

Developmental milestones 12 to 18 months

As children grow, so do their skills. While not specific to your child, this education sheet can help you know what skills your child is likely to develop at this age.

Children develop at their own rate, learning some skills much quicker than others.

Progress also starts and stops. As some skills are learned, your child might go back to an earlier stage in some other areas for a time.

Gross motor skills

— skills that use large muscles (legs, arms, trunk, and neck)

- walk independently
- throw a ball forward
- walk sideways and backwards
- crawl up stairs
- walk up and down stairs with help
- play with pull and push toys, such as a toddler grocery cart
- seat self in a child-sized chair, starts to crawl into car seat

Fine motor skills

—skills that use small muscles (hands and fingers)

- build a two-block tower
- turn pages, 2 to 3 at a time
- drop small objects, such as a raisin, into a bottle
- explores holes of pegboard
- scribble, spontaneously
- places larger coin shape objects into slot openings

Self-help skills

—skills that help children become more independent

- begin to use spoon and fork
- drink from cup independently
- take off socks and shoes (when laces are undone)
- put arms through sleeve and legs through pants legs
- try to wash face and hands
- help put toys away

Cognitive skills

— mental skills (thinking, learning, problem solving)

- enjoy looking at picture books
- identify self in mirror
- know some body parts
- follow some simple directions
- starting to match and sort by shape and color
- starting to match animal sounds to pictures

Speech skills

See the education sheet, “Speech and language development: 12 to 18 months.”

Questions?

This sheet is not specific to your child, but provides general information. If you have any concerns about your child’s development, ask your doctor or therapist.