



Games & Activities for Babies

When you choose games to play with a baby or toddler, follow their lead! Play games that they show an interest in, notice their mood, and stop when they seem ready to move on. It's okay to repeat the same game over and over. **If baby is into a game, they are still learning from it!**

Simple Role Play



Chores

Older babies and toddlers love helping out around the home and doing simple tasks that they see adults or siblings doing. Sweeping the floor, putting away toys or books, and putting clothes into a laundry basket are all great options for a child at this age to practice new skills. Do the activity together a few times and give verbal instructions and reminders so that the child feels confident in their job!

Songs, Fingerplays & Rhymes

Songs or rhymes with simple hand motions are a lot of fun for babies. With lots of practice, babies can learn to copy and remember the movements to a song.



Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes

Point out each body part on yourself or on the child as you sing each word. Try repeating while changing up the speed or volume! Once the child knows some of the words or movements, you can pause while singing to see if they remember what comes next.

*Head, shoulders, knees, and toes, knees and toes,
Head, shoulders, knees, and toes, knees and toes,
And eyes and ears and mouth and nose,
Head, shoulders, knees, and toes, knees and toes*

Conversation *Scan the code with your phone camera to see the activity in action!*



Shopping Together

Running errands with a child may take a little longer, but shopping is a great opportunity to build children's brains. As you take a child through the market, point to familiar products. Talk about colors and numbers and follow the child's interests to help connect what they know with what's on the shelf.

The child's brain is making connections between what they point at and see, and the words you are using—helping to boost their communication skills.



Reading

Children at this age love reading picture and story books. When they point to pictures on a page tell them what they're seeing. You can also encourage them to find something in a picture, like asking "Where is the kitty cat?" Try changing your voice as you read aloud, maybe give a character a funny voice, make animal noises, or speaking loudly during some parts and softly during others. Make reading part of your routine, like reading when they wake up from a nap or before bedtime.



Choices

As children continue to learn how to communicate with others, they might be trying out new words—especially popular at this age is "No!" When a child constantly says "no" in response to daily activities like taking a nap or getting dressed, it helps to give choices. Ask your child, "Would you like to read a book before or after your nap?"; "Would you like to wear your red shirt or your blue shirt?"; "Would you like an apple or a banana?".

Imitation Games



Symbolic Play

Children at this age are very active and are exploring ways to move their body. Model pretend play for children and use up some energy by pretending to be an animal. For example, you could be a fish by puffing up your cheeks, using your arms as fins to swim around the room, and saying “blub, blub.” Encourage the child to pretend with you and let them choose the next animal to act out!