

Fine Motor Development 18-24 Months

Fine Motor Milestones

- Using a crayon to draw on paper
- Getting a spoon into their mouth while feeding themselves
- Stacking blocks into simple towers
- Turning motion for a doorknob or opening a container
- Stringing large objects such as wooden beads on a string

What is important during this age?

Your toddler will become better at holding onto a crayon and marking on a paper. They will be getting better at feeding themselves while using a spoon. They will also be able at using their hands for turning objects for tasks such as winding a toy, turning a doorknob, or taking a lid off a jar.

What can you do to support fine motor development?

Your toddler will become more proficient at using their hands for functional tasks. Let them practice using a spoon to feed themselves. Blocks are a great toy during this age. Help them to practice stacking blocks into a tower. By the age of 2, your child should be able to stack about 7 blocks into a tower. You can also have them practice stringing beads, or even large pasta noodles onto a piece of shoelace or yarn.

Gross Motor Development

18-24 Months

Milestones

- Climbing
- Falling less while walking
- Running
- Walking up a few steps by themselves
- Navigating spaces without falling
- Kicking a ball

What is important during this age?

Your toddler is now great at walking and is getting better at running. They have more control and can navigate hallways and spaces with less falling. They are also able to navigate a few steps by themselves, using the wall or handrail for support.

What can you do to support motor development?

Taking your toddler outside to play is a great way to allow them to run, climb, and play. Help your toddler kick a ball back and forth, take turns pushing and pulling toys in a wagon, chase bubbles, or go to the park. Modify sports games such as baseball, soccer, and football to encourage your toddler to practice these skills. Celebrate when your toddler practices and achieves these motor milestones.

Social & Emotional Development

18-24 Months

Milestones

- Shows ownership over certain toys or objects
- May push or hit if a toy is taken
- Acts differently towards strangers
- Likes a balance of independence and help
- Helps with simple tasks
- Shows fear and seeks reassurance

What is important during this age?

Your toddler is starting to assert their independence and they may use the word no a lot, even when they mean yes.

What can you do?

To help take some of the power from the word no, play silly games with your child where no is the answer you are looking for. “Do dogs say Meow? Do cows say baa?” Your child can practice using the word no with purpose. You may notice your child enjoys playing near other children but may not necessarily play with them. Fighting may happen if another child takes their toy. Model turn-taking and reassure that it is okay for other kids to play with toys. Remind them that hitting and biting is not okay. Read books about turn taking and ask your child how they think the characters should solve the problem.

Self-Help Skills

18-24 Months

Milestones

- Increasing sense of independence
- Pride in completing a task
- Developing fine-motor coordination
- Improving use of utensils while eating
- Copies activities adults do such as cleaning the floor, or combing hair
- Cares for a doll or stuffed animal during pretend play

What is important during this age?

Your toddler is developing a sense of self and autonomy. They are testing rules and want to complete things on their own. They may say no a lot and may sometimes refuse help. They are still learning routines and need help to complete tasks such as dressing, grooming, and eating.

What can you do?

Offer choices. Help your toddler feel more independent by letting them make some decisions. Instead of asking a child if they want to get in the bath after a long day of play, ask if they want the red towel or the blue. Instead of asking if they want peas with dinner, ask if they want one scoop or two. Avoiding “yes” or “no” questions can help limit power struggles and give your toddler a sense of autonomy.

Speech and Language Development

18-24 Months

Language Milestones

18-24 Months

- Points at things they want
- Says no
- Says single words
- Points to pictures in a book
- Repeats words they hear
- Follows a simple request
- Knows names of family members
- Says short 2-4-word sentences
- Points to things when they are named

What is important during this age?

Your toddler is increasing their vocabulary by interacting with their environment. They will point at pictures in books and are starting to combine words to form simple sentences.

What can you do?

Ask your child to find pictures within a book, “where is the dog?” and have the child to point to the picture of the dog. Play games like head shoulders, knees, and toes to help your child learn body parts. When your child points at something in the room, tell them the name of the object and encourage them to say it back. Continue to read books and ask questions about the pictures and story. Your child learns through repetition and may choose the same story many times.