

Birth-5 months

- Reacts to loud sounds.
- Turns head toward a sound source.
- Watches your face when you speak.
- Vocalizes pleasure and displeasure sounds (laughs, giggles, cries, or fusses).
- Makes noise when talked to.

6 - 11 months

- Understands "no-no".
- Babbles (says "ba-ba-ba" or "ma-ma-ma").
- Tries to communicate by actions or gestures.
- Tries to repeat your sounds.

12 - 17 months

- Attends to a book or toy for about two minutes.
- Follows simple directions accompanied by gestures.
- Answers simple questions nonverbally.
- Points to objects, pictures, and family members.
- Says two to three words to label a person or object (pronunciation may not be clear).
- Tries to imitate simple words.
- Has vocabulary of approx 5-20 words

18 - 23 months

- Enjoys being read to.
- Follows simple commands without gestures.
- Points to simple body parts such as "nose."
- Understands simple verbs such as "eat," "sleep."
- Correctly pronounces most vowels and n, m, p, h, especially in the beginning of syllables and short words. Also begins to use other speech sounds.
- Says 8 to 10 words (pronunciation may still be unclear).
- Asks for common foods by name.

2 - 3 years

Knows about 50 words at 24 months.

Knows some spatial concepts such as "in," "on."

Knows pronouns such as "you," "me," "her."

Knows descriptive words such as "big," "happy."

Says around 40 words at 24 months.

Speech is becoming more accurate but may still leave off ending sounds. Strangers may not be able to understand much of what is said.

Answers simple questions.

Begins to use more pronouns such as "you," "I."

Speaks in two to three word phrases.

Uses question inflection to ask for something (e.g., "My ball?").

Begins to use plurals such as "shoes" or "socks" and regular past tense verbs such as "jumped."

3 - 4 years

Groups objects such as foods, clothes, etc.

Identifies colors.

Uses most speech sounds but may distort some of the more difficult sounds such as l, r, s, sh, ch, y, v, z, th. These sounds may not be fully mastered until age 7 or 8.

Uses consonants in the beginning, middle, and ends of words. Some of the more difficult consonants may be distorted, but attempts to say them.

Strangers are able to understand much of what is said.

Able to describe the use of objects such as "fork," "car," etc.

Has fun with language. Enjoys poems and recognizes language absurdities such as, "Is that an elephant on your head?"

Expresses ideas and feelings rather than just talking about the world around him or her.

Uses verbs that end in "ing," such as "walking," "talking."

Answers simple questions such as "What do you do when you are hungry?"

Repeats sentences.

Knows the name of familiar animals

Indulges in make-believe
