

3 TO 4 YEARS

- Uses words like **bigger** or **shorter** to compare things.
- Tells you a story from a book or a video.
- Understands and uses more location words—like **inside**, **on**, and **under**.
- Uses words like **a** or **the** when talking—like **a book** or **the dog**.
- Pretends to read alone or with others.
- Recognizes signs and logos.
- Pretends to write or spell and can write some letters.
- Correctly produces **t**, **k**, **g**, **f**, **y**, and **-ing** in words.
- Says all the syllables in a word.
- Says the sounds at the beginning, middle, and end of words.
- By age 4 years, your child speaks smoothly. Does not repeat sounds, words, or phrases most of the time.
- By age 4 years, your child speaks so that people can understand most of what they say. Child may make mistakes on sounds that are later to develop—like **l**, **j**, **r**, **sh**, **ch**, **s**, **v**, **z**, and **th**.
- By age 4 years, your child says sounds in a word with two or more consonants in a row—like the **tw** in **tweet** or the **-nd** in **sand**. May not produce all sounds correctly—for example, **spway** for “spray.”

4 TO 5 YEARS

- Produces grammatically correct sentences. Sentences are longer and more complex.
- Tells stories that include main characters, settings, and ideas. Uses words like **and** to connect information.
- Uses at least one irregular plural form—like **feet** or **men**.
- Understands and uses location words—like **behind**, **beside**, and **between**.
- Uses more words for time—like **yesterday** and **tomorrow**—correctly.
- Follows simple directions and rules to play games.
- Locates the front of a book and its title.
- Recognizes and names 10 or more letters and can usually write their own name.
- Imitates reading and writing from left to right.
- Blends word parts, like **cup + cake = cupcake**. Identifies some rhyming words—like **cat** and **hat**.
- Produces most consonants correctly, and speech is understood in conversation.



These are milestones for **hearing, speech, and language** development. They will help you to know what to expect as your child grows and develops. Children do not develop at the same rate, even within the same family. Visit on.asha.org/dev-milestones to learn more about how to use the milestones and helpful tips to develop your child’s communication skills. If you have concerns about your child’s communication development, find an audiologist or speech-language pathologist through **ASHA ProFind**.



Learn More
on.asha.org/dev-milestones



ASHA ProFind
asha.org/profind

ASHA’s Developmental Milestones: Communication

BIRTH TO 5 YEARS
 Hearing, Speech, and Language



TIP TO HELP!

Let your child tell you how to do something. Draw a picture that they describe. Write down your child’s story as they tell it. Your child will learn the power of storytelling and writing.





BIRTH TO 3 MONTHS

- Alerts to sound.
- Quiets or smiles when you talk.
- Makes sounds back and forth with you.
- Makes sounds that differ depending on whether they are happy or upset.
- Coos and makes sounds like ooooo, aahh, and mmmmm.
- Recognizes loved ones and some common objects.
- Turns or looks toward voices or people talking.

4 TO 6 MONTHS

- Giggles and laughs.
- Responds to facial expressions.
- Looks at objects of interest and follows objects with their eyes.
- Reacts to toys that make sounds, like those with bells or music.
- Vocalizes during play or with objects in mouth.
- Vocalizes different vowel sounds—sometimes combined with a consonant—like uuuuummm, aaaaaagoo, or daaaaaaaaa.
- Blows “raspberries.”



7 TO 9 MONTHS

- Looks at you when you call their name.
- Stops for a moment when you say, “No.”
- Babbles long strings of sounds, like mamamama, upup, or babababa.
- Looks for loved ones when upset.
- Raises arms to be picked up.
- Recognizes the names of some people and objects.
- Pushes away unwanted objects.



Respond to your child. Look at them when they make noises. Talk to them. Imitate the sounds they make.

10 TO 12 MONTHS

- By age 10 months, reaches for objects.
- Points, waves, and shows or gives objects.
- Imitates and initiates gestures in social interactions and playing games, like blowing kisses or playing peek-a-boo.
- Tries to copy sounds that you make.
- Enjoys dancing.
- Responds to simple words and phrases—like “Go bye-bye” and “Look at Mommy.”
- Says one or two words—like mama, dada, hi, and bye.



19 TO 24 MONTHS

- Uses and understands at least 50 different words for food, toys, animals, and body parts. Speech may not always be clear—like du for “shoe” or dah for “dog.”
- Puts two or more words together—like more water or go outside.
- Follows two-step directions—like “Get the spoon, and put it on the table.”
- Uses words like me, mine, and you.
- Uses words to ask for help.
- Uses possessives—like Daddy’s sock.

13 TO 18 MONTHS

- Looks around when asked “where” questions—like “Where’s your blanket?”
- Follows directions—like “Give me the ball,” “Hug the teddy bear,” “Come here,” or “Show me your nose.”
- Points to make requests, to comment, or to get information.
- Shakes head for “no” and nods head for “yes.”
- Understands and uses words for common objects, some actions, and people in their lives.
- Identifies one or more body parts.
- Uses gestures when excited, like clapping or giving a high-five, or when being silly, like sticking out their tongue or making funny faces.
- Uses a combination of long strings of sounds, syllables, and real words with speech-like inflection.

2 TO 3 YEARS

- Uses word combinations often but may occasionally repeat some words or phrases, like baby – baby – baby sit down or I want – I want juice.
- Tries to get your attention by saying, Look at me!
- Says their name when asked.
- Uses some plural words—like birds or toys.
- Uses -ing verbs—like eating or running. Adds -ed to the ends of words to talk about past actions, like looked or played.
- Gives reasons for things and events, like saying that they need a coat when it’s cold outside.
- Asks why and how.
- Answers questions like “What do you do when you are sleepy?” or “Which one can you wear?”
- Correctly produces p, b, m, h, w, d, and n in words.
- Correctly produces most vowels in words.
- Speech is becoming clearer but may not be understood by people who do not know your child.



Teach your child new words. Reading books or talking about things you see is a great way to do this. Describe how things look or feel. Use words that describe color, shape, and size.

