

Houston Zoo at Home

OTTER-LY FUN

Otter-ly Awesome Popsicles

All Ages

Asian small-clawed otters are the smallest of the otter species. They are well adapted to life in the water and spend much of their time there playing, socializing, and searching for food. Unlike other species, Asian small clawed otters will spend more time on land. Otters have very dexterous paws and will forage along shorelines and shallows in the mud for snacks like mollusks, fish, frogs, crabs and other crustaceans. One of our otters' favorite treats are popsicles. Keepers will make them a tasty fish flavor. The otters can then practice using those strong flexible paws to hold on to their popsicles, dunking them in the water and chewing on them.

Do you like popsicles, too? Try making your own frozen treat by mixing your favorite juice and fruits and freezing them in ice cube trays, Tupperware, or popsicle trays. They're fun to make and eat! See how long it takes you to melt your popsicle and get to a tasty piece of fruit. Do some flavors freeze better than others? What's your favorite flavor combination?

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Otter Pup Tag

All Ages

Otters spend much of their time playing and socializing in the water and on the shoreline, which creates strong bonds or relationships between individuals. Sometimes you can even see mud slides where otters regularly visit. It's also a great way to burn energy! Otters will often play hard and then take long naps. Our otters, Dahn Tu and Hope, can be seen chasing after each other in their pool or climbing along the rocks. Then they will find a warm sunny spot to groom their fur and take a nap together. Have the whole family join in for a fun game of otter tag! You can keep it simple or add challenges to make it more difficult.

Level up suggestions: Do you have access to a pool or sprinkler? Try playing tag in the water. Otters also love throwing and bouncing objects. If you have a ball or other soft item, incorporate a game of pass the ball. Whoever is tossed the ball becomes the tagger.

What happens when someone is tagged? Instead of being out of the game, create a quick task they must complete to rejoin the game.

Otters are known to use rocks to crack open shells and mollusks. Have tagged family members collect different shaped rocks. Whenever someone gets out, they must crack open a seed or nut using the rocks to rejoin the game.

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