

Language Development Checklist

*How Does Your Child Hear and Talk, American Speech-Language-Hearing Association
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Remember, “Children typically do not master all items in a category until they reach the upper age in each age range. Just because your child has not accomplished one skill within an age range does not mean the child has a disorder.”

If several milestones have not been reached by the time your child reaches the upper limit for an age category, discuss your concerns with your child’s pediatrician during the next well baby check-up.

Birth to 3 Months

- Startles to loud sounds.
- Quiets or smiles when spoken to.
- Seems to recognize your voice and quiets if crying.
- Increases or decreases sucking behavior in response to sound.
- Makes pleasure sounds (cooing, gooing).
- Cries differently for different needs.
- Smiles when sees you.

4 to 6 Months

- Moves eyes in direction of sounds.
- Responds to changes in the tone of your voice.
- Notices toys that make sounds.
- Pays attention to music.
- Babbling sounds more speech-like with many different sounds, including p, b, and m.
- Chuckles and laughs.
- Vocalizes excitement and displeasure.
- Makes gurgling sounds when alone or playing with you.

7 Months to 1 Year

- Enjoys games like peek-a-boo and pat-a-cake.
- Turns and looks in the direction of sounds.
- Listens when spoken to.
- Understands words for common items such as “cup,” “shoe,” or “juice”.
- Responds to requests (“Come here” or “Want more?”).
- Babbling has both long and short groups of sounds “tata, upup, bibibi”.
- Uses speech or non-crying sounds to get and keep attention.
- Uses gestures to communicate (waving, holding arms to be picked up).
- Imitates different speech sounds.
- Has one or two words (Hi, dog, Dada, or Mama) around first birthday, although sounds may not be clear.

1 to 2 Years

- Points to a few body parts when asked.
- Follows simple commands and understands simple questions (“Roll the ball,” “Kiss the baby,” “Where’s your shoe?”).
- Listens to simple stories, songs, and rhymes.
- Points to pictures in a book when named.
- Says more words every month.
- Uses some one- or two- word questions (“Where kitty?” “Go bye-bye?” “What’s that?”).
- Puts two words together (“more cookie,” “no juice,” “mommy book”).
- Uses many different consonant sounds at the beginning of words.

2 – 3 Years

- Understands differences in meaning (“go-stop,” “in-out,” “big-little,” up-down”).
- Follows two requests (“Get the book and put it on the table”).
- Listens to and enjoys hearing stories for longer periods of time.
- Has a word for almost everything.
- Uses two- or three- words to talk about and ask for things.
- Uses k, g, f, t, d, and n sounds.
- Speech is understood by familiar listeners most of the time.
- Often asks for or directs attention to objects by naming them.
- Ask why?
- May stutter on words or sounds.

3 to 4 Years

- Hears you when you call from another room.
- Hears television or radio at the same loudness level as other family members.
- Understands words for some colors, like red, blue, and green.
- Understands words for some shapes, like circle and square.
- Understands words for family like brother, grandmother, and aunt.
- Talks about activities at school or friends’ homes.
- Talks about what happened during the day. Uses about 4 sentences at a time.
- People outside of the family usually understand child's speech.
- Answers simple “who?”, “what?”, and “where?” questions.
- Asks when and how questions.
- Says rhyming words like hat-cat.
- Uses pronouns, like I, you, me, we, and they.
- Uses some plural words, like toys, birds, and buses.
- Uses a lot of sentences that have 4 or more words.
- Usually talks easily without repeating syllables or words.