cleared for takeoff!
We start scouting new toys in February, request tons of them in May and June, and over the summer, test a few hundred faves with some 75 kids and their parents. The result—this annual list—is the best of the newest. We don’t play around! (Oh wait, maybe we do...)

Coding that’s intuitive! Each part of the Fisher-Price Think & Learn Code-A-Pillar dictates an action. Pull it apart and reassemble in any order, then hit the go button to watch the creature follow each step. Use the arrow and star to set up a challenge. 3 to 6 years, $50; toysrus.com

The Li’l Woodzeez Honeysuckle Airway is the latest set for the sweet land of make-believe. It comes with luggage and snacks; characters are sold separately. 3 years+, $30; target.com

You will get wet playing the Zing Wet Head Water Roulette Game, but only enough to make you laugh! The anticipation—players take turns pulling pins, waiting to see who gets dumped on—makes for a screaming good time. 4 years+, $15; target.com

The Manhattan Toy MIO Playing Eating Sleeping Working + 2 People set is beautiful in its simplicity. Wooden pieces can be placed any which way, and characters have a beanbag body so they balance upright. 3 years+, $100; manhattantoy.com

Way too young for Game of Thrones, kids may still want to mother this dragon. Hasbro FurReal Friends Torch My Blazin’ Dragon coos when petted and breathes flame-colored mist; to light up the marshmallow to watch it “toboggan!” 4 years+, $80; hasbrotoyshop.com