



Infant & Toddler DEVELOPMENTAL CHECKLISTS

Just like tracking height and weight, tracking developmental milestones provides information about how a child's skills compare to typical growth and development.

Developmental milestones are skills children typically can do with a certain age range. Knowing what to look for is key to knowing how a child is developing. Developmental milestones can help caregivers become aware of what skills are expected at what ages and celebrate what the child is accomplishing—a first smile, a first step, a first word.



Each child is an individual, so it is important to remember that a milestone checklist is only a guide for growth and development. Some children may achieve skills a little earlier, and some children may achieve skills a little later; however, certain skills tend to develop within predictable age ranges.

HELPFUL HINTS FOR USING MILESTONE CHECKLISTS:

- Most milestones can be observed while the child is playing during a variety of activities and following daily routines throughout the day.
- If milestones do not occur naturally while observing the child, engage the child with social interaction, toys, and demonstrations to try to elicit certain skills. Infants and toddlers may be most comfortable moving around and playing on the floor, while preschoolers may sometimes play at a table.
- Mark a check or date on the milestone checklist when the child is observed performing each skill. If the child needs assistance to complete a skill, do not check off the skill on the milestone checklist, as it means the child is still learning this skill.
- While some milestones (like language) can be observed at any time during the day, other milestones will most likely be observed during targeted times of the day. For example, motor skills will be easy to observe during movement activities, dancing, and in the yard/playground. Look for self-help skills during arrival, dismissal, toileting, and mealtimes. Social-emotional skills can be observed while children play or interact with each other.

The following milestone checklists can be used by families and teachers of children from birth to 48 months of age. They are divided into age ranges and areas of development: Language, Social-Emotional, Cognitive, Early Literacy, Physical Health & Motor Development. Milestones are typically achieved by the end of the age range.

The checklists can also be downloaded at: public.cliengage.org/tools/assessment/infant-toddler-checklists/



0-3 months

DEVELOPMENTAL CHECKLIST

Child's Name:

Observer's Name:

Date(s) of Observation:

Tip: If completing multiple times (e.g., once per month), use a different colored pen for each administration.

HEALTH & MOTOR

- Stretches legs out and kicks when lying on stomach or back
- Raises head and chest up when lying on tummy
- Opens and shuts hands
- Focuses on objects up close (6-12 inches away)
- By 3 months old, begins to make smoother movements with arms and legs

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL

- Likes to be held close and cuddled
- Enjoys looking at faces
- Begins to smile at people
- Can briefly calm self by sucking on hand or pacifier
- Is comforted by voice, sight, smell, and touch of familiar caregiver

COGNITIVE

- Spends more time awake and alert by 3 months old
- Tracks or follows movements with eyes
- Looks back and forth briefly from one object to another

LANGUAGE & LITERACY

- Startles at loud sounds
- Starts to turn eyes or head toward sounds
- Starts to make different cries for different needs (hungry, tired, uncomfortable)

RED FLAGS

Teachers should talk to parents or guardians if they notice one or more of these signs of possible developmental delay by the end of this age range. Parents should discuss red flags with their pediatricians or call Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) to ask for a developmental screening.

- Doesn't respond to loud sounds
- Doesn't watch things as they move
- Doesn't smile at people
Can't hold head up when on tummy



3-6 months

DEVELOPMENTAL CHECKLIST

Child's Name:

Observer's Name:

Date(s) of Observation:

Tip: If completing multiple times (e.g., once per month), use a different colored pen for each administration.

HEALTH & MOTOR

- Holds head steady, unsupported
- Rolls from back to tummy and tummy to back
- Pushes up on forearms when lying on tummy
- Sits with support by 6 months old
- Pushes down on legs or bounces on feet when supported in a standing position
- Brings both hands together at midline
- Brings hands to mouth
- Reaches for, grasps, and holds objects
- Shakes and bangs objects
- Focuses eyes on small objects up close as well as on objects a few feet away
- Closes mouth firmly or turns head away when hunger is satisfied

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL

- Responds with eye gaze or smiling when spoken to, picked up, or shown affection by a familiar caregiver
- Initiates social interactions with others by making eye contact and/or cooing
- Copies some facial expressions, like smiling or frowning
Shows excitement by waving arms and legs
- Laughs or chuckles

COGNITIVE

- Looks around and shows curiosity about things nearby in environment (objects, people, activities)
- Looks at own hands with interest
- Forgets about object when removed from view
- Begins to experiment with cause and effect (e.g., shaking a rattle to make noise)

LANGUAGE & LITERACY

- Turns head toward the sound of caregiver's voice
- Responds to music and singing
- Coos (sounds like "ooh" and "ahh")
- Communicates vocally (to get attention, to express displeasure by fussing or crying) and nonverbally (turns head, frowns, arches back, spits up)
- Produces raspberries, squeals, trills
- Takes turns making sounds with others
- Reaches toward and touches a book
- May respond by smiling and cooing to caregiver's voice while reading

RED FLAGS

Teachers should talk to parents or guardians if they notice one or more of these signs of possible developmental delay by the end of this age range. Parents should discuss red flags with their pediatricians or call Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) to ask for a developmental screening.

- Doesn't bring hands to mouth
- Has trouble moving one or both eyes in all directions by 4 months old
- Can't hold head steady by 4 months old
- Doesn't coo or make sounds by 4 months old
- Doesn't push down with legs when feet are placed on a hard surface by 4 months old
- Doesn't try to get things that are in reach
- Doesn't respond to sounds around them
- Has difficulty getting things to mouth
- Doesn't roll over in either direction
- Doesn't laugh or make squealing sounds
- Seems very stiff, with tight muscles on one or both sides of the body
- Seems very floppy, like a rag doll
- Loses skills they once had

6-9 months

DEVELOPMENTAL CHECKLIST

Child's Name:

Observer's Name:

Date(s) of Observation:

Tip: If completing multiple times (e.g., once per month), use a different colored pen for each administration.

HEALTH & MOTOR

- Crawls
- Can get into sitting position by self
- Sits without support
- Holds one thing in each hand at the same time
- Transfers object from one hand to the other hand
- Uses fingers to rake and pick up small objects in palm
- May drool and enjoy chewing toys during teething
- Places pacifier in own mouth (if he or she uses one)
- May begin sleeping through the night

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL

- Looks back and forth between toy and adult while playing
- Shows interest in simple interaction games (e.g., peek-a-boo, pat-a-cake)
- Reaches out to touch another person
- Responds differently to caregiver than to strangers; may become clingy with familiar adults
- Turns and looks when name is called
- Expresses distinct emotions (e.g., fear, sadness, anger, excitement)

COGNITIVE

- Explores objects (e.g., visually inspects, turns around, feels, mouths, shakes, drops)
- Repeats actions to get an effect
- Searches for objects that are partially hidden or dropped out of sight

LANGUAGE & LITERACY

- Watches caregiver's face when they talk
- Lifts arms to request to be picked up
- Shows recognition of family members' or pets' names (e.g., by turning to look for the person or pet when caregiver says, "Where's ___?")
- Babbles repeated syllables of alternating consonants and vowels (e.g., "bababa")
- Explores a book by feeling it, turning it upside down, or putting it in mouth
- Vocalizes and pats pictures

RED FLAGS

Teachers should talk to parents or guardians if they notice one or more of these signs of possible developmental delay by the end of this age range. Parents should discuss red flags with their pediatricians or call Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) to ask for a developmental screening.

- Doesn't bear weight on legs with support under the arms
- Doesn't sit with support
- Doesn't babble ("mama," "baba," "dada")
- Doesn't make eye contact
- Doesn't show interest in any games involving back-and-forth play
- Doesn't respond to own name
- Doesn't seem to recognize familiar people
- Doesn't transfer toys from one hand to the other
- Loses skills they once had



9-12 months

DEVELOPMENTAL CHECKLIST

Child's Name:

Observer's Name:

Date(s) of Observation:

Tip: If completing multiple times (e.g., once per month), use a different colored pen for each administration.

HEALTH & MOTOR

- Changes positions without help (between crawling, sitting, or standing)
- Pulls self up to stand
- Cruises or walks holding on to furniture
- May stand alone
- "Dances" or moves body to music
- Bangs two small objects together
- Puts objects in and out of container
- Waves bye-bye
- Claps hands
- Picks up small objects between thumb and pointer finger
- Finger feeds self; may remove food from mouth, look at it, and put it back in
- Drinks from cup with assistance

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL

- Participates in simple interaction games (e.g., peek-a-boo, pat-a-cake)
- Uses several communicative gestures (e.g., showing, pointing, giving, or waving bye-bye)
- Looks to familiar adults for comfort
- May be shy or nervous with strangers and may cry when separated from primary caregiver ("stranger anxiety")
- Responds to "no" by stopping momentarily or protesting
- Begins to show a sense of humor (e.g., laughing at funny faces)

COGNITIVE

- Takes action with a goal in mind (e.g., avoids diaper change by crawling away)
- Gives an object to adult upon request, expects to have it returned immediately
- Remembers and finds object hidden under cloth or cup

LANGUAGE & LITERACY

- Demonstrates understanding of a few words (e.g., "hi," "bye," "no") or simple phrases
- Touches or points to one body part when named (e.g., on self, on adult, or in book)
- Babbles with expression in a way that sounds like real speech
- Imitates familiar sounds
- Says one to two words including sounds with meaning (e.g., "Mama," "Dada," "Uh-oh")
- Reaches for the favorite of two books offered
- Looks at objects or pictures that are named
- Opens and closes book
- Pays attention to a story for a few minutes at a time

RED FLAGS

Teachers should talk to parents or guardians if they notice one or more of these signs of possible developmental delay by the end of this age range. Parents should discuss red flags with their pediatricians or call Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) to ask for a developmental screening.

- Can't stand when supported by holding on to fingers or furniture
- Doesn't search for things that they see you hide
- Doesn't babble expressively
- Loses skills they once had



12-18 months

DEVELOPMENTAL CHECKLIST

Child's Name:

Observer's Name:

Date(s) of Observation:

Tip: If completing multiple times (e.g., once per month), use a different colored pen for each administration.

HEALTH & MOTOR

- Rolls a ball
- Climbs up stairs on hands and knees
- Walks independently
- Squats to pick something up
- Pushes/pulls toys while walking
- Stacks at least two blocks or small objects
- Holds crayon or marker in fist
- Drinks from an open cup as caregiver holds it
- Eats with a spoon with some spilling
- Helps with undressing self

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL

- Initiates joint attention (e.g., points to car and looks at caregiver to make sure the caregiver sees it too)
- Brings toy to share with caregiver
- Enjoys praise and clapping to celebrate accomplishments
- Moves toward or away from people or objects to express comfort/discomfort
- Looks to caregiver for reassurance when faced with a new situation
- Shows affection to others (e.g., hugs, pats, kisses)
- May use a favorite toy or blanket to self-soothe

COGNITIVE

- Shows understanding of how objects go together (e.g., spoon with bowl, shoe with sock)
- Tries to make mechanical objects work after watching someone else do it
- Solves problems by trial and error (e.g., inverts bottle to obtain object)
- Engages in simple pretend play (e.g., pretends to drink from an empty cup, feed a doll/stuffed animal, roll a car, talk on a play phone)

LANGUAGE & LITERACY

- Shakes head and says "no"
- Looks at familiar objects when named
- Points to several body parts when named
- Follows simple commands that are paired with gestures
- Uses at least three or more words besides "mama" or "dada"
- Gives book to caregiver to read aloud
- Turns board book pages
- Points to pictures in a book to show interest
- Copies caregiver's reactions to the book
- Begins to name some familiar objects in pictures
- Makes mark with crayon on paper or surface

RED FLAGS

Teachers should talk to parents or guardians if they notice one or more of these signs of possible developmental delay by the end of this age range. Parents should discuss red flags with their pediatricians or call Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) to ask for a developmental screening.

- Doesn't look where you point
- Doesn't point to show things to others
- Can't walk
- Doesn't try to imitate others
- Isn't gaining new words
- Doesn't say at least five words
- Doesn't notice or mind when a caregiver leaves or returns
- Doesn't use gestures like waving bye-bye
- Doesn't show affection (cuddles, hugs, kisses)
- Loses skills they once had



18-24 months

DEVELOPMENTAL CHECKLIST

Child's Name:

Observer's Name:

Date(s) of Observation:

Tip: If completing multiple times (e.g., once per month), use a different colored pen for each administration.

HEALTH & MOTOR

- Climbs on/off furniture without help
- Walks up and down stairs holding on
- Throws a ball
- Kicks a ball
- Uses feet to propel riding toys
- Takes linking toys apart and puts them back together (e.g., snap lock beads)
- Pours, fills, and digs (e.g., sand, water)
- Starts to eat with a fork
- Helps with dressing
- Lets caregiver know when diaper is wet or soiled
- Helps pick up and put away toys

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL

- Plays near or next to other children ("parallel play")
- Shows signs of empathy and caring for others (e.g., comforting another child who is hurt or giving bottle to a crying baby)
- Begins to assert independence ("No!," "Mine!") and own preferences, wants to try doing things without help
- May have temper tantrums and use physical aggression when frustrated

COGNITIVE

- Plays hide-and-find with objects
- Matches two similar objects
- Inserts shapes into matching slots with assistance (e.g., shape sorter)
- Activates mechanical toy without demonstration (e.g., wind-up toys, switches, buttons, knobs)
- Likes to take things apart and experiment with how they work

LANGUAGE & LITERACY

- Follows simple instructions without gestures (e.g., "Put it in the trash" or "Bring it to Mommy")
- Makes sounds of familiar animals
- Uses one or more words to to make wants known
- Produces at least 25 words
- Uses two-word phrases
- Uses one pronoun (e.g., "me," "mine")
- Points to real objects or pictures in a book when named
- Especially likes rhyming chants and/or books about familiar routines (e.g., bedtime, bath time)
- Uses a word or two to comment on a favorite picture
- Scribbles and experiments with marks on paper, but no understanding of "writing" yet

RED FLAGS

Teachers should talk to parents or guardians if they notice one or more of these signs of possible developmental delay by the end of this age range. Parents should discuss red flags with their pediatricians or call Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) to ask for a developmental screening.

- Doesn't use two-word phrases (e.g., "drink milk")
- Doesn't know what to do with common things (e.g., a brush, phone, fork, spoon)
- Doesn't copy actions and words
- Doesn't walk steadily
- Loses skills they once had



24-36 months

DEVELOPMENTAL CHECKLIST

Child's Name:

Observer's Name:

Date(s) of Observation:

Tip: If completing multiple times (e.g., once per month), use a different colored pen for each administration.

HEALTH & MOTOR

- Climbs well
- Runs easily
- Jumps in place
- Rolls, pounds, squeezes, pulls playdough
- Stacks a tower of blocks
- Strings large beads together
- Uses hands to twist (e.g., turn a doorknob, unscrew lid on toy container)
- Takes off some clothing by self (e.g., jacket, shoes; unzips zippers)
- Shows signs of readiness for toilet training (e.g., stays dry for longer periods of time)
- Washes and dries hands
- Helps brush own teeth
- Enjoys helping with simple household chores (e.g., wiping the table, feeding a pet)
- Shows or tells where it hurts when in pain

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL

- Says "please" and "thank you" when reminded
- Enjoys being around other children; may show preference for certain friends
- Participates in simple group activity or game, like chase
- Begins to take turns with assistance
- Recognizes and/or names some feelings in self and others
- Takes pride in own accomplishments by smiling, clapping, cheering for self, or saying "I did it!"
- May have increased temper tantrums, physical aggression, or rapid mood shifts

LANGUAGE & LITERACY

- Follows two-step instructions
- Demonstrates understanding of at least one preposition (e.g., "up," "down," "in," "on," "under")
- Responds verbally or nonverbally to "what" and "where" questions (e.g., "What are you doing?," "What is that?," or "Where are your shoes?")
- Names body parts
- Uses two-word phrases or short sentences
- Asks questions like "What's that?" or "Where's my__?"
- Uses quantitative words (e.g., "some," "one," "more")
- Says first name and age
- Uses some pronouns (e.g., "I," "me," "we," "you")
- Uses some plurals ("cars," "dogs," "cats")
- Carries on a simple conversation using two or three exchanges
- Talks to other children as well as adults
- Holds book right side up
- Names or tells about pictures in own words
- Fills in words or completes the end of a rhyme/sentence in a familiar book
- May love reading the same book again and again
- Pretends to read books aloud to self
- Recognizes some frequently seen signs and symbols (e.g., stop sign or fast food logo)
Scribbling becomes more varied to include vertical lines, horizontal lines, and circles

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24–36 months, continued.

COGNITIVE

- Knows where things usually belong
- Uses a chair or stool to reach an object
- Completes simple puzzles
- Pretends an object is something else (e.g., block as a car, banana as a phone)
- Strings steps of pretend play together in a sequence (e.g., making crying noise to indicate doll is sad, preparing food for doll, feeding it, and putting it to bed)

RED FLAGS

Teachers should talk to parents or guardians if they notice one or more of these signs of possible developmental delay by the end of this age range. Parents should discuss red flags with their pediatricians or call Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) to ask for a developmental screening.

- Falls down a lot or has trouble with stairs
- Drools or has very unclear speech
- Can't work simple toys (e.g., peg boards, simple puzzles, a turning handle)
- Doesn't speak in simple sentences
- Doesn't follow simple instructions (e.g., "Put it in the trash" or "Bring it to Mommy")
- Doesn't do pretend play
- Doesn't want to play with other children
- Loses skills they once had



36-48 months

DEVELOPMENTAL CHECKLIST

Child's Name:

Observer's Name:

Date(s) of Observation:

Tip: If completing multiple times (e.g., once per month), use a different colored pen for each administration.

HEALTH & MOTOR

- Catches a big ball with arms extended
- Pushes, pulls, steers wagon or wheeled toys
- Walks up and down stairs with alternating feet
- Jumps off low step
- Climbs ladder and uses slide
- Pedals a tricycle
- Forms simple shapes out of playdough (e.g., balls, snakes)
- Holds a crayon between thumb and fingers
- Begins to show a preference for being right-handed or left-handed
- Builds three-dimensional structures with blocks
- Snips with scissors
- Blows nose when reminded
- Puts on some clothing (e.g., jacket, shoes) by self
- Unbuttons large buttons
- Uses toilet independently during daytime
- Pours liquid from small pitcher with supervision
- Spreads with a butter knife with supervision
- Can recite familiar safety rules

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL

- Can follow familiar daily routines at home and school with adult assistance
- Can name a friend
- Initiates or tries to join in play with other children
- Shares toys and takes turns, with assistance
- Begins to negotiate solutions to conflicts or might accept compromise offered by an adult
- Is able to wait briefly without becoming upset, with assistance
- Expresses emotions through words in addition to actions and body language
- Begins to manage intensity of emotions by asking for help or using self-soothing strategies (e.g., deep breaths to calm down, hugging a comfort object) with assistance

LANGUAGE & LITERACY

- Follows simple instructions even when objects are not present (e.g., "Go to the kitchen and get your shoes")
- Can follow commands with modifiers (e.g., "Walk slowly to the car")
- Demonstrates understanding of four different prepositions (e.g., "up," "in," "on," "under")
- Says what action is happening in a picture (e.g., jumping, drinking, playing).
- Can relate events and experiences (e.g., "I went swimming with Grandma")
- Uses sentences of three to four words
- Sings a song or says a poem from memory (e.g., "Itsy Bitsy Spider," "Wheels on the Bus")
- Can say first and last name when asked
- Names an object within a category (e.g., "Tell me a kind of fruit," "Name different kinds of animals")
- Speech is understood by familiar adults and peers
- Answers simple "who," "what," "where," and "how" questions
- Asks "who," "what," "where," and "why" questions
- Turns pages one at a time
- Sustains attention to an age appropriate book when read aloud
- Retells a familiar story in own words with some prompting (e.g., "What happens next?")
- Names or points to some letters and numbers
- Copies a circle and plus sign when caregiver shows how to draw them
- Begins to draw recognizable forms (e.g., person drawn with circle for head and two vertical lines for legs)
- Attempts to write by making squiggles, letter-like forms, and/or letters in their name
- May express interest in typing on electronic devices

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36–48 months, continued.

COGNITIVE

- Identifies some colors
- Identifies basic shapes (circle, square, triangle)
- Sorts objects into categories using one feature (e.g., all cars together)
- Counts aloud up to 10
- Counts up to 5 objects one by one
- Recognizes familiar driving routes and locations (e.g., says, “That’s where Grandma lives!” when approaching her house)
- Better able to ignore distractions and focus on the task at hand, persists in completing something that is a bit difficult
- Experiments with different objects during play to compare their effects (e.g., cars on ramps to see which goes faster)
- Repeats actions to improve results (e.g., blowing bubbles or pumping legs on swing)

RED FLAGS

Teachers should talk to parents or guardians if they notice one or more of these signs of possible developmental delay by the end of this age range. Parents should discuss red flags with their pediatricians and can request a free evaluation for their child from the local public school district by calling their local zoned elementary school.

- Has trouble drawing lines and circular shapes
- Does not do pretend play
- Shows no interest in playing with others
- Cannot put on any clothes independently
- Resists using the toilet
- Doesn’t use “me” and “you” correctly
- Speech cannot be understood by those outside the family
- Loses skills they once had

Your child at 4 years



Child's Name _____

Child's Age _____

Today's Date _____

Milestones matter! How your child plays, learns, speaks, acts, and moves offers important clues about his or her development. Check the milestones your child has reached by age 4. Take this with you and talk with your child's doctor at every well-child visit about the milestones your child has reached and what to expect next.

What most children do by this age:

Social/Emotional Milestones

- Pretends to be something else during play (teacher, superhero, dog)
- Asks to go play with children if none are around, like "Can I play with Alex?"
- Comforts others who are hurt or sad, like hugging a crying friend
- Avoids danger, like not jumping from tall heights at the playground
- Likes to be a "helper"
- Changes behavior based on where she is (place of worship, library, playground)

Language/Communication Milestones

- Says sentences with four or more words
- Says some words from a song, story, or nursery rhyme
- Talks about at least one thing that happened during his day, like "I played soccer."
- Answers simple questions like "What is a coat for?" or "What is a crayon for?"

Cognitive Milestones (learning, thinking, problem-solving)

- Names a few colors of items
- Tells what comes next in a well-known story
- Draws a person with three or more body parts

Movement/Physical Development Milestones

- Catches a large ball most of the time
- Serves himself food or pours water, with adult supervision
- Unbuttons some buttons
- Holds crayon or pencil between fingers and thumb (not a fist)

Other important things to share with the doctor...

- What are some things you and your child do together?
- What are some things your child likes to do?
- Is there anything your child does or does not do that concerns you?
- Has your child lost any skills he/she once had?
- Does your child have any special healthcare needs or was he/she born prematurely?

You know your child best. Don't wait. If your child is not meeting one or more milestones, has lost skills he or she once had, or you have other concerns, act early. Talk with your child's doctor, share your concerns, and ask about developmental screening. If you or the doctor are still concerned:

1. Ask for a referral to a specialist who can evaluate your child more; and
2. Call any local public elementary school for a free evaluation to find out if your child can get services to help.

For more on how to help your child, visit [cdc.gov/Concerned](https://www.cdc.gov/Concerned).

Don't wait.
Acting early can make
a real difference!



Download CDC's
free Milestone
Tracker app



American Academy
of Pediatrics



DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN®

Help your child learn and grow

As your child's first teacher, you can help his or her learning and brain development. Try these simple tips and activities in a safe way. Talk with your child's doctor and teachers if you have questions or for more ideas on how to help your child's development.



- Help your child be ready for new places and meeting new people. For example, you can read stories or role play (pretend play) to help him be comfortable.
- Read with your child. Ask him what's happening in the story and what he thinks might happen next.
- Help your child learn about colors, shapes, and sizes. For example, ask the color, shapes, and size of things she sees during the day.
- Encourage your child to use "his words" to ask for things and solve problems but show him how. He may not know the words he needs. For example, help your child say, "Can I have a turn?" instead of taking something from someone.
- Help your child learn about others' feelings, and about positive ways to react. For example, when he sees a child who is sad, say "He looks sad. Let's bring him a teddy."
- Use positive words and give attention to behaviors you want to see ("wanted behaviors"). For example, say "You're sharing that toy so nicely!" Give less attention to those you don't want to see.
- Tell your child in a simple way why she can't do something you don't want her to do ("unwanted behavior"). Give her a choice of what she can do instead. For example, "You can't jump on the bed. Do you want to go outside and play or put on some music and dance?"
- Let your child play with other children, such as at a park or library. Ask about local play groups and pre-school programs. Playing with others helps you child learn the value of sharing and friendship.
- Eat meals with your child when possible. Let her see you enjoying healthy foods, such as fruits, vegetables, and whole grains, and drinking milk or water.
- Create a calm, quiet bedtime routine. Avoid any screen time (TV, phone, tablet, etc.) for 1 to 2 hours before bed and don't put any screens in your child's bedroom. Children this age need 10 to 13 hours of sleep a day (including naps). Consistent sleep times make it easier!
- Give your child toys or things that encourage his imagination, such as dress-up clothes, pots and pans to pretend cook, or blocks to build with. Join him in pretend play, such as eating the pretend food he cooks.
- Take time to answer your child's "why" questions. If you don't know the answer, say "I don't know," or help your child find the answer in a book, on the Internet, or from another adult.

To see more tips and activities download CDC's Milestone Tracker app.

This milestone checklist is not a substitute for a standardized, validated developmental screening tool. These developmental milestones show what most children (75% or more) can do by each age. Subject matter experts selected these milestones based on available data and expert consensus.

www.cdc.gov/ActEarly | 1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636)



Download CDC's
free Milestone
Tracker app



Learn the Signs. Act Early.

Your child at 5 years



Child's Name _____

Child's Age _____

Today's Date _____

Milestones matter! How your child plays, learns, speaks, acts, and moves offers important clues about his or her development. Check the milestones your child has reached by age 5. Take this with you and talk with your child's doctor at every well-child visit about the milestones your child has reached and what to expect next.

What most children do by this age:

Social/Emotional Milestones

- Follows rules or takes turns when playing games with other children
- Sings, dances, or acts for you
- Does simple chores at home, like matching socks or clearing the table after eating

Language/Communication Milestones

- Tells a story she heard or made up with at least two events. For example, a cat was stuck in a tree and a firefighter saved it
- Answers simple questions about a book or story after you read or tell it to him
- Keeps a conversation going with more than three back-and-forth exchanges
- Uses or recognizes simple rhymes (bat-cat, ball-tall)

Cognitive Milestones (learning, thinking, problem-solving)

- Counts to 10
- Names some numbers between 1 and 5 when you point to them
- Uses words about time, like "yesterday," "tomorrow," "morning," or "night"
- Pays attention for 5 to 10 minutes during activities. For example, during story time or making arts and crafts (screen time does not count)
- Writes some letters in her name
- Names some letters when you point to them

Movement/Physical Development Milestones

- Buttons some buttons
- Hops on one foot

Other important things to share with the doctor...

- What are some things you and your child do together?
- What are some things your child likes to do?
- Is there anything your child does or does not do that concerns you?
- Has your child lost any skills he/she once had?
- Does your child have any special healthcare needs or was he/she born prematurely?

You know your child best. Don't wait. If your child is not meeting one or more milestones, has lost skills he or she once had, or you have other concerns, act early. Talk with your child's doctor, share your concerns, and ask about developmental screening. If you or the doctor are still concerned:

1. Ask for a referral to a specialist who can evaluate your child more; and
2. Call any local public elementary school for a free evaluation to find out if your child can get services to help.

For more on how to help your child, visit [cdc.gov/Concerned](https://www.cdc.gov/Concerned).

Don't wait.
Acting early can make
a real difference!



Download CDC's
free Milestone
Tracker app



American Academy
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DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN®

Help your child learn and grow

As your child's first teacher, you can help his or her learning and brain development. Try these simple tips and activities in a safe way. Talk with your child's doctor and teachers if you have questions or for more ideas on how to help your child's development.



- Your child might start to “talk back” in order to feel independent and test what happens. Limit the attention you give to the negative words. Find alternative activities for her to do that allow her to take the lead and be independent. Make a point of noticing good behavior. “You stayed calm when I told you it’s bedtime.”
- Ask your child what she is playing. Help her expand her answers by asking “Why?” and “How?” For example, say “That’s a nice bridge you’re building. Why did you put it there?”
- Play with toys that encourage your child to put things together, such as puzzles and building blocks.
- Use words to help your child begin to understand time. For example, sing songs about the days of the week and let him know what day it is. Use words about time, such as today, tomorrow, and yesterday.
- Let your child do things for himself, even if he doesn’t do it perfectly. For example, let him make his bed, button his shirt, or pour water into a cup. Celebrate when he does it and try not to “fix” anything you don’t have to.
- Talk about and label your child’s and your own feelings. Read books and talk about the feelings characters have and why they have them.
- Play rhyming games. For example, say “What rhymes with cat?”
- Teach your child to follow rules in games. For example, play simple board games, card games, or Simon Says.
- Create a spot in your home for your child to go to when he’s upset. Stay nearby so your child knows he is safe and can come to you for help calming as needed.
- Set limits for screen time (TV, tablets, phones, etc.) for your child, to no more than 1 hour per day. Make a media use plan for your family.
- Eat meals with your child and enjoy family time talking together. Give the same meal to everyone. Avoid screen time (TV, tablets, phones, etc.) during mealtime. Let your child help prepare the healthy foods and enjoy them together.
- Encourage your child to “read” by looking at the pictures and telling the story.
- Play games that help with memory and attention. For example, play card games, Tic Tac Toe, I Spy, or Hot and Cold.

To see more tips and activities download CDC’s Milestone Tracker app.

This milestone checklist is not a substitute for a standardized, validated developmental screening tool. These developmental milestones show what most children (75% or more) can do by each age. Subject matter experts selected these milestones based on available data and expert consensus.

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