



Games & Activities for Babies

When you choose games to play with a baby or toddler, follow their lead! Play games that they show an interest in, notice their mood, and stop when they seem ready to move on. It's okay to repeat the same game over and over. **If baby is into a game, they are still learning from it!**

Imitation Games



Baby See, Baby Do!

Organize toys in certain ways and ask baby to copy you. For example, you could place toy animals in a barnyard or stack blocks on top of another and knock them down. When baby does the same action, encourage the behavior with positive praise, “Wow! Look that tall tower you built! Great job.” When babies imitate, they keep track of your actions, remember them, wait their turn, and then recall what you did.



Symbolic Play

At this age, babies are beginning to learn and understand the concept of pretend play. Use a toy (or a banana, shoe, or even just your hand!) to pretend talking on the phone with family members or friends. Make a ringing sound and when you “answer” the phone, tell baby that it's someone calling for them!

Conversation

Scan the code with your phone camera to see the activity in action!



Changing Time Chats

Any time is a good time to talk to a baby! One idea is when you're changing their clothes or diaper. While making eye contact, you can describe each step, "Zzzzip! Time to zip up your pajamas!" or "First we'll put the onesie over your head, then your arms, and finally snap together the bottom!"

You can also make silly sounds and invite the baby to copy you, or make up a special song that you always sing during this time. Chatting together will make this daily task fun and engaging.



Table Talk

Include the child at family mealtimes by having them join you at the table. Show your child the many different foods you are eating, and talk about each one as you share safe, bite-sized pieces of food for them to try. Ask them about what they think about each food, although you will probably be able to tell from their facial expressions! Even if a child doesn't like a new food the first few times, keep trying!

Other Play



Container Play

You might have noticed that at this age children love to dump out laundry baskets full of clothing or bins full of toys, and then carefully fill them back up again. This is called container play, and is a great way to keep children busy and having fun! Provide children with a variety of containers, such as empty mixing bowls, boxes, or baskets and safe items to fill them up with, such as toys or socks.



Explore on the Floor

It's fun for baby to explore their environment – at this age they might be crawling, standing with support, or even starting to walk. Wherever they are, join your baby on their level for some playtime. You can place pillows or couch cushions on the floor for “obstacles” and encourage your child to explore. They might climb over the cushions, stack them, carry them, or even pretend to lay down and go to sleep.