and enjoy a one-on-one conversation in a quiet corner, a quiet room, or during a quiet walk.
9. **Seat them next to someone who will be a patient advocate:** Some people are just good at being aware of others' needs and empathizing. If someone you love is struggling with hearing loss, try to pair them at the dinner table with someone who will be proactive in making sure they're following the conversation and patient if they need things repeated or rephrased. Also consider seating the loved one with hearing loss at the head of the table, which can make it easier for them to see the other guests' faces. Better yet, use a round table.

Everything You Need to Know about Winter in Kansas City



The Most Comforting Dishes in Kansas City

By Jenny Vergara

Each of us has a dish that we gravitate toward to bring us comfort.

People from all across the region are bundled up and crowded at the **Country Club Plaza**, mugs of hot chocolate warm

Often these dishes are tied to childhood memories or people, or maybe it takes for you is just a decadent splurge of cheese and calories to make what might be wrong in

chilly hands as people wait(ed) in earnest anticipation for the famous **Plaza Lights** ceremony to begin. November officially kick(ed) off the holiday season in Kansas City. What follows next is six weeks of seasonal celebrations, festive events and luminous light shows.

Iconic Sights, seasonal merriments, holiday gift Giving, warm up with winter menus, high-powered athletics, and can't miss Plays & Performances!

Make sure you check out some of Kansas City's most iconic live performances during wintertime. The full list of shows can be found [here](#), but you'll find a few highlights below:

A Christmas Carol – **Spencer Theatre**, Nov. 18–Dec. 24

Handel's Messiah – **Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts**, Dec. 1–4

The Nutcracker – Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts, Dec. 3–24

The Book of Mormon – **Music Hall Kansas City**, Dec. 6–11

Santaland Diaries – **Kansas City Repertory Theatre**, Dec. 8–24

The Lumineers and Rayland Baxter – **Sprint Center**, Jan. 24

Eric Church – Sprint Center, Jan. 31

To see the full list of activities click on [VisitKC](#).

your world, right again.

So, the next time you find yourself craving a comforting dish, check out these places doing the best versions of some of our favorite food hugs.

Macaroni and Cheese, Meatloaf, Pizza, Burgers, Soup, Fried Chicken, Grilled Cheese and Barbecue.

An example of what Jenny wrote:

*The ultimate pasta and cheese comfort food treat, and favorite childhood staple, can be found in new and creative adult forms at **The Westside Local**. Made with house smoked gouda and parmesan cheese, the eatery's take includes cavatapi pasta topped with bread crumbs and can be beefed up with Brussels sprouts and red pepper, Korean pork belly, salmon or chicken.*

To see the complete list with photos and details, [VisitKC](#).

Favorite Recipes

Saucy Asian Meatballs

20 min to make, makes 30-35 meatballs



Ingredients:

Meatball Ingredients:

- 2 lbs. ground pork or ground beef
- 2 tsp. sesame oil
- 1 cup Panko or breadcrumbs
- 1/2 tsp. ground ginger
- 2 eggs
- 3 tsp. minced garlic
- 1/2 cup thinly-sliced green onions
- optional garnish: toasted sesame seeds, sliced scallions

Asian Sauce Ingredients:

- 2/3 cup hoisin sauce
- 1/4 cup rice vinegar
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 Tbsp. soy sauce
- 1 tsp. sesame oil
- 1 tsp. ground ginger

Directions:

Preheat oven to 400.

In a large bowl, mix together meatball ingredients until well-combined. Shape into balls (I made mine about 1.5 inches, which yielded about 35 meatballs, but 1 inch is probably standard), and place on a greased baking sheet or in a 9x13-inch baking dish. Bake for 10-12 minutes, or until meatballs are golden on the outside and no longer pink on the inside.

While the meatballs are baking, whisk together all of the sauce ingredients until blended. Once meatballs have finished cooking, you can either dip each meatball individually (using a toothpick) in the sauce mixture. Or you can pour the sauce over the meatballs and gently stir them until covered.

Serve warm, and sprinkle with additional garnish if desired. (I served mine on [these cocktail forks](#).)

Ali's Tip:

You can also keep these warm (after cooking) in the [crockpot](#) on a low setting!

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