Developmental Milestones: 12 to 18 Months

Developmental milestones are skills or behaviors that most children will start or master by a certain age. Children reach milestones in many ways: speaking, learning, moving, and playing. There are things you can do with your child to help them reach these milestones.

Cognitive, Play, and Communication Skills

Look for your child to show these signs at 12- to 18-months-old:

- Stacks blocks and rings
- Pushes and pulls toys
- Babbles
- Mimics simple words and sounds
- Combines gestures with words like waving and saying, “Bye-bye”
- Finds simple objects when asked like a ball, teddy, or cup
- Looks for objects you hide
- Understands “No”
- Knows their eyes, nose, ears, and mouth
- Uses 8 to 10 words
- Plays with toys in hands, less in their mouth

Motor Skills

Your child will do more as they grow. Look for these small and large body movements:

- Turns book pages
- Uses a crayon to mark on paper
- Rolls a ball forward
- Carries an object when walking
- Stays standing in 1 spot without help
- Stands up from the floor without holding on to anything
- Walks without help
- Walks backward and sideways
- Marks on paper with a crayon
- Tries to run by fast walking
- Does simple puzzles
- Uses thumb and index fingers to pick up small objects


How You Can Help

You can help with your child’s developmental milestones by:

• Kicking and throwing a ball with them.
• Reading books, talking about the pictures, letting them turn pages, and pointing to things.
• Having them repeat words you say during playing.
• Naming objects during play so they know what they’re called.
• Doing simple 3 to 5-piece knob puzzles.
• Using toys that help your child problem solve, like stacking, opening, and closing.
• Having items for pretend play like dolls, trucks, doctor’s kits.
• Having your child use sort toys, like blocks with a shape box.
• Having your child stand without holding on to anything.
• Walking with a push toy.
• Helping with their balance.
  – Have them pick up toys by squatting.
  – Make a simple obstacle course to walk through.

If you have any questions about your child’s development, call their doctor or health care provider.