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ABSTRACT

This booklet presents several ideas for using old tires as equipment in both indoor and outdoor learning settings for young children. (JMB)

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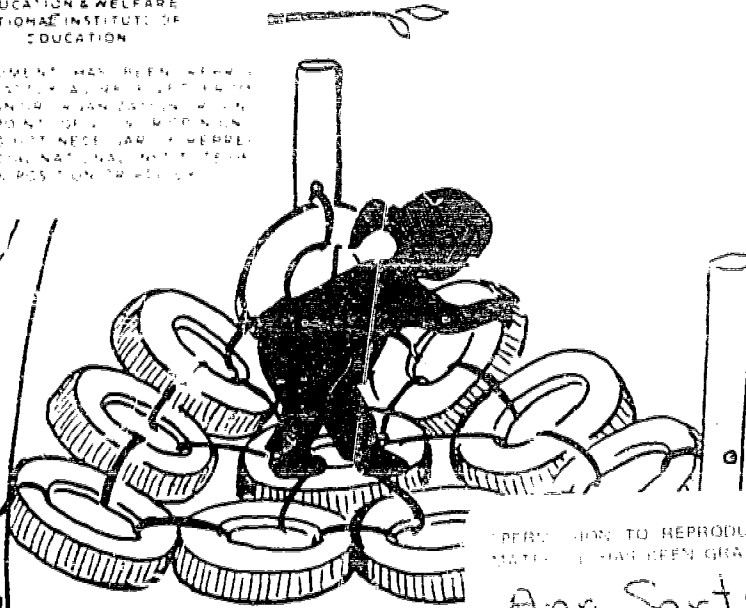
# TIRES ARE TOOLS FOR LEARNING

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(Cover Note)

### THE TIRE WEB

Fasten tires together with rope or chains to make a triangle. Put knots underneath. Attach to securely mounted utility poles, sturdy posts — even trees. The highest point should be at least four feet from the ground.

# Tires Are Tools For Learning

By Mabel B. Pitts  
Program Consultant on Child  
Development and Day Care

Illustrations by Betty Creamer

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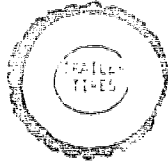
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## Tires Are ...

Available in many sizes

Inexpensive, sometimes free

Safe for children

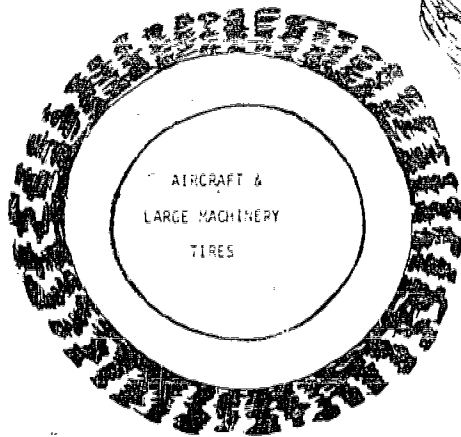
Very durable, require minimum care

Easy to use

Attractive when painted lightly

Convenient to store

Suitable for outdoors or indoors



## Use Loose Tires To ...

SIT ON

RELAX IN

STACK AND HIDE IN

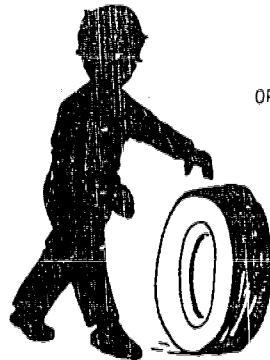
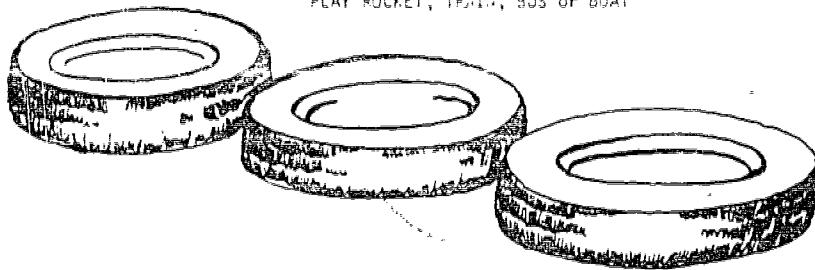
JUMP FROM

PLAY BIRD NEST

BE A JACK-IN-A-BOX

Arrange on the ground or an elevated surface and

PLAY ROCKET, TRAIN, BUS or BOAT



OR ROLL 'EM!

Even three-year-olds are sufficiently well-coordinated to roll something like a tiny trailer tire.

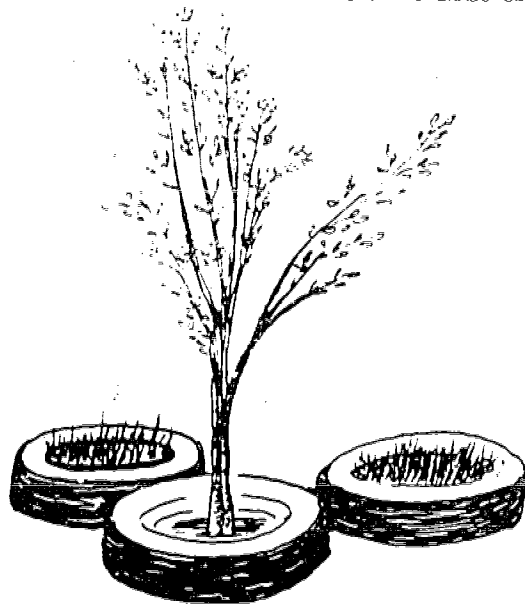
Fill Tires

With Dirt



Place the tire on a base, such as an old cookie sheet or a squashed garbage can lid, and plan a "garden" that can be moved around easily.

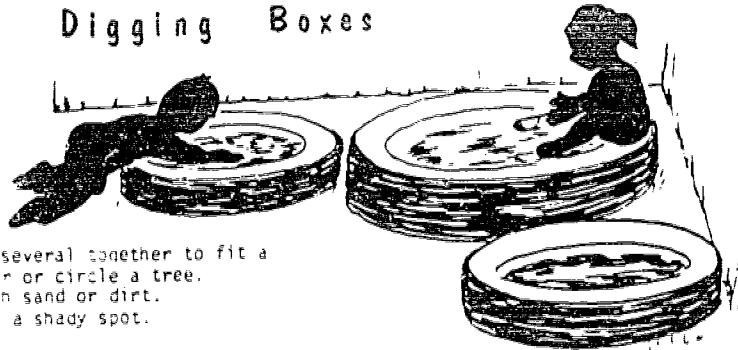
FOR VEGETABLE GARDENS, SPECIAL FLOWERS,  
GOLF BEES AND GRASS BEES



Protect young  
shrubs and trees  
in traffic areas.



# Fill Very Large Tires For Digging Boxes

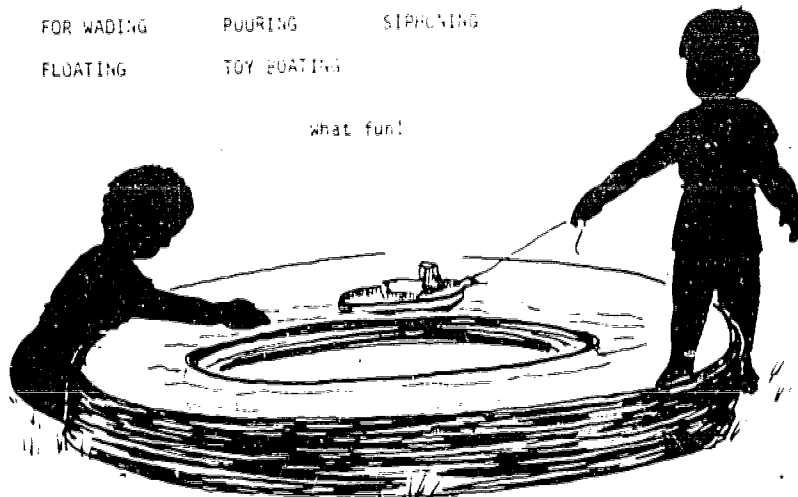


Arrange several together to fit a corner or circle a tree. Fill with sand or dirt. Place in a shady spot.

Fill and cover large tires with dirt to make interesting mounds.  
Cut very large tires in half horizontally and fill with water.

FOR WADING      POURING      SIPHONING  
FLOATING      TOY BOATING

what fun!



Fill With Cement If You Need.



STEPPING STONES

PERMANENT PLACES TO SIT

Stack two tires together  
for this if you wish.

A PLAYGROUND DIVIDER

PERMANENT BOPPERS  
For gardens or flower beds



DIRECTIONS

Materials needed

Tire casing	Water
Ready-mix cement	Container for mixing

1. Place tire on a piece of heavy cardboard.
2. Fill tire with prepared cement.
3. Level and smooth cement.
4. Remove cardboard when the cement is dry.

# Put An Upright In Cement

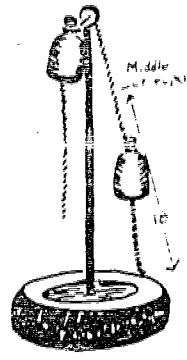
## To Make A ...



PUNCHING BAG

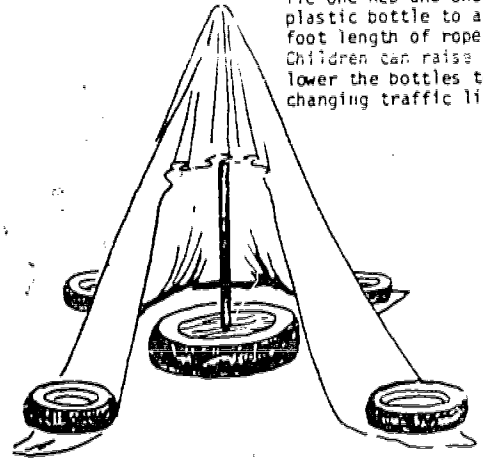
With a cord attach a perforated plastic bag filled with shredded plastic, or a balloon or a ball.

- FLAG POLE
- MAY POLE
- WEATHER VANE



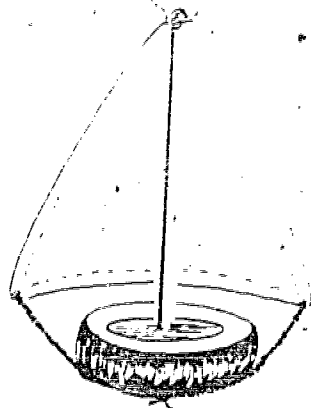
TRAFFIC SIGNAL LIGHT

Tie one RED and one GREEN plastic bottle to a nine-foot length of rope. Children can raise and lower the bottles to play changing traffic lights.

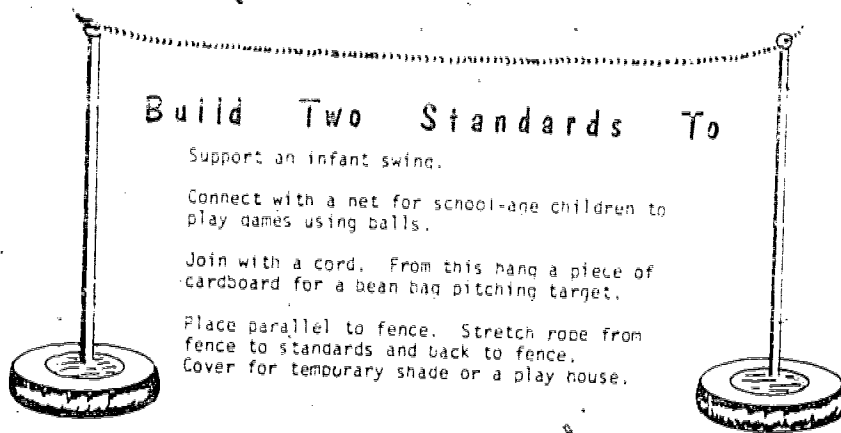


TENT

Just put an old bedspread or other large piece of fabric over the upright. Use smaller tires to hold down the corners.



- Materials needed
1. Use sturdy fabric in a triangle, 2 feet on each side.
  2. Sew leather hem on the three sides, leaving hems open at the corners.
  3. Run heavy cord through each hem. Allow 2 inches of cord to tie at top of pole and several feet to tie under the tire at bottom.



## Build Two Standards To

Support an infant swing.

Connect with a net for school-age children to play games using balls.

Join with a cord. From this hang a piece of cardboard for a bean bag pitching target.

Place parallel to fence. Stretch rope from fence to standards and back to fence. Cover for temporary shade or a play house.

### DIRECTIONS FOR UPRIGHTS

#### Materials needed

Tire casing

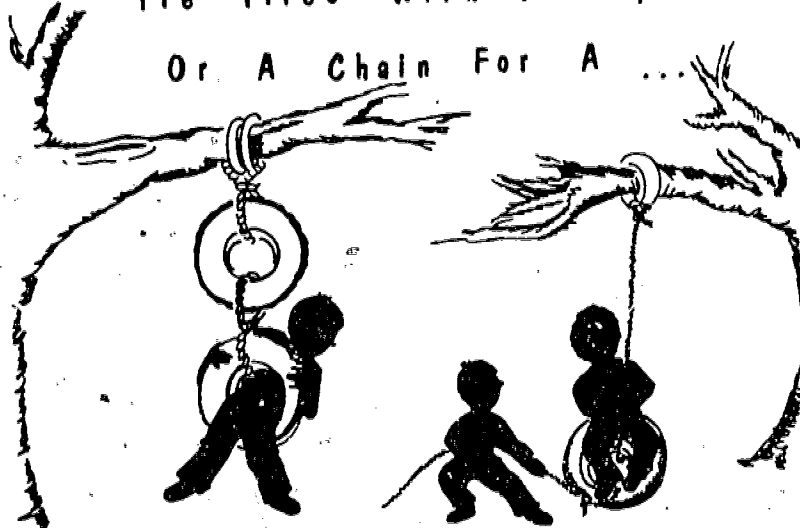
Prepared ready-mix cement

Upright, approximately 5 ft. long (4 ft. for tent)  
(Use pipe or 2" x 1" plank or smooth post.)

Eye or hook to attach things at top.

1. Place tire on heavy cardboard
2. Stand upright in center.
3. Fill tire with prepared cement and smooth.
4. Hold uprights in place with boards placed across tire until cement is dry.

# Tie Tires With A Rope Or A Chain For A ...

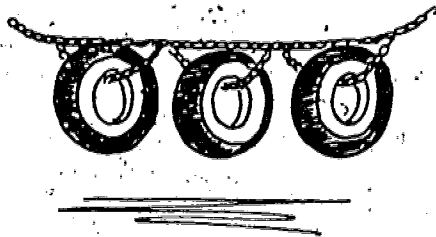


DOUBLE-DECKER SWING

SINGLE SWING

Children can sit best on small trailer tires. With a rope attached, they are easy for another child to pull.

TANDEM SWING



Fasten tandem swings between

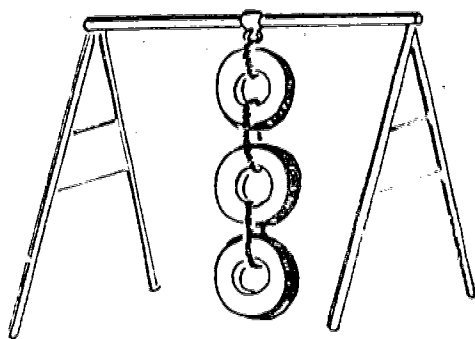
Old utility poles

Sturdy posts

Between trees

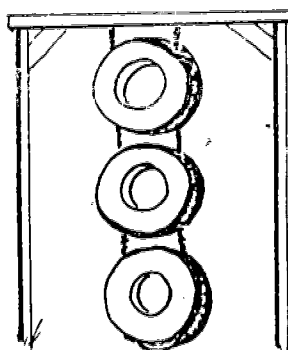
Or hang them on an extra  
swing stand.

## Ladders

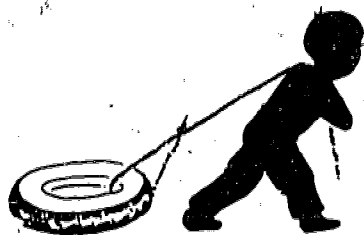


Tie or chain smaller tires through the center to form a simple ladder

Punch holes in both sides of casings of larger tires and thread a rope through to make a more stable ladder.



## Pull Toys

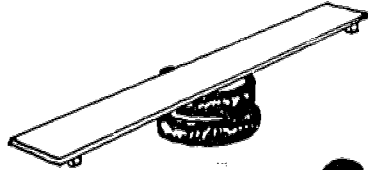


Attach a rope or chain to a small tire to make a pull toy, trailer for a tricycle, or an anchor for a boat. (See page 15 for directions.)

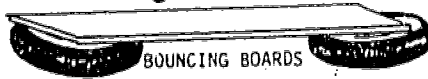
# Use Tires & Boards

To Make ...

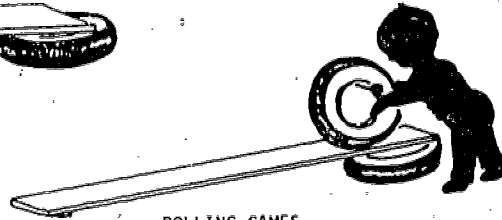
SEE SAWS



BALANCING BOARDS



BOUNCING BOARDS



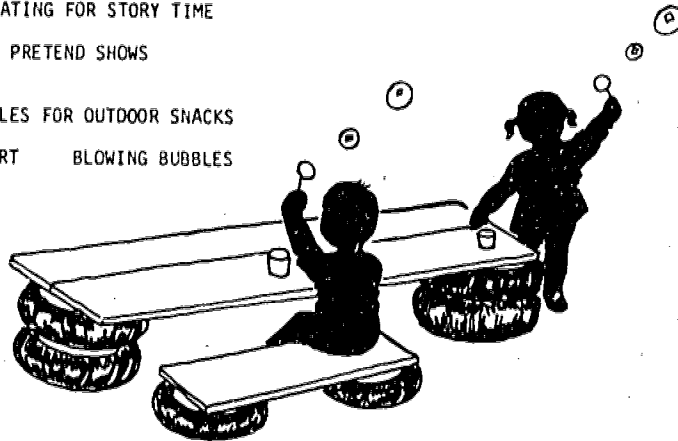
ROLLING GAMES

STAGE & SEATING FOR STORY TIME

CHILDREN'S PRETEND SHOWS

LOW TABLES FOR OUTDOOR SNACKS

ART BLOWING BUBBLES



ROLL-A-POLE

Make an unusual rolling device by placing small trailer tires on each end of a short piece of discarded utility pole.

## Storage

Children can stack tires neatly to low heights.

Where space is limited, arrange tall stacks over one of the standards.

If tires are to be stored outside, punch holes in each tire to provide water drainage.

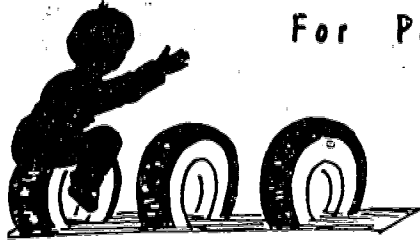




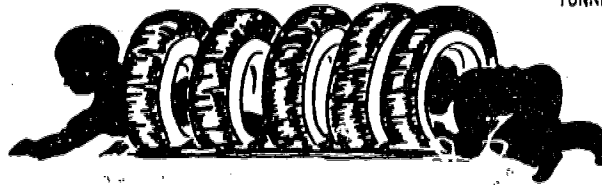
## Anchor In Cement

For Permanent

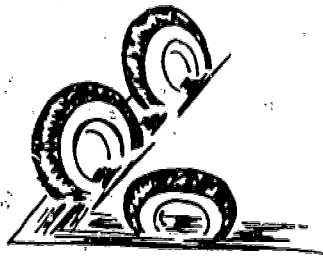
Outdoor Equipment



BOUNCING HORSES



TUNNELS



CORRALS  
OR  
HITCHING POSTS

### DIRECTIONS

Materials needed  
Tire casings  
Prepared ready-mix cement

1. Dig a trench in the ground 8 to 12 inches deep.
2. Prop each tire in the desired position.
3. Fill the trench with cement. Level the top of the cement 1 or 2 inches below ground level. (Later smooth the playground soil over the dry cement.)

## Tips for the Teacher



Try these approaches in challenging situations:

To the grouchy child, who is making everyone including himself unhappy, say, "I know how to make a boat just for you. Let's find the big yellow tire... Would you like to rest in it here by me?... I will tell the others you want to be alone for awhile."

Your children aren't as independent as they are capable of being. So when they ask you to lift them to the high swing or up a tree say, "Let's find a way for you to climb yourself. Do you have any ideas? (Pause) I do. Why don't we stack one red tire on top of another red tire? I think you can reach the swing then."

All of your three-year-olds want to use two wagons. Quietly but with enthusiasm to the ones left out you say, "Who wants to ride the bus (assuming they are acquainted with buses)? If we place all the blue tires in a row we can make a bus." Help them find and arrange the tires.

For the poorly coordinated children, you can make all sorts of arrangements with your tires and boards. If your structure itself isn't interesting enough or if a child is afraid, then say, "Here's a bridge for Mary." Or sing slowly as you lightly hold Juan's hand while he walks on the board, "This is the way Juan walks across, walks across, etc."

You'll find many ways tires can broaden your children's learning experiences. For instance, children cannot really learn about plant growth unless they participate in the whole process. Your children can grow lots of lettuce and other vegetables in the tire gardens.

## Tips for the Equipment Planner

Although you probably have a plan for your playground, how about adding some tires to your permanent equipment? They will last for a long, long time.

### PAINTING

To make your grounds as appealing as possible to the staff, the children and the public, you may add some color with a light coat of paint to the tires. They hold paint well; there is no need to paint between the treads.

### CLEANING

If you use old tires, you probably won't have to worry about the black rubbing off. Of course you can always scrub them with soap and water or hose them down occasionally when you clean other equipment.

### DRAINING

You'll want to punch holes in tires left outside so that water will drain out quickly. This is a must to prevent mosquitoes from breeding in them.

### STORING

If possible store loose tires and accessories inside. They are good for active and imaginative rainy day play. (And uninvited visitors won't be tempted to carry them away either.)

## Selecting and Using Accessories

### Boards

A good rule of thumb is at least eight boards per playyard:

Four, 2" x 4" x 10' for balancing

Four, 1" x 10" x 8' or 10' for other purposes

Any other length you choose

### Chains, Ropes and Attachments

See your local hardware salesman for information about the weight different size chains support. For the cautious, #2-0 is an excellent size for swings.

Loose chains or ropes may be dangerous but chains and ropes attached to tires are not. Fasten them permanently to the tires with repair links, size 1/4 inch (see figure 1). Three or four-foot lengths work well for such items as sleds.

Since self-help is so important, attach snap hooks to the end of all ropes and chains (see figure 2). Children learn to manipulate these quickly and can fasten their tires together, to tricycles, to the jungle gym, etc.

Fig. 1

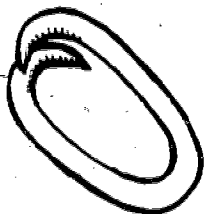
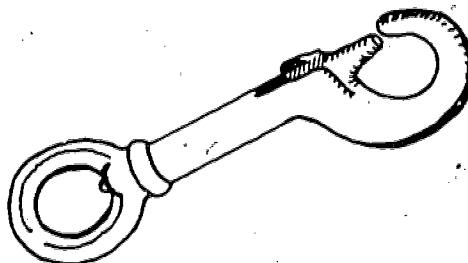


Fig. 2



EDITOR'S NOTE: I hope you will enjoy using tires as tools for learning as much as I have. Perhaps the parents will implement some of your ideas at home when they hear about and see what the children and you are doing. When you discover additional ideas for using tires, won't you tell us about them?