



Developmentally Appropriate Play for Babies

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Age	Visual play	Auditory play	Tactile play	Kinetic play
Birth-1 month	<p>Gaze at baby at close range</p> <p>Hang colorful toys (high contrast) 8-10 inches in front of baby's face</p> <p>Hang mobile with black-and-white patterns above baby</p>	<p>Talk and sing to baby</p> <p>Play CD with lullabies or other soft music for baby</p> <p>Have ticking clock or other rhythmic noises nearby</p> <p>Describe actions as you dress, feed, and bathe baby</p>	<p>Hold, caress, and cuddle baby</p> <p>Swaddle baby</p> <p>Kiss baby's hands and feet</p> <p>Give baby a massage</p>	<p>Rock baby in a rocking chair</p> <p>Nestle baby close while you gently rock and sway</p> <p>Pat baby on the back</p> <p>Let baby ride in a stroller for walks</p> <p>"Wear" baby in an infant carrier</p>
2-3 months	<p>Make room bright with high contrast pictures</p> <p>Hold brightly colored toys in front of baby and slowly move them up, down, right, left, and in a circle</p> <p>Take baby to various rooms while completing chores</p> <p>Smile at baby</p>	<p>Talk to baby</p> <p>Laugh when baby laughs</p> <p>Involve baby in family gatherings and activities</p> <p>Shake rattles for baby</p> <p>Expose baby to various sounds in the home (e.g., dishwasher, vacuum) and outside of the home (e.g., cash register, honking car)</p>	<p>Caress baby during baths and while changing clothes</p> <p>Comb baby's hair with a soft brush</p> <p>Help baby touch different textures (e.g., soft stuffed animal, smooth tabletop)</p>	<p>Use infant swing and/or bouncer</p> <p>Place baby on tummy for tummy time</p> <p>Move baby's extremities in swimming motions</p> <p>Utilize toy bars and infant play mats</p>
4-6 months	<p>Use a wide variety of facial expressions while talking to baby</p> <p>Provide baby with brightly colored toys that can be grasped</p> <p>Look at picture books with baby</p>	<p>Talk to baby; mimic sounds baby makes</p> <p>Call baby by name</p> <p>Recite nursery rhymes to baby</p> <p>Crinkle different papers by baby's ear</p> <p>Help baby grip and shake rattles</p>	<p>Give baby toys of various textures</p> <p>Allow baby to splash in bath</p> <p>Place baby to play on a soft, furry rug</p> <p>Help baby touch pages in touch-and-feel books</p>	<p>Bounce baby in lap while holding in standing position</p> <p>Support baby in sitting position</p> <p>Place baby on floor to roll over, crawl, and sit</p> <p>Allow baby to use mouth to explore age appropriate toys</p>
6-9 months	<p>Give baby toys that have moveable parts and make noises</p> <p>Place baby in front of a baby-safe mirror</p> <p>Play peekaboo with baby</p> <p>Point out objects while you walk and talk with baby</p> <p>Make funny faces at baby; mimic the faces baby makes</p>	<p>Repeat simple words such as "dada," "mama," and "hi"</p> <p>Name body parts, foods, people, and colors when playing with baby</p> <p>Narrate to baby what you are doing</p> <p>Use "no" only when necessary</p> <p>Give simple commands</p> <p>Show baby how to clap hands</p>	<p>Let baby touch fabrics of various textures with hands and feet</p> <p>Let baby manipulate foods of various textures</p> <p>Help baby "catch" running water and pour water out of cups</p> <p>Encourage baby to "swim" in a bathtub or shallow pool</p> <p>Give baby a wad of sticky tape to manipulate</p>	<p>Help baby stand upright and bounce</p> <p>Say "up" when lifting baby up and "down" when putting baby down</p> <p>Place toys out of baby's reach to encourage baby to move to get them</p> <p>Play pat-a-cake</p> <p>Place baby tummy down on a blanket and gently pull the blanket around the room</p> <p>Dance with baby in your arms</p>
9-12 months	<p>Take baby to places where there are animals, people, and a variety of objects (e.g., zoo, shopping mall)</p> <p>Show baby pictures in books</p> <p>Help baby roll and drop balls</p> <p>Help baby build a short tower out of blocks</p>	<p>Read short stories to baby</p> <p>Point to body parts and name them</p> <p>Imitate sounds of animals</p> <p>Respond to baby's sounds to encourage two-way communication</p>	<p>Give finger foods of various textures to baby</p> <p>Let baby squash food</p> <p>Let baby play with cold and warm objects; call them "cold" and "warm"</p> <p>Let baby feel a breeze (e.g., a fan blowing)</p>	<p>Provide large push-pull toys for baby</p> <p>Place furniture in a circle around baby to encourage cruising</p> <p>Let baby play with large objects such as tunnels, pillows, and boxes while supervised</p> <p>Help baby practice walking</p>

Sources: Zero to Three (<http://www.zerotothree.org/child-development/play/tips-and-tools-play.html>), Pathways.org (<https://pathways.org/growth-development/baby/games/>), and Wong et al. (2006). *Maternal Child Nursing Care*.