

## Listening Skills Develop Early – A Hierarchy of Auditory Skills Learned by Age 4 Years\*

Age Acquired	Listening Skill	Expected Skill Development
0 – 3 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Auditory awareness</li> <li>• Responds to sound by smiling, head turning, stilling, startling</li> <li>• Responds to loud sounds</li> <li>• Recognizes mother's/caregiver's voice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Detection</li> <li>• Discrimination</li> </ul>
4 – 6 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sound begins to have meaning</li> <li>• Listens more acutely</li> <li>• Starts to associate meaning to sound (e.g., responds to own name occasionally)</li> <li>• Responds to changes in voice inflections</li> <li>• Starts to localize source of voice with accuracy</li> <li>• Listens to own voice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Detection</li> <li>• Prosodic identification</li> <li>• Discrimination</li> </ul>
7 – 9 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Localizes sound source with accuracy</li> <li>• Discriminates suprasegmental aspects of duration, pitch and intensity</li> <li>• Has longer attention span</li> <li>• Associates meaning to words</li> <li>• Discriminates vowel and syllable content</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Detection</li> <li>• Segmental identification</li> <li>• Discrimination</li> </ul>
10 – 12 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Associates meaning to more words</li> <li>• Monitors own voice and voices of others</li> <li>• Localizes sound from a distance</li> <li>• Discriminates speaker's voice from competing stimuli</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visual Integration: Sound/Object</li> <li>• Figure ground discrimination</li> </ul>
13 – 15 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifies more words</li> <li>• Processes simple language</li> <li>• Auditory memory of one item at the end of a phrase/sentence</li> <li>• Discriminates between familiar phrases</li> <li>• Follows one-step directions that are familiar</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visual Integration: Sound/Object</li> <li>• Discrimination</li> <li>• Memory</li> </ul>
16 – 18 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discriminates between more phrases</li> <li>• Identifies and associates more words related to objects (e.g., body parts, food)</li> <li>• Imitates words heard</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integration</li> <li>• Discrimination</li> <li>• Memory</li> </ul>
19 – 24 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Auditory memory of 2 items</li> <li>• Discriminates songs</li> <li>• Discriminates descriptive phrases</li> <li>• Follows a two-step direction (e.g., Get your ball and throw it)</li> <li>• Identifies by category</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integration</li> <li>• Discrimination</li> <li>• Memory</li> </ul>
25 – 30 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Auditory memory of 2 items in different linguistic contexts</li> <li>• Listens to familiar songs (recorded)</li> <li>• Comprehends longer utterances</li> <li>• Listens from a distance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integration</li> <li>• Memory</li> <li>• Figure ground discrimination</li> </ul>
31 – 36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continues to expand auditory memory – 3 items with different linguistic features</li> <li>• Sequences 2 pieces of information in order</li> <li>• Listens to stories (recorded)</li> <li>• Follows 2-3 directions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integration</li> <li>• Memory</li> </ul>
37 – 42 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Auditory memory increases to 5 items</li> <li>• Sequences 3 or more pieces of information in order</li> <li>• Retells a short story</li> <li>• Follows 3 directions</li> <li>• Processes complex sentence structures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integration</li> <li>• Memory</li> </ul>
43 – 48 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Processes longer and more complex language structures (e.g., Can you find something that lives in a tree, has feathers and a yellow crest?)</li> <li>• Follows more difficult directions (e.g., Put the thick blue square behind the empty jug.)</li> <li>• Retells longer stories in detail – 5 or more sentences</li> <li>• Tracks an 8 word sentence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emerging Closure</li> <li>• Emerging Visual Integration: Sound/Letter</li> </ul>

\*Typically hearing, typically developing children. Information excerpted from Cochlear Limited (2005). *Listen learn and talk: Another cochlear innovation*. Compiled from the listening section of the *Integrated Scales of Development*, based on a variety of sources. It was further revised to include expected skill development by age. 2015© Karen L. Anderson & Lynne H. Price, *Steps to Assessment*, <http://successforkidswithhearingloss.com>