



# Your Child's Growth, Step by Step: Milestone Tracking with

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## Your child at 18 months

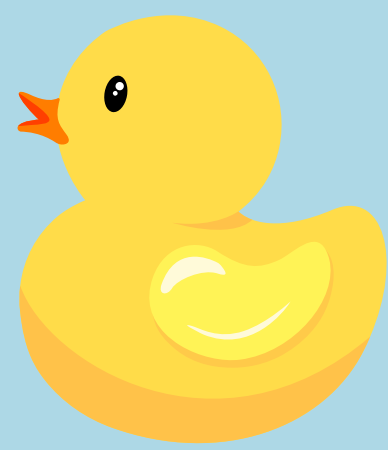
Milestones are important! How your child plays, learns, speaks, behaves, and moves provides key insights into their development. Review the milestones your child has achieved by 18 months. Be sure to bring this information to every well-child visit and discuss your child's progress with their doctor, along with what to expect next.

### Social/Emotional Milestones

- Moves away from you but checks to ensure you're nearby
- Points to indicate something of interest
- Holds out hands for washing
- Looks at several pages of a book with you
- Assists in getting dressed by pushing an arm through a sleeve or lifting a foot

### Language/Communication Milestones

- Attempts to say three or more words other than "mama" or "dada"
- Follows one-step directions without gestures, such as handing you a toy when you say, "Give it to me."



### What to Share with Your Doctor

- ★ Is there anything about the baby that concerns you?
- ★ Is that healthcare needs that your baby have or he/she born prematurely?
- ★ Is there anything that you and your baby do together?
- ★ Does your baby stop doing anything that he/she used to do?
- ★ What are your baby's favorite things to do?

### Cognitive Milestones

(Learning, thinking, problem-solving)

- Imitates you while doing chores, such as sweeping with a broom
- Starts playing with toys in simple ways, like pushing a car or holding a teddy

### Movement/Physical Development Milestones

- Walks independently, without needing support
- Engages in scribbling
- Drinks from a cup without lid and spills occasionally
- Feeds themselves using their fingers
- Attempts to use a spoon
- Climbs onto and off of a couch or chair unaided

**It's time for developmental screening! At 18 months, your child is due for a general developmental assessment and an autism screening, as advised by the American Academy of Pediatrics for all children. Be sure to discuss your child's developmental screening with the doctor.**



**You know your baby the most. Don't wait if you have any concerns about their development. If your baby isn't meeting certain milestones, has lost previously acquired skills, or if you have other concerns, take action early. Talk with your baby's doctor about developmental screenings.**



## Support your Baby's Learning & Development

As your baby's first teacher, you play a key role in their learning and brain development. Here are some simple, safe activities you can try. If you have any questions or need more ideas, be sure to talk to your baby's doctor or teachers.

- ✔ Use positive language and focus more on the behaviors you want to encourage, known as "wanted behaviors." For example, say, "Look how nicely you put the toy away," and give less attention to unwanted behaviors.
- ✔ Foster "pretend" play by giving your child a spoon to pretend to feed her stuffed animal. Take turns role-playing together.
- ✔ Help your child understand others' feelings and how to respond positively. For instance, if he sees a sad child, say, "He looks sad. Let's bring him a teddy."
- ✔ Ask simple questions to encourage your child to observe her surroundings. For example, ask, "What is that?"
- ✔ Allow your child to use a cup without a lid and practice eating with a spoon. Although learning to eat and drink can be messy, it's also enjoyable!
- ✔ Provide simple choices to your child, such as asking whether he wants to wear the red or blue shirt when getting dressed.
- ✔ Establish consistent routines for sleeping and eating. For example, sit at the table with your child during meals and snacks to help set family mealtime routines.
- ✔ Limit screen time (TV, tablets, phones, etc.) to video calls with loved ones, as screen time is not recommended for children under 2 years. Encourage learning through talking, playing, and interacting. Also, try to reduce your own screen time when with your child so you can engage with her more effectively.
- ✔ Consult your child's doctor or teachers to determine if your child is ready for toilet training. Most children aren't successful until they're 2 to 3 years old. If he isn't ready, pushing the process can lead to stress and setbacks, making training take longer.
- ✔ Be prepared for tantrums, which are normal at this age and should decrease in frequency and duration as your child grows. Distractions can help, but it's okay to allow the tantrum to pass. Give him space to calm down before moving on.
- ✔ Engage in conversations with your child by positioning yourself at her eye level. This allows her to better perceive your expressions and emotions alongside your words.
- ✔ Begin teaching your child the names of body parts by pointing them out. For example, say, "Here's your nose, and here's my nose," while pointing to both her nose and yours.

This milestone checklist is not a substitute for a standardized, validated developmental screening tool. These developmental milestones show what most children (75% or more) do by each age. Subject matter experts selected these milestones based on available data and expert consensus.

