

**big blue
blocks**

A photograph of children playing with large blue plastic blocks in a grassy park. The blocks are stacked into a tall, abstract structure. A young boy with red hair is climbing on the structure, while other children are playing around it. The background shows lush green trees.

**The Ultimate Loose Parts
Playground!**

MUD kitchen

SOLD IN AUSTRALIA BY

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What are

BIG BLUE BLOCKS?



Big Blue Blocks are an innovative, open-ended, play-based learning system that transforms any space – schools, preschools, museums, playgrounds, libraries, and community spaces – into imaginative, creative, innovative hubs for hands-on STEM/STEAM play that encourages learning, social development, movement, and above all, fun.

Using Big Blue Blocks, children build a new world every day. They make objects like animals, rocket ships, and robots. They make imaginary places like houses, factories, and cities. They make new dramatic scenarios, settings, and games to play. Most importantly, they make the rules.

Big Blue Blocks are sold in sets, suitable for a variety of outdoor and indoor sites, offering a simple, inclusive way to give children of any age access to productive, ever-changing play, year after year.

BENEFITS:

Play-based learning of STEM concepts, such as:

- Engineering / Physics
- Design Processes
- Proportionality
- Shape Identification
- Observation
- Investigation
- Modelling
- Geometry
- Measuring / Recording
- Patterns / Grouping
- Symmetry/Mirroring
- Simple Machines & Mechanisms
- If / Then Thinking
- Comparing / Contrasting

And other essential skills, such as:

- Creativity
- Problem Solving
- Communication
- Release, Relaxation
- Collaboration
- Fine & Gross Motor Development
- Self-Expression
- Accomplishment
- Social Development
- Focus, Determination
- Curiosity & Discovery
- Dramatic & Artistic Expression
- Resiliency
- Inclusivity

Kids literally make their own open-ended fun!





Rectangles,
bricks, cogs,
curves, and
cylinders!

BIG BLUE BLOCKS ARE LOOSE PARTS

Traditional playgrounds consist primarily of fixed equipment, such as slides, climbing frames and see-saws, all of which focus on developing children's gross motor skills. By contrast, Big Blue Blocks are "loose parts" that prompt children to transform their environment and create a play space of their own.

Big Blue Blocks contain a wide variety of loose parts, including cubes, bricks, cogs, curves, and cylinders. The parts however, are not simply loose. They have holes and shapes that fit together in ways that allow the continuation of a child's idea, and an irresistible invitation to imagine, create, and design.

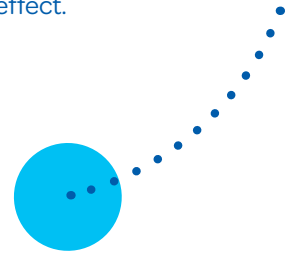
A set of squares becomes a wall. A wall becomes a room. A room becomes a house. In this way, the pieces fit or connect together to make immersive play last a long time.

Big Blue Blocks grow with kids!



Ages 2–4

Simply picking up a Big Blue Block begins to teach kids basic principles of maths and physics. Building even the most basic tower teaches important skills of prediction and cause and effect.



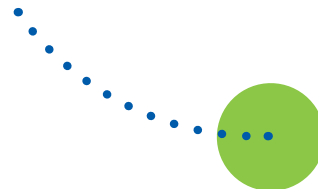
Ages 4–7

As kids' structures grow more intricate, they intuitively learn the concepts of balance, mass, and gravity by doing. They also learn spatial relationships and develop gross fine motor control.



Ages 7–10

Kids enter the representational stage of block building. They use their structures to depict their world symbolically, engage in dramatic play to create new play scenarios, and learn social skills by negotiating and working collaboratively with other students.



Ages 10+

Big Blue Blocks engages children of all ages, from teachers to adults, to engage and create in new ways, although specific developmental benefits have not been established.

Big Blue Blocks are “loose parts” that prompt children to transform their environment and create an ever-changing play space of their own.



Image: Kaboodle.sg

“Enter into children’s play and you will find the place where their minds, hearts, and souls meet.”

VIRGINIA AXLINE

Big Blue Blocks are big block play.

Researchers have long known that playing with blocks helps children develop cognitive and social skills. Big Blue Blocks combine all of the benefits of block play on a larger-than-life-size scale that encourages kids to play together in groups and have more fun while learning.

Big Blue Blocks are free play.

Unstructured, child-directed play is a critical component of healthy social, emotional and intellectual development. Unlike toys and games, Big Blue Blocks don’t dictate to children the way they’re meant to be played.

With Big Blue Blocks, kids literally make their own open-ended fun. There’s no right or wrong way to play with them. That’s also why they’re only available in one colour. This facilitates more imaginative play, without any distraction or competition that might arise from having multi-coloured toys.

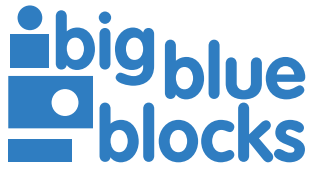
Big Blue Blocks are safe.

Big Blue Blocks are made of a lightweight foam that is non-toxic and microbe and mould resistant. They’re soft and friendly to the touch yet dense and firm enough to build structures and shapes. Their velvety texture allows stacked blocks to stay in place and not slip around during building. Big Blue Blocks meet American Society for Testing Materials (ASTM) and U.S. Consumer Products Safety Commission (CPSC) standards, and are fully compliant with AUS/NZ product safety standards.

Big Blue Blocks are durable.

Put them to the test with water, sand, or sun! Unlike other loose parts that may have a short life span under repeated use or in an outdoor environment, Big Blue Blocks are made of a dense, but lightweight, foam that is waterproof and resistant to weather conditions such as sun, heat and cold. Though the colour may fade to a lighter blue over time, the Blocks are durable and long lasting, and their life can be extended further if they are periodically cleaned with soap and water and left to air dry fully.

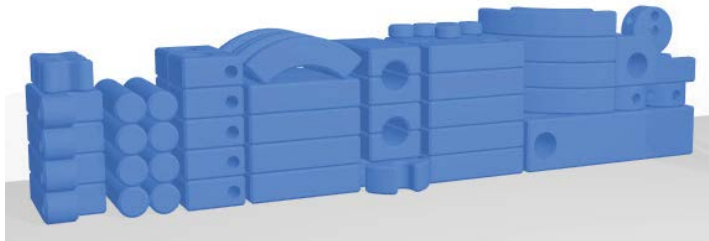
** Rough surfaces can dent or scratch Blocks, though this will not have an effect on the playability, softer, flat surfaces are recommended.*



105 piece CLASSIC set!

The Classic Set of Big Blue Blocks consists of 105 pieces in 15 different shapes, and is available in a vibrant shade of blue.

Manufactured in the United States out of waterproof high-density foam, the blocks are resistant to mould, mildew, corrosion, and micro-organisms. Using materials that are made for long-term use, these highly durable parts have a suede-like texture and provide an extraordinary sensory play experience!

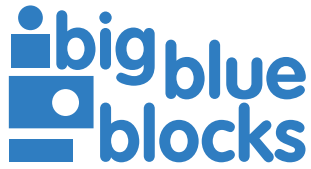


“This is the raw material for creativity. It’s just fantastic.”
 MARTHA H., MUM

Ask about storage options sold separately

Recommended age group:	All ages from 2 years and up
Minimum play area:	20 sq m
Overall dimensions:	Approximately 3.8m L x 0.7m D x 0.9m H (as displayed in rendering above)
Weight:	Approximately 110kg (total set) with water, mud, or sand*
Site condition:	For use in indoor or outdoor settings. Adult supervision required at all times; 20 – 25 children to play at one time or 4 – 5 blocks per child.
Set includes:	90 Big Blue Blocks, in a variety of shapes as shown above 15 Play balls
Training + orientation:	1 User’s manual
Contact:	Mud Kitchen/Playable Spaces Pty Ltd 1300 79 60 62 (in Australia) sales@mudkitchen.com.au

* Rough surfaces can dent or scratch Blocks, though this will not have an effect on the playability, softer, flat surfaces are recommended.



Big Blue Blocks - ANGLES Add-On Set!

Our Big Blue Blocks ANGLES Add-On Set is a kit of parts complimentary to the Big Blue Blocks - CLASSIC set.

Suitable for use in a variety of indoor and outdoor sites, the Angles Add-On Set introduces more advanced STEM-based geometric concepts like polygons and concave shapes. With a wider range in scale, angular shapes give children more variety and the ability to construct more mechanical connections. The Angles up the ante in complexity as the children construct and play.

These shapes prompt children to consider balance, asymmetry, positive and negative space, and to think ahead as they build. The new shapes also prompt more nuanced thinking with more small-scale parts that allow for props, accents, furniture, and object-scale inventions.

Angles Add-Ons are sized to fit and connect with the Big Blue Blocks Classic Set and the Curves Add-On Set, as one comprehensive play system.



2 chevron A's



4 trapezoids



4 parallelograms



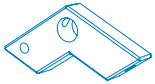
2 plugs



4 lil' hexes



6 play balls



2 chevron B's



4 rhombuses



2 peaks



4 small plugs



8 noodles



4 nickels

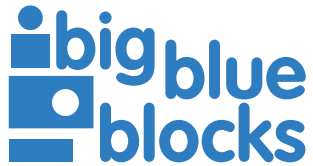
Recommended age group:	2 years and up
Minimum play area:	25 sq m (Add-On Set plus Big Block CLASSIC Set)
Weight:	Approximately 45 kg (ANGLES set on its own) with water, mud, or sand*
Site condition:	For use in indoor or outdoor settings. Adult supervision required at all times; 10-12 additional children when playing with the Big Blue Block CLASSIC Set.
Set includes:	32 Biodegradable blue foam Big Blue Blocks in 10 different ANGLE shapes 8 Noodles 6 Play Balls
Contact:	Mud Kitchen/Playable Spaces Pty Ltd 1300 79 60 62 (in Australia) sales@mudkitchen.com.au

Angular shapes give children more variety to extend their play

* Rough surfaces can dent or scratch Blocks, though this will not have an effect on the playability, softer, flat surfaces are recommended.

Ask about storage options sold separately





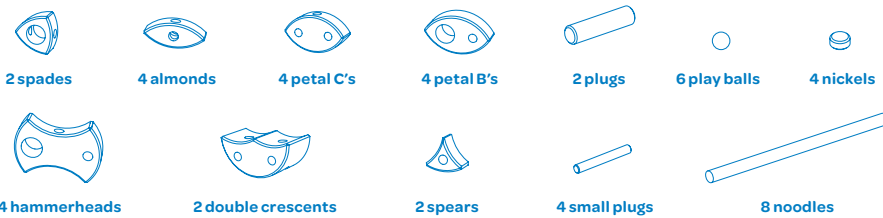
Big Blue Blocks - CURVES Add-On Set!

Our Big Blue Blocks CURVES Add-On Set is a kit of parts complimentary to the Big Blue Blocks - CLASSIC set.

Suitable for use in a variety of indoor and outdoor sites. The Curves Add-On Set offers curvilinear shapes that add an element of whimsy to their play, and allow children more opportunities for self-expression, while at the same time offering opportunities for extending STEM based play. The Curves boost the complexity of the children's inventions: children make moving parts, structures based on connectors, and irregular compositions that require consideration of balance.

These complex biomorphic forms give children much greater range for figuration, finer details and advanced structures.

Children are able to make more elaborate characters, as well as props and accessories to fuel their dramatic play. The curved, ergonomic contours also invite more sensory and body interaction with the parts, so children can rock, ride-on and hug them.



Recommended age group:	2 years and up
Minimum play area:	25 sq m (Add-On Set plus Big Block CLASSIC Set)
Weight:	Approximately 45 kg (ANGLES set on its own)
Site condition:	For use in indoor or outdoor settings. Adult supervision required at all times; 10-12 additional children when playing with the Big Blue Block CLASSIC Set.
Set includes:	32 Biodegradable blue foam Big Blue Blocks in 10 different CURVE shapes 8 Noodles 6 Play Balls
Contact:	Mud Kitchen/Playable Spaces Pty Ltd 1300 79 60 62 (in Australia) sales@mudkitchen.com.au

** Rough surfaces can dent or scratch Blocks, though this will not have an effect on the playability, softer, flat surfaces are recommended.*

Ask about storage options sold separately

Curvilinear shapes add an extra element of whimsy and imagination...



How are Big Blue Blocks different from other playground equipment?

While traditional playgrounds consist primarily of fixed equipment, such as slides and swings, Big Blue Blocks are interactive, transformable, endlessly evolving loose parts that prompt children to manipulate their environment and create a playspace made purely from imagination.

The Big Blue Blocks address a broader spectrum of play needs through opportunities for fantasy play and socio-cooperative play, in addition to more traditional running, jumping and climbing. Kids need to be active on many levels, and they need to exercise their creative minds as well as their muscles, and Big Blue Blocks allow for both types of play.

Additionally, Big Blue Blocks are perfect for inclusive play and allow for children with a wide variety of needs to participate in playful learning and sensory stimulation that might be limited with traditional play equipment.

Where can Big Blue Blocks be used?

The flexible and adaptable nature of Big Blue Blocks is one of their great benefits. They can be used inside a school hall on a wet weather day, or outside on a grassy area or in sand pit. They are weather resistant and can be wiped down after messy play with a soft brush and soapy water. Over time, they will fade in the sun to a light blue, and may have scratches or marks, however, this will not have an effect on their appeal, usefulness, or playability. We recommend avoiding use on rough surfaces such as gravel or asphalt for greatest longevity.

What are Big Blue Blocks made of?

Big Blue Blocks are made of a cross-linked polyethylene foam, similar to that used in the medical and aerospace industries for its density, durability and safety. The closed-cell foam is soft, lightweight, and waterproof, with a velvet-like feel on the surface that prevents slipping.

The particular type of molecular linking used to bond the foam ensures that when exposed to an open fire the Blue Blocks will smoulder, but not catch fire. They are resistant to sun, heat, mould, mildew, corrosion and microorganisms, and are non-toxic, conforming to international toy safety standards. With care, Big Blue Blocks should offer several years of playful use.

What ages are best for playing with Big Blue Blocks?

Creators, dreamers, and inventors of all ages will be captivated by the endless, imaginative possibilities of Big Blue Blocks! Often, parents and grandparents join in with children of all ages to collaboratively design and build unique and incredible structures and sculptures that are truly awe-inspiring.

The appeal of Block Play is universal and the delight of creating on a mega-scale inspires many moments of inter-generational fun. For general safety purposes, we recommend only children aged 2+ use Big Blue Blocks, and always with adult supervision.

Where are Big Blue Blocks designed and manufactured?

Big Blue Blocks are made to order in Rhode Island, USA by Imagination Playground LLC and are imported to Australia for distribution as Big Blue Blocks by Mud Kitchen/Playable Spaces Pty Ltd. The design of each set, as well as their particular colour, is the original product of thorough research and consultation with many seminal figures in the field of play and education during the development phase, especially Roger Hart, Director of the Children's Environments Research Group and Professor of Environmental Psychology at the Graduate Centre of the City of New York, Susan Solomon, author of American Playgrounds: Revitalizing Community Space, Penny Wilson, a renowned U.K. Play Worker, and Elise Clark at the City and Country School in New York City.

Much time was also spent speaking with parents, teachers, kids, doing focus groups, prototyping, and researching all sorts of different ways to play.



How can adults help children to get the most out of Big Blue Block play?

Educators, parents, or other adults act as Play Facilitators with Big Blue Block play. Other than general supervision of the play space for safety and maintenance, Play Facilitators only need to prompt play with some ideas for use of materials, but ideally do not direct play or teach children a 'right' way to use the objects or environment. What children do will be the result of their inherent curiosity and urge to play. When using Big Blue Blocks in conjunction with curriculum outcomes, more specific prompts can be used, though even then, open-ended, non-prescriptive play should be encouraged by Play Facilitators for the most rewarding experience.

How do I purchase Big Blue Blocks in Australia?

Please review our Mud Kitchen Big Blue Blocks Order & Delivery Schedule online or request a copy to be emailed. This details order deadlines, payment dates, and estimated delivery timeframes. To obtain a formal quote, please contact us at sales@mudkitchen.com.au and mention the sets you are interested in (Classic, Add-Ons, etc), and your delivery address for accurate shipping costs from our Melbourne warehouse to your location, and we will reply promptly with details. From there, once the quote is accepted, we will issue a tax invoice for the deposit amount, which when received, will hold your set of Blocks in the next delivery. A second invoice for the balance will be issued in line with the Order Schedule and payment must be received prior to dispatch of your Big Blue Block order. If you have an urgent need for the Big Blue Blocks outside of the Schedule timeframes, please let us know as we may have inventory available in Melbourne for immediate dispatch.

How do you recommend Big Blue Blocks are stored?

Big Blue Blocks can be stacked along a wall or in a storage shed, ideally out of the elements to prolong their life. Stacked with care to a height, they have a relatively small storage footprint. Alternatively, we recommend wheeled storage carts that are durable and easy to use, folding up when not in use.

For a 105pc Classic set, we suggest 5-6 carts to be used. These can be stacked two high if needed as long as care is taken to fit the wheels of the top cart in a way that doesn't weigh heavily on the Blocks in the bottom cart. If you are needing a cart solution, please contact us for further details.

Big Blue Blocks are a large purchase, do you have any suggestions for stretching our budget?

We recognise that Big Blue Blocks are a significant investment, just like any other play equipment that will have many years of use, and much love. To help as many Australian children as possible have the unique play experiences that Big Blue Blocks provide, we do our best to keep our costs low by consolidating orders and working with our overseas partners to get the best pricing. However, we understand that this still can leave some budgets short of being able to purchase. If this is the case, we suggest searching for grants that would assist in funding – Big Blue Blocks can fall under Learning Environments grants, Inclusive Play grants, STEM/STEAM grants, Outdoor Play Equipment grants, and many, many others. Additionally, fundraising within your school or organisation can help to bridge the gap, or consider crowd-funding in your community. We can help with crafting a fundraising pitch, or with grant submission ideas if needed, please contact us at sales@mudkitchen.com.au for more details.

Can I order replacement Blocks for my existing set?

Occasionally, Blocks or Balls go missing from a set, or a piece has had an abundance of love and needs to be replaced. If this happens, please contact us for options.

Can we hire a set of Big Blue Blocks?

At this stage, we only offer the Big Blue Blocks for purchase, but we are looking for opportunities to provide them to communities for hire. If you would like to know more about this option, or if you might be interested in working with us to be a Big Blue Block Community Partner and manage hire in your area, please contact us at sales@mudkitchen.com.au.

“Children have always learned and created places for themselves through play.”

DONNA R. BARNES

PLAY PROMPTS

Creative inspiration for
Big Blue Block adventures...

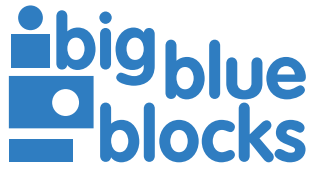


"I think it's really important to realize every child has a different play style. They are as unique as somebody's personality."

CHRIS BYRNE

Let's work together to...

- Build a tool that can lift something
- Make something you can get inside or crawl through
- Discover how many different ways can you join three pieces
- Make something that will take you to the centre of the earth
- Using 15 pieces develop a contraption that can _____
(change the goal every time!)
- Make a contraption that incorporates extra loose parts (i.e. box, cloth, etc.) in a useful way
- Invent something that uses moving parts
- Develop a creation that includes a chair
- Create two separate small structures with a friend and find a creative way to join them into one big one!
- Create a structure that would allow you to live on a cloud
- Build something that would allow you to ride a whale
- Discover the tallest, free-standing structure you can make with 20 pieces
- Make something that will take you to space
- Draw a picture of your creation and label the parts. Next, give instructions for how it works and see if a friend can re-create it
- Name your creation and write a story about it
- Name all the shapes you see, arrange them from smallest to largest
- Create a ball run that starts high, goes through a tunnel, and has two bends in it
- Have each person in your group take turns adding a new piece to make one big combined sculpture



What people are saying...



“When I see the kids engage with this and I see them having fun and I see them problem solving, I have to believe that it’s doing something to improve the quality of their thinking.”

DOMINIC, HEAD OF SCHOOL

“These have endless opportunities, so a child can never tire of exploring and creating and coming up with something different every time they go to the Big Blue Blocks to play with them. There’s always something new waiting for them.”

JEAN, EDUCATOR

“When I watch my kids play, I’m looking to see them smile. And that’s all I saw today, just big grins. They’ve been running around. They’ve had a great time. At the end of the day, that’s really what’s important.”

REGINA, MUM

“At most playgrounds, kids who already know each other play alone. This [Big Blue Block] playground is inviting collaboration. There’s a lot of social interacting going on.”

ROGER HART, DIRECTOR, CHILDREN’S ENVIRONMENTS RESEARCH GROUP, NEW YORK CITY

“Today’s make believe is tomorrow’s creativity.”

K. LAMB

