

Developmental milestones



Children communicate long before they say their first words. This chart shows the age most babies and young children show early hearing and talking skills.

Children develop at their own pace. This chart explains when **most** children will reach each milestone. As your child reaches the top of the age range listed, if you are still answering “no” to most or all of these skills, consider talking to your provider.

Age	Hearing and Understanding	Talking
Birth to 3 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reacts to loud sounds. • Quiets or smiles when spoken to. • Recognizes caretaker's voices. • Changes sucking in response to sound. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makes pleasure sounds and coos. • Cries differently for different needs.
4 months to 6 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moves eyes towards sounds. • Responds to tone changes in your voice. • Enjoys toys that make sounds. • Pays attention to music. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coos or babbles when playing alone or with people. • Babbling can start to sound more like words. Sounds include “pa,” “ba,” & “mi”. • Laughs and giggles. • Makes sounds when happy or upset.

7 months to 1 year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listens when spoken to. Begins to respond to simple requests ("come here," "want more?"). • Turns and looks when called. • Knows words for common items like "book", "shoe", "juice", "mama". • Likes games like peek-a-boo and pat-a-cake. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Babbles with both long and short groups of sounds. • Uses gestures like waving, and holding arms up to be picked up. • Imitates speech sounds. • Says one or two words (hi, uh-oh, dada, mama) around first birthday. Words may not sound clear.
Age	Hearing and Understanding	Talking
1 year to 2 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knows a few parts of the body and can point to them when asked. • Follows simple one-part commands and understands simple questions ("throw the ball," "Where's your cup?"). • Likes simple stories, songs and rhymes. • Points to pictures in books. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses new words on a regular basis. • Puts two words together ("More cookie"). • Uses some one- or two-word questions ("what's that?" or "go bye-bye?"). • Uses many different consonant sounds (p, b, m, h) at the start of words.
2 years to 3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learns new words quickly. • Knows differences in meaning ("go vs. stop," "big vs. little," & "up vs. down") • Follows two-step directions ("get your blanket & put it on the couch"). • Listens to and enjoys hearing stories for longer periods of time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has word for most things • Uses two- or three-word phrases. • Uses k, g, f, t, d, & n sounds. • Speaks in a way that is understood by family members and friends. • Will talk about things that are not in the room.

<p>3 years to 4 years</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hears when you call from another room. • Hears the TV or radio at the same level as others • Answers simple “who?” “what?” “where?” and “why?” questions • Knows words for some colors and shapes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talks about things outside of the home, like at daycare or friends' homes. • People outside of the family understand child's speech. • Uses sentences with four or more words. • Usually speaks easily without having to repeat syllables or words.
<p>4 years to 5 years</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pays attention to short stories and will answer simple questions about them. • Hears and understands most of what is said at home and at school. • Follows longer, multi-step directions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses sentences that include a lot of detail. • Tells stories that stick to a topic • Says most sounds correctly. • Talks in different ways based on the listener and the place.

Table adapted from *How Does Your Child Hear and Talk?*
 Courtesy of the American Speech-Language Hearing Association

For more health and wellness information check out this resource:

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

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.

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.