

# Developmental Milestones: Your Infant at 12 Months

## What are developmental milestones?

Developmental milestones are skills most children achieve by a certain age. Developmental milestones include physical, social, emotional, cognitive, and communication skills that are appropriate for the child's age. Milestones give important clues about a child's health and well-being. Any child whose milestones are delayed should be evaluated by a health or developmental professional.

- **Social and emotional** milestones include how children learn about their own emotions and the emotions of others. These milestones also involve learning how to interact and play with other people.
- **Language and communication** milestones involve language, speech, and nonverbal communication (for example, hand gestures or facial expressions). These milestones include a baby's babbling, their first words, and their ability to listen to others and hold a conversation.
- **Cognitive (learning, thinking, problem-solving)** milestones are centered on a child's ability to think, learn, and solve problems. Cognitive milestones include an infant learning how to react to different facial expressions and a preschooler learning to say the alphabet.
- **Movement/physical development** involves both gross motor skills and fine motor skills. Gross motor skills are typically the first to develop. They include your child's ability to support their head, sit up, stand, crawl, and walk. Fine motor skills involve precise movements such as grasping a spoon, picking up small objects, and drawing.

As a parent or caregiver, you spend the most time with your child and know them the best. If your child is not meeting these age-related milestones, or if you think there could be a problem with the way your child plays, learns, speaks, or acts, it is important to tell your child's primary care provider so they can assess your child's development. Discuss these concerns with them at your child's 1-year well-child exam.

Here are the milestones to expect from your child based on what most children do at this age:

## Social and emotional

- Is shy or nervous with strangers
- Cries when Mom or Dad leaves the room
- Has favorite things and people
- Shows fear in some situations
- Hands you a book when they want to hear a story
- Repeats sounds or actions to get attention
- Puts out arm or leg to help with dressing
- Plays games such as peek-a-boo and pat-a-cake

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## Language/communication

- Responds to simple spoken requests
- Uses simple gestures, like shaking head no or waving bye-bye
- Makes sounds with changes in tone (sounds more like speech)
- Say “mama” and “dada” and exclamations like “uh-oh!”
- Tries to say words you say

## Cognitive (learning, thinking, problem-solving)

- Explores things in different ways, like shaking, banging, or throwing
- Finds hidden things easily
- Looks at the right picture or thing when it's named
- Copies gestures
- Starts to use things correctly; for example, drinks from a cup or brushes hair
- Bangs two things together
- Puts things in a container; takes things out of a container
- Points with index (pointer) finger
- Follows simple directions like “pick up the toy”

## Movement/physical development

- Gets to a sitting position without help
- Pulls up to stand, walks holding onto furniture (“cruising”)
- May take a few steps without holding on
- May stand alone

Tell your child's doctor if you notice any signs of developmental delay for this age. Most communities also have early childhood intervention programs that can help assess your child.

## Resources and References:

<https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones/index.html>

[https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/pdf/parents\\_pdfs/developmentalscreening.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/pdf/parents_pdfs/developmentalscreening.pdf)

<https://hhs.texas.gov/services/disability/early-childhood-intervention-services> (Texas Early Childhood Intervention services)