



Communication Milestones *

Every child is unique even within a family. If your child does not meet milestones within these ranges, please contact us for an assessment.

Birth to 6 Months

Alerts to sound.

Quiets or smiles when you talk and make sounds back and forth with you.

Makes sounds that differ depending on whether they are happy or upset.

Coos, makes sounds like ooooo, ahhh, and mmmmm.

Recognizes loved ones and some common objects.

Turns or looks toward voices or people talking.

4 to 6 Months

Giggles and laughs.

Responds to facial expressions.

Looks at objects of interest and follows objects with their eyes.

Reacts to toys that make sounds, like those with bells or music.

Vocalizes during play or with objects in mouth.

Vocalizes different vowel and or consonant sounds—like uuuuuuummm, aaaaaaagoo, or daaaaaaaaaa.

Blows “raspberries.”

7 to 9 Months

Looks at you when you call their name

Stops for a moment when you say, “No.”

Babbles long strings of sounds, like mamamama, upup, or babababa.

Looks for loved ones when upset.

Raises arms to be picked up.

Recognizes the names of some people and objects and pushes away unwanted objects.

10 to 12 Months



Reaches for objects.

Points, waves, and shows or gives objects.

Imitates and initiates gestures for social interactions and playing games, like blowing kisses or peek-a-boo.

Tries to copy sounds that you make.

Responds to simple words and phrases like “Go bye-bye” and “Look at Mommy.”

Says one or two words—like mama, dada, hi, and bye.

13 to 18 Months

Looks around when asked “where” questions—like “Where’s your blanket?”

Follows directions—like “Give me the ball,” “Hug the teddy bear,” “Come here,” or “Show me your nose.”

Points to make requests, to comment, or to get information.

Shakes head for “no” and nods head for “yes.”

Understands and uses words for common objects, some actions, and people in their lives.

Identifies one or more body parts.

Uses gestures when excited, like clapping or giving a high-five, or when being silly, like making funny faces.

Uses a combination of long strings of sounds, syllables, and real words with speech-like intention.

19 to 24 Months

Uses and understands at least 50 different words for food, toys, animals, and body parts.

Speech may not always be clear—like du for “shoe” or dah for “dog.”

Puts two or more words together—like “more water” or “go outside.”

Follows two-step directions—like “Get the spoon and put it on the table.”

Uses words like me, mine, and you.

Uses words to ask for help.

Uses possessives, like Daddy’s sock.

2 to 3 Years

Uses word combinations but may occasionally repeat some words or phrases, like “baby – baby – baby sit down” or “I want – I want juice.”

Tries to get your attention by saying, “Look at me!”



Says their name when asked.

Uses some plural words like “birds” or “toys.”

Uses –ing verbs like “eating” or “running.” Adds –ed for regular past tense, like “looked” or “played.”

Gives reasons for things and events, like saying that they need a coat when it’s cold outside.

Asks why and how.

Answers questions like “What do you do when you are sleepy?” or “Which one can you wear?”

Correctly produces p, b, m, h, w, d, and n in words.

Correctly produces most vowels in words.

Speech is becoming clearer but may not be understandable to unfamiliar listeners.

3 to 4 Years

Compares things, with words like “bigger” or “shorter.”

Tells you a story from a book or a video.

Understands and uses more location words, like “inside,” “on,” and “under.”

Uses words like “a” or “the” when talking, like “a book” or “the dog.”

Pretends to read alone or with others.

Recognizes signs and logos like STOP.

Pretends to write or spell and can write some letters.

Correctly produces t, k, g, f, y, and –ing in words.

Says all the syllables in a word.

Says the sounds at the beginning, middle, and end of words.

Talks smoothly. Does not repeat sounds, words, or phrases most of the time.

Speaks so that people can understand most of what they say.

May make mistakes on sounds that are later to develop—like l, j, r, sh, ch, s, v, z, and th.

Says all sounds in a consonant cluster containing two or more consonants in a row—like the tw in tweet or the –nd in sand. May not produce all sounds correctly—for example, spway for “spray.”

4 to 5 Years

Produces grammatically correct sentences. that includes main characters, settings, and words like “and” to connect information and ideas to tell stories.

Uses at least one irregular plural form, like “feet” or “men.”



Understands and uses location words, like “behind,” “beside,” and “between.”

Uses more words for time—like “yesterday” and “tomorrow”—correctly.

Follows simple directions and rules to play games.

Locates the front of a book and its title.

Recognizes and names 10 or more letters and can usually write their own name.

Imitates reading and writing from left to right.

Blends word parts, like cup + cake = cupcake. Identifies some rhyming words, like “cat” and “hat.”

Produces most consonants correctly, and speech is understandable in conversation.

* Data from 2023 ASHA guidelines and norms

CURIOUS ABOUT OTHER AGE RANGES? Go to on.asha.org/dev-milestones