

# Developmental Milestones: Birth to 3 Years

Gross Motor | Fine Motor | Visual Motor | Language | Feeding

Organized by age group across five developmental domains. Milestones represent typical age ranges, not strict deadlines. Children develop in sequence but timing varies. Check off skills your child has achieved. Concerns? Speak with your pediatrician.

Gross Motor	Fine Motor	Visual Motor	Language	Feeding
<b>0 - 3 Months</b>				
<p><b>Gross Motor</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Turns head to each side when lying on back</li> <li>Lifts head 45 degrees briefly during tummy time</li> <li>Symmetrical, random arm and leg movements</li> <li>Head bobs upright when held in supported sitting</li> </ul>	<p><b>Fine Motor</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hands fisted most of the time</li> <li>Grasps finger placed in palm (palmar reflex)</li> <li>Holds rattle momentarily (3 mo)</li> <li>Arms move toward a shown toy</li> </ul>	<p><b>Visual Motor</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focuses on a face at 8-12 inches</li> <li>Tracks a moving object horizontally</li> <li>Responds to high-contrast black and white images</li> <li>Eyes follow a face in a wide arc</li> </ul>	<p><b>Language</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cries differently for different needs</li> <li>Coos and makes soft vowel sounds</li> <li>Smiles responsively when interacted with (2 mo)</li> <li>Quiets to a familiar voice</li> </ul>	<p><b>Feeding</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coordinates suck-swallow-breathe pattern</li> <li>Rooting reflex present (turns toward touch on cheek)</li> <li>Sucking reflex strong and present</li> <li>8-12 feeds per day (breast) or 6-8 per day (bottle)</li> </ul>
<b>3 - 6 Months</b>				
<p><b>Gross Motor</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lifts chest off surface during tummy time</li> <li>Pushes up onto straight arms on tummy</li> <li>Rolls belly to back (4-5 mo)</li> <li>Sits with slight support for brief moments</li> </ul>	<p><b>Fine Motor</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reaches for and attempts to grasp objects</li> <li>Hands open most of the time (4 mo)</li> <li>Brings both hands together at midline (4 mo)</li> <li>Transfers object from one hand to the other (5-6 mo)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Visual Motor</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tracks a moving toy smoothly across 180 degrees</li> <li>Reaches accurately toward a seen object</li> <li>Watches own hands during play</li> <li>Looks from one object to another</li> </ul>	<p><b>Language</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Babbles (ba, ma, da sounds)</li> <li>Laughs and squeals</li> <li>Turns toward a familiar voice</li> <li>Vocalizes to get attention</li> </ul>	<p><b>Feeding</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May begin exploring solids around 4-6 months*</li> <li>Tongue thrust begins to fade</li> <li>Shows growing interest in watching others eat</li> <li>Holds bottle independently</li> </ul>

## 6 - 9 Months

Gross Motor	Fine Motor	Visual Motor	Language	Feeding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sits independently</li> <li>Rolls back to belly</li> <li>Belly crawls; pivots on belly</li> <li>Crawls on hands and knees (7-10 mo)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rakes or scoops small objects into palm (7-8 mo)</li> <li>Feeds self small finger foods (8 mo)</li> <li>Early pincer grasp: side of index finger and thumb (7.5-10 mo)</li> <li>Pokes with index finger into small openings (9 mo)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Looks for a dropped object</li> <li>Reaches for a partially hidden object</li> <li>Inspects objects by turning them in hands</li> <li>Bangs objects together while watching</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Imitates sounds and facial expressions</li> <li>Responds to own name (6-7 mo)</li> <li>Babbles with varied consonant-vowel combinations</li> <li>Raises arms to be picked up (5-6 mo)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Begins mashed and soft table foods</li> <li>Munching chewing pattern on soft solids</li> <li>Drinks from open cup with support</li> <li>Grasps and holds bottle</li> </ul>

## 9 - 12 Months

Gross Motor	Fine Motor	Visual Motor	Language	Feeding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pulls to stand at furniture</li> <li>Cruises sideways along furniture</li> <li>Stands momentarily without support</li> <li>Walks with both hands held</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>True pincer grasp: tip of index finger and thumb (10-12 mo)</li> <li>Puts 3 or more objects into a container</li> <li>Claps hands together well</li> <li>Points with index finger at objects of interest</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finds a fully hidden object (object permanence)</li> <li>Imitates simple gestures after watching</li> <li>Places objects into a container while looking</li> <li>Emerging imitation of scribble after a model</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1-3 true first words (beyond mama/dada)</li> <li>Waves bye-bye</li> <li>Responds to "no"</li> <li>Follows one-step commands with gesture ("give me")</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Feeds self finger foods independently</li> <li>Drinks from straw (9-12 mo)</li> <li>Beginning spoon use with much spilling</li> <li>Chews soft solids with up-down jaw movement</li> </ul>

## 12 - 18 Months

Gross Motor	Fine Motor	Visual Motor	Language	Feeding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Walks independently (12-18 mo)</li> <li>Walks upstairs with hand held</li> <li>Runs (hurried walk; may fall)</li> <li>Kicks a ball forward</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stacks 2 blocks (14 mo) up to 6 blocks (18 mo)</li> <li>Scribbles with a crayon, making clear marks</li> <li>Throws a small ball overhand or underhand</li> <li>Points with index finger (12-16 mo)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Imitates strokes after watching a model</li> <li>Places shapes into a simple shape sorter</li> <li>Matches identical objects</li> <li>Completes a simple 2-knob puzzle</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5-20 words</li> <li>Points to request AND to share or comment (not just to get)</li> <li>Identifies 2-3 body parts on self or a doll</li> <li>Beginning to name familiar people and objects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses spoon with significant spilling</li> <li>Eats most soft family foods</li> <li>Open cup with assistance</li> <li>Emerging independence at mealtimes</li> </ul>

## 18 - 24 Months

Gross Motor	Fine Motor	Visual Motor	Language	Feeding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Runs fairly well; walks backward</li> <li>Walks downstairs with one hand held</li> <li>Squats in play without losing balance</li> <li>Climbs onto furniture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stacks 6 small blocks (22-24 mo)</li> <li>Holds crayon with thumb and fingers (23-25 mo)</li> <li>Turns book pages one at a time (21-24 mo)</li> <li>Imitates a vertical stroke (18-24 mo)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Imitates vertical and circular scribbles</li> <li>Completes a 2-3 piece puzzle</li> <li>Matches colors and basic shapes</li> <li>Simple pretend play with objects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>50 or more words</li> <li>Beginning 2-word combinations ("more milk," "daddy go")</li> <li>Names pictures in books</li> <li>Follows 2-step commands with or without gesture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses spoon with less spillage (20 mo)</li> <li>Eats more varied textures</li> <li>Transitioning to open cup</li> <li>Good straw drinking established</li> </ul>

## 24 - 30 Months

Gross Motor	Fine Motor	Visual Motor	Language	Feeding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jumps with both feet off the ground</li> <li>Walks up and down stairs (both feet per step, with rail)</li> <li>Climbs playground equipment</li> <li>Rides a push toy without pedals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Copies a circle (25-36 mo)</li> <li>Strings 1-inch beads (23-25 mo)</li> <li>Folds paper in half (24-30 mo)</li> <li>Imitates a 4-block train (27 mo)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Imitates horizontal stroke and circular scribble</li> <li>Completes a 4-5 piece puzzle</li> <li>Sorts objects by shape or color</li> <li>Matches colors consistently</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>200 or more words</li> <li>2-3 word phrases consistently</li> <li>Asks "what's that?"</li> <li>Uses words more than gestures to communicate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pours from a small container (32 mo)</li> <li>Uses a fork (30 mo)</li> <li>Eats most family foods with minor modifications</li> <li>Feeding largely self-directed</li> </ul>

## 30 - 36 Months

Gross Motor	Fine Motor	Visual Motor	Language	Feeding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Climbs stairs alternating feet (holding rail)</li> <li>Balances on one foot for 2-3 seconds</li> <li>Rides a tricycle independently</li> <li>Throws a ball overhand with direction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Copies a cross (+)</li> <li>Makes continuous cuts across paper with scissors</li> <li>Draws a simple person with 2 or more body parts</li> <li>Stacks 9 small blocks (32-36 mo)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Copies a circle independently</li> <li>Completes a 6-8 piece puzzle</li> <li>Draws simple recognizable shapes</li> <li>Sorts by multiple attributes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>300 or more words; 3-4 word sentences</li> <li>Asks why and how questions</li> <li>Understood by unfamiliar listeners 75% or more of the time</li> <li>Uses pronouns: I, me, you, he, she</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Self-feeds complete meals with spoon and fork</li> <li>Drinks well from an open cup</li> <li>Food jags and strong preferences are normal and expected</li> <li>Beginning to spread with a butter knife</li> </ul>

\* Signs of readiness for solid foods include: sitting with minimal support, bringing hands to mouth, good head and neck control, showing interest in food when others eat, and tongue thrust fading. Some families choose to begin with purees; others use a baby-led approach with soft table foods. Both are valid. Either way, food preparation and texture matter. Consult your pediatrician for individualized guidance.

Sources: HELP Strands (Furuno et al.); Peabody Developmental Motor Scales (Folio and Fewell); CDC Learn the Signs Act Early guidelines (pre-2022 edition). Note: Crawling is retained as a key developmental milestone throughout this checklist. Milestones shown are approximate ranges, not strict deadlines.