

Infants and young children undergo incredible development within their first three years of life. While all children are different, most reach certain milestones at similar ages. Expect your baby to grow and develop at his or her own pace. As you get to know your baby, consider these general developmental milestones but be aware of the “red flags” and seek help if you are worried that your child seems “out of step” with others of the same age.

BY THREE MONTHS

- Begins to smile at people
- Coos, makes gurgling sounds
- Turns head toward sounds
- Begins to track objects with eyes
- Begins to act bored (cries, fussy) if activity doesn’t change
- Can hold head up and begins to push up when lying on tummy
- Makes smoother movements with arms and legs
- Opens and shuts hands and bring hands to mouth
- Grip objects in hands
- Take swipes at or reach for dangling objects

FOUR MONTHS - SIX MONTHS

- Smiles spontaneously, especially at people
- Laughs
- Likes to play with people and might cry when playing stops
- Copies movements and facial expressions, like smiling or frowning
- Begins to babble
- Brings hands to mouth
- Cries in different ways to show hunger, pain, or being tired
- Reaches for toy with one hand
- Can hold a toy and shake it and swing at dangling toys
- Uses hands and eyes together, such as seeing a toy and reaching for it
- Follows moving things with eyes from side to side
- Holds head steady, unsupported
- Pushes down on legs when feet are on a hard surface
- May be able to roll over from tummy to back
- When lying on stomach, pushes up to elbows

SEVEN MONTHS - NINE MONTHS

- Knows familiar faces and begins to know if someone is a stranger
- Likes to play with others, especially parents
- Responds to sounds by making sounds
- Strings vowels together when babbling (“ah,” “eh,” “oh”)
- Begins to say consonant sounds (jabbering with “m,” “b”)
- Responds to own name
- Looks around at things nearby
- Shows curiosity about things and tries to get things that are out of reach
- Begins to pass things from one hand to the other
- Rolls over in both directions (front to back, back to front)
- Begins to sit without support
- Rocks back and forth on knees, might crawl backward before moving forward
- When standing, supports weight on legs and might bounce
- Learns to pull up to a standing position

TEN MONTHS - TWELVE MONTHS

- May be afraid of strangers and clingy with familiar adults
- Understands “no”
- Makes a lot of different sounds like “bababababa”
- Copies sounds and gestures of others
- Uses fingers to point at things
- Watches the path of something as it falls
- Looks for things she sees you hide
- Plays peek-a-boo
- Moves things smoothly from one hand to the other
- Picks up things like cereal o’s between thumb and index finger
- Pulls to stand
- Stands, holding on to things

- Can get into sitting position
- Sits without support
- Crawls
- Begin feeding herself
- Can “cruise” around the room on own while supported by furniture

YEAR ONE

- Is shy or nervous with strangers
- Cries when mom or dad leaves
- Has favorite things and people
- Shows fear in some situations
- Hands you a book when he wants 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”
- 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)
- Says “mama” and “dada” and exclamations like “uh-oh!”
- Tries to say words you say
- Explores things in different ways, like shaking, banging, 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, brushes hair
- Bangs two things together
- Puts things in a container, takes things out of a container
- Pokes with index (pointer) finger
- Follows simple directions like “pick up the toy”
- Gets to a sitting position without help
- Pulls up to stand, walks holding on to furniture (“cruising”)
- May take a few steps without holding on
- May stand alone

EIGHTEEN MONTHS

- Likes to hand things to others as play
- May have temper tantrums
- May be afraid of strangers
- Shows affection to familiar people
- Plays simple pretend, such as feeding a doll
- May cling to caregivers in new situations
- Points to show others something interesting
- Explores alone but with parent close by
- Says several single words
- Says and shakes head “no”
- Points to show someone what he wants
- Knows what ordinary things are for; e.g., telephone, brush, spoon
- Points to get the attention of others
- Points to one body part
- Scribbles on his own
- Follows 1-step commands without gestures; e.g., sits when you say “sit down”
- Walks alone
- May walk up steps and run
- Pulls toys while walking
- Can help undress herself
- Drinks from a cup
- Eats with a spoon

YEAR TWO

- Copies others, especially adults and older children
- Gets excited when with other children
- Shows more and more independence
- Shows defiant behavior (doing what he has been told not to)
- Begins including other children in games such as chase
- Points to things or pictures when they are named
- Knows names of familiar people and body parts
- Says sentences with 2 to 4 words
- Follows simple instructions
- Repeats words overheard in conversation
- Points to things in a book
- Finds things even when hidden under two or three covers
- Begins to sort shapes and colors
- Completes sentences and rhymes in familiar books
- Plays simple make-believe games
- Builds towers of 4 or more blocks
- Might use one hand more than the other
- Follows 2-step commands, e.g., “Pick up your shoes and put them in the closet.”
- Names items in a picture book such as a cat, bird, or dog
- Stands on tiptoe
- Kicks a ball
- Begins to run
- Climbs onto and down from furniture without help
- Walks up and down stairs holding on
- Throws ball overhand
- Makes or copies straight lines and circles

YEAR THREE

- Copies adults and friends
- Shows affection for friends without prompting
- Takes turns in games
- Shows concern for crying friend
- Understands the idea of “mine” and “his” or “hers”
- Shows a wide range of emotions
- Separates easily from mom and dad
- May get upset with major changes in routine
- Dresses and undresses self
- Follows instructions with 2 or 3 steps
- Can name most familiar things
- Understands words like “in,” “on,” and “under”
- Says first name, age, and sex
- Names a friend
- Says words like “I,” “me,” “we,” and “you” and some plurals (cars, dogs, cats)
- Talks well enough for strangers to understand most of the time
- Carries on a conversation using 2 to 3 sentences
- Can work toys with buttons, levers, and moving parts
- Plays make-believe with dolls, animals, and people
- Does puzzles with 3 or 4 pieces
- Understands what “two” means
- Copies a circle with pencil or crayon
- Turns book pages one at a time
- Builds towers of more than 6 blocks
- Screws and unscrews jar lids or turns door handle
- Climbs well
- Runs easily
- Pedals a tricycle (3-wheel bike)
- Walks up and down stairs, alternating feet

RED FLAGS BY TWO MONTHS

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

BY FOUR MONTHS

- Doesn't watch things as they move
- Can't hold head steady
- Doesn't coo or make sounds
- Doesn't bring things to mouth
- Has trouble moving one or both eyes in all directions

BY SIX MONTHS

- Doesn't try to get things that are in reach
- Shows no affection for caregivers
- Doesn't respond to sounds around him
- Doesn't laugh or make squealing sounds
- Seems very floppy, like a rag doll

BY NINE MONTHS

- Doesn't bear weight on legs with support
- Doesn't sit with help
- Doesn't babble ("mama", "baba", "dada")
- Doesn't respond to own name
- Doesn't transfer toys from one hand to the other

BY YEAR ONE

- Doesn't crawl
- Can't stand when supported
- Doesn't say single words like "mama" or "dada"
- Doesn't learn gestures like waving or shaking head
- Doesn't point to things

BY EIGHTEEN MONTHS

- Doesn't point to show things to others
- Can't walk
- Doesn't know what familiar things are for
- Doesn't copy others
- Doesn't gain new words and doesn't have at least 6 words
- Doesn't notice or mind when a caregiver leaves or returns

BY YEAR TWO

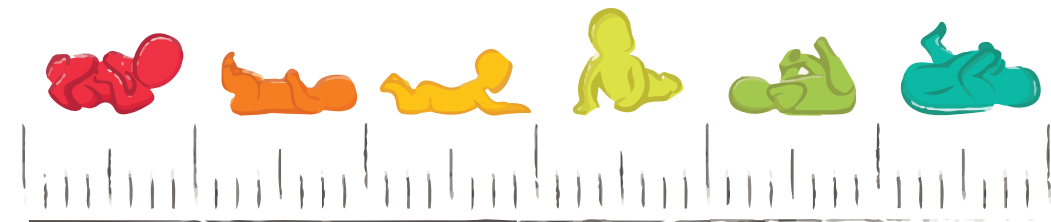
- Doesn't use 2-word phrases (for example, "drink milk")
- Doesn't know what to do with common things like a brush, phone, spoon
- Doesn't copy actions and words
- Doesn't follow simple instructions
- Doesn't walk steadily

BY YEAR THREE

- Falls down a lot or has trouble with stairs
- Can't work simple toys (peg boards, simple puzzles, turning handle)
- Doesn't understand simple instructions
- Doesn't want to play with other children or with toys
- Doesn't make eye contact

DO YOU HAVE CONCERNS ABOUT YOUR CHILD'S DEVELOPMENT?

Connect with your pediatrician or contact your local Early Childhood Intervention Program. Learn more by visiting:
hhs.texas.gov/services/disability/early-childhood-intervention-services



BABY DAY™

<https://babyday.us>

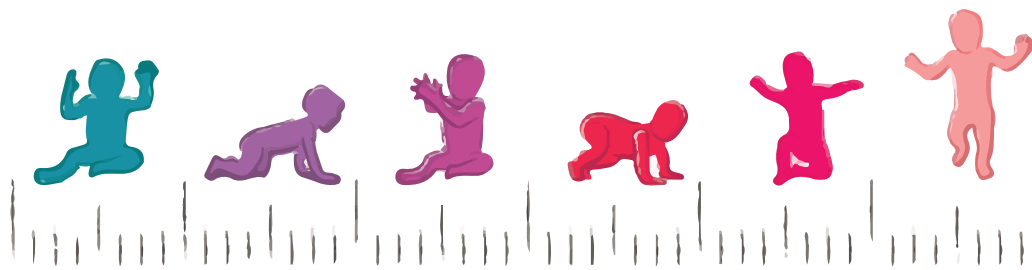
AGES AND STAGES

a glance at common
developmental milestones for
children 0-3 years old



FIRST 3 YEARS

www.first3yearstx.org



THIS GUIDE HAS BEEN ADAPTED FROM THE FOLLOWING RESOURCES:

www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones/index.html

www.webmd.com/parenting/baby/features/stages-of-development#1