

# Your child at 18 to 24 months of age



All children develop at their own pace. This sheet is a guide to help you know what you might expect from your child at 18 to 24 months of age.

What should my child be learning?	How can I help my child?
<p><b>Gross Motor Skills: Big body movements</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Run well.</li> <li>• Walk on stairs, putting both feet on each step. Use a wall or railing for help.</li> <li>• Scoot on a riding toy with no pedals.</li> <li>• Jump.</li> <li>• Throw a ball.</li> <li>• Climb onto an adult size chair or couch, then turn around and sit down.</li> <li>• Squat while playing for a long time without losing balance.</li> <li>• Kick a large ball forward.</li> </ul> <p><b>Fine Motor Skills: Hands and fingers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build a tower with 3 to 5 blocks.</li> <li>• Turn individual pages of a book.</li> <li>• Put three simple shapes in a shape sorter or puzzle board.</li> <li>• Pick up tiny objects using the tips of fingers and thumb.</li> <li>• Put small items, like cereal or raisins, in a container that gets narrow at the top.</li> <li>• Use fingers and thumb to hold crayons.</li> <li>• Scribble with a crayon. Try to copy circles and lines drawn by an adult.</li> <li>• String 1 to 3 one-inch beads.</li> <li>• Cut a piece of paper using scissors.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Gross motor skills</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spend time outdoors at parks and playgrounds.</li> <li>• Let your child roll and tumble in the grass. Pretend to be different animals. Help your child swing, slide, climb and jump.</li> <li>• Give your child a riding toy without pedals.</li> <li>• Play with balls. Have your child practice throwing, catching, and kicking.</li> <li>• Use beanbags and a target. Have your child throw the beanbags overhand and underhand at the target.</li> <li>• Jump over a chalk or tape line on the ground.</li> </ul> <p><b>Fine motor skills</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have your child sit in the sandbox with shovels and pails. Show how to pour sand into a pail. Have your child do it.</li> <li>• Have your child sit on the floor or at a low table with their feet touching the floor. Give your child paper and crayon. Your child should pick up the crayon and scribble without being told. After 1 to 2 minutes, get your child's attention. Make lines and circles. Have your child make these same strokes.</li> <li>• Put small plastic shapes and a bowl in front of your child. Show your child how to put the objects into the bowl using your fingertips and thumb. Then have your child do it.</li> <li>• Help your child put Cheerios® onto a straw.</li> <li>• Play together with small toy animals, trucks and pretend play sets.</li> </ul>

## Language and social development

- Use single words.
- Copy new words.
- Play alone for longer periods of time.
- Point to 2 to 6 body parts when asked.
- Follow 1 to 2 step verbal instructions. For example, "Get your shoes and bring them to me."
- Grab, push, or pull others to communicate.
- Pretend play using toys that looks like real objects. For example, use a play telephone or play food.
- Test limits and want to control others.
- Remember where items belong. They know what is theirs and say "mine."
- Chew thoroughly with rotary jaw movements.
- Hold a cup with one hand. No longer use a bottle.
- Play with food.

## Sensory processing: Understanding sights, sounds, tastes, touch, smell and body movement

- Enjoy rough and tumble play.
- Become easily frustrated.
- Can be jealous of attention given to others.
- Have many different emotional expressions.
- Like getting messy while playing with food, paints, play dough, and sand.

## Fine motor skills continued

- Use a child's scissors to show your child how to cut a piece of paper. Put their hands around the scissors and cut the paper. Repeat. Let your child practice without help.
- String blocks and play with shape sorters.

## Language

- Talk to your child. Explain what you are doing. Ask a question and wait for an answer.
- Play simple matching games. Match an object to a picture or to a group of similar objects.
- Read books with your child. Ask your child to point to pictures or actions in the book.
- Sing songs that include actions, such as "Itsy, bitsy spider".
- Ask your child to name items or people they know.
- When games and play are over, have your child help put toys away. Sing a song to make it fun. Praise your child for cleaning up.

## Sensory skills

- Offer toys with different textures. Try squishy toys or toys that can be molded, like Play-doh™. Have your child poke, smash, twist, and pull the play dough. Be near so your child will not eat it.
- Put your child on a rocking horse or swing. Stay with your child to keep them safe.
- Have your child run, jump and climb. Make a mountain of pillows or bean bags to climb.

## Toys for Children from 18 to 24 months of age

- Picture and simple story books
- Balls
- Blocks
- Crayons, markers, sidewalk chalk
- Toy versions of real-life items such as phones, tools, dolls, and kitchen play sets
- Shape sorters
- Pop-up toys
- Ride on toys with no pedals
- Carts or wagons to push and pull
- Simple puzzles
- Musical toys

**ALERT:** Call your child's doctor, nurse, or clinic if you have any questions or concerns or if your child has special health care needs that were not covered by this information.

**For other health and wellness information, check out this resource:**

<https://kidshealth.org/ChildrensWi/en/parents>

**This sheet was created to help you care for your child or family member. It does not take the place of medical care. Talk with your healthcare provider for diagnosis, treatment and follow-up.**