

Your Baby's Development: 9–12 Months

Babies are becoming good communicators as they get closer to turning 1 year old. This makes it a delightful time for parents. Babies can use their actions and sounds to let loved ones know what they want, like handing a book to a parent so that she'll read it aloud.

What Your Baby Can Do	What You Can Do
<p>I can understand more words than I can say.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am starting to understand what you say to me. • I can even follow simple directions like Go get the ball. • I tell you what I want with my sounds and body movements. I may say a word or two, like mama. 	<p>Tell your baby what is happening and what you will do next:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After your milk, it is time for a nap. This helps her learn language. • Routines also let her know what to expect. • Put your baby's sounds and actions into words. You are pushing your food away. I think you are telling me you are all done. <p>Name things your baby looks at or points to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That's the moon. The moon comes out at night.
<p>I can creep and crawl.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have found my own way of crawling—on my hands or knees, on my stomach, “crab crawling” by moving backwards and sideways, or even scooting on my bottom! • I walk while holding on to furniture or your hand. I may even start walking on my own. 	<p>Give your baby lots of time and a safe place to practice new skills like crawling and walking.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make a “trail of toys” in a child-safe place in your house. Line up several interesting objects (a wooden spoon, a plastic bowl, a brightly colored dishcloth) that your child can crawl to and explore.
<p>I know that things still exist even though I can't see them—especially you!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I may cry when you leave because I know you are still out there somewhere and I want you to come back! 	<p>Play hide-and-seek games.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This helps your baby learn that things that disappear also reappear. • Be sure to say good-bye to your baby. Never sneak out. This builds his trust in you and helps him learn to deal with difficult feelings.
<p>I love to do things over and over again.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is how I practice and figure out how things work. • Repetition also helps build my memory. 	<p>Help your child take the next step in her play.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If she is banging two blocks together, see if she'd like to try stacking them. • Offer your child a ball to toss, a rattle to shake, or a scarf to swing. These activities help children learn how things work. They also build the muscles in their hands that will help them learn to write.

For more information on parenting and child development, go to: www.zerotothree.org.

