

DID YOU KNOW AT 9–12 MONTHS I CAN...

Language Development

- Repeat words and phrases
- Begin to say one or two words like “mama” or “dada”
- Understand “no”
- Communicate using gestures
- Try to use speech to communicate

Read books over and over to me while repeating simple words. Also, use these words when talking to me and others, so I can listen to conversations.

Cognitive Development

- Build towers with blocks
- Follow simple directions
- Place objects inside of each other
- Enjoy looking at picture books
- Recognize symbols of objects
- Point to objects as they are named

I can begin to learn about size by stacking different objects of various sizes or placing things inside of each other. To help me learn cause and effect, tie a string to a toy and let me play with the string, so I will learn that the toy can move when I want. I can also practice solving problems by finding you during a game of peek-a-boo or hide-and-seek. Use your hands for peek-a-boo, and use blankets or furniture to hide under or behind for hide-and-seek. You can also go around the corner to call for me to come to you.

Physical Development

- Begin to crawl up and down the stairs
- Walk and try to pick up something or wave at the same time
- Take lids off jars
- Eat soft food with a baby spoon
- Hold my cup by myself
- Show right-handed or left-handed tendencies
- Use pincer grasp to pick up small objects



I love to listen to music and dance. Give me a toy for each hand so I can show you that I can do one thing with one hand and another with the other hand. To help my fine motor development, allow me to turn the pages of the story we’re reading. I can also learn to draw with a jumbo crayon and a large drawing surface (paper, cardboard box, etc.) Also, put a large, toddler-size crayon in both of my hands so that I can see which hand is better for me to hold it with.

Social/Emotional Development

- Get upset when my toys are taken away
- Show my likes and dislikes about food and toys by shaking my head or saying “yes” or “no”
- Want to do things by myself
- Enjoy listening and moving to music
- Begin to show expressions
- React when caregiver leaves
- Respond to name
- Shy around strangers

Allow me to have choices of food, clothes, and toys, so I can show you my independence and what I like and dislike.

Play these games with me!

Give me soft blocks to play with. Place them in front of me, stack them up, and let me knock them down. Encourage me to stack the blocks, and let me knock them down again.

You can also use items from around the house to make other stacking or nesting toys.

Materials

different-sized plastic lids or plastic bowls

(Note: Make sure they’re not small enough to fit in my mouth.)

Instructions

1. Clean the lids or bowls with soap and water.
2. Show me how to stack the plastic lids or bowls on top of each other or nest them inside each other. Talk to me about the different colors and sizes. Introduce words like bigger, smaller, inside, on top of, and so forth. Interaction is key!

Sing to me!

Lay me on your lap or on the floor on top of a soft blanket. Take my hand and touch or wiggle my nose with my hand and sing "If You're Happy and You Know It" as follows:

If you're happy and you know it,

Touch your nose...

If you're happy and you know it,

Wiggle your nose...

If you're happy and you know it,

Touch your ear...

You can continue to sing this, touching different parts of my face and body.

Sing this song with me:

One, two, buckle my shoe,

Three, four, shut the door,

Five, six, pick up sticks,

Seven, eight, lay them straight,

Nine, ten, do it again!

Here are some books that I may enjoy:

Goodnight Moon by Margaret Wise Brown

From Head to Toe board book by Eric Carle

Rainbow Fish by Marcus Pfister

Eating the Alphabet by Lois Ehlert

Twinkle, Twinkle, Time for Bed by Caroline Williams

Five Little Ducks by Annie Kubler

Sleep helps me grow and develop. I should get 12–15 hours of sleep a day. To reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), place me on my back in an empty crib. An empty crib is important to prevent me from suffocating, so avoid having bumper pads or stuffed animals in my crib.

Safety note: Any toys or materials that can fit inside a paper towel roll can be choking hazards for infants and toddlers. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, any object handled by young children should be at least 1.25 inches in diameter and 2.25 inches long.

Remember that each child develops at his or her own rate, and this handout is meant only as a guide of what to expect of your child's development at this age.

For more information about parenting and developmental milestones, contact your county Extension office or visit extension.msstate.edu.

References

American Academy of Pediatrics. 2010. *Policy statement—prevention of choking among children*. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2009-2862>

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. *Birth to one year: What should my child be able to do?* Retrieved from <http://www.asha.org/public/speech/development/01/>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 2022. *Your baby at 9 months*. Retrieved from <http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones/milestones-9mo.html>

National Sleep Foundation. 2020. *How much sleep do you really need?* Retrieved from <https://www.thensf.org/how-many-hours-of-sleep-do-you-really-need/>

Safe to Sleep. 2018. *Babies need tummy time!* Retrieved from <https://safetosleep.nichd.nih.gov/safesleepbasics/tummytime>



**MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY™
EXTENSION**

Publication 3910 (POD-08-24)

By **Louise E. Davis**, PhD, former Extension Professor; **Elizabeth Thorne**, PhD, Project Manager; and **Mary Hannah Mills**, MS, Project Manager, Human Sciences.

Copyright 2024 by Mississippi State University. All rights reserved. This publication may be copied and distributed without alteration for nonprofit educational purposes provided that credit is given to the Mississippi State University Extension Service.

Produced by Agricultural Communications.

Mississippi State University is an equal opportunity institution. Discrimination in university employment, programs, or activities based on race, color, ethnicity, sex, pregnancy, religion, national origin, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, status as a U.S. veteran, or any other status protected by applicable law is prohibited.

Extension Service of Mississippi State University, cooperating with U.S. Department of Agriculture. Published in furtherance of Acts of Congress, May 8 and June 30, 1914. ANGUS L. CATCHOT JR., Director