

DEVELOPMENT MILESTONES

All children are unique and develop different skills at different speeds, but most children follow a similar developmental trajectory. We have listed a range of skills that should be attained by a particular age. If your child is missing a few, it is worth having a discussion with an Occupational Therapist or Speech and Language Therapist. Early intervention in a caring environment will help your child bridge the developmental gap and feel more comfortable among their peers.

COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Communication Skills are crucial for children to express themselves and understand the world around them. Vocabulary is just one important piece of the puzzle. Understanding all the tricky rules of communication such as the tone of voice, facial expressions and how to communicate with friends are also important for living in a social world.

FINE MOTOR SKILLS

Fine Motor Skills should really be called 'things I can do with my hands'. Examples include fastening buttons, using cutlery, tying shoe laces and writing, using scissors and playing with Lego.

GROSS MOTOR SKILLS

Gross Motor Skills should really be called 'things I can do with the big muscles in my body'. Examples including; running, hopping, skipping, kicking a ball, climbing a tree and sitting at a table.

PLAY SKILLS

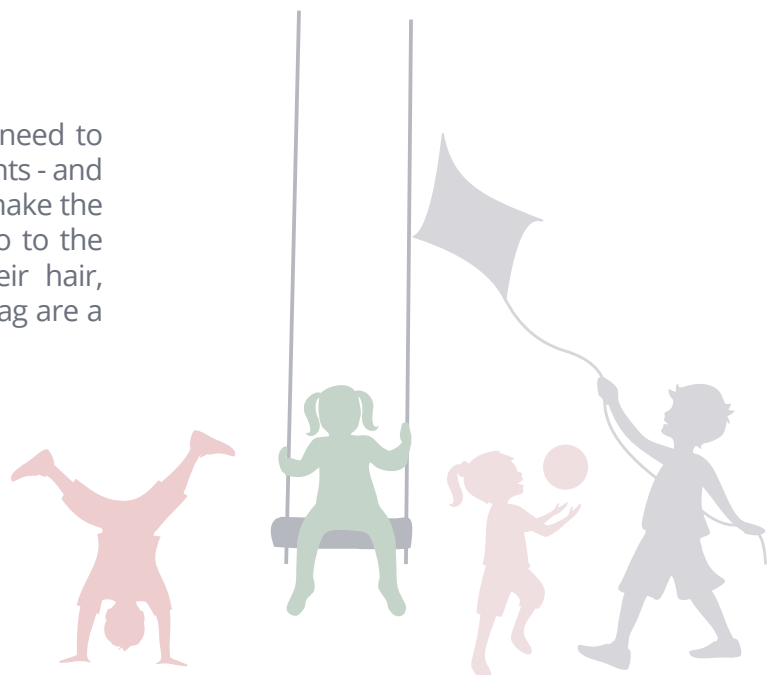
Play Skills are the dynamic activities that can bring your child joy, promote social skills, facilitate learning and improve motor skills. These can be unstructured or organised, independent or with others. While there is no universally accepted definition of play, allied health professionals agree that play skills are important for the well-being of children and can usually spot when children experience difficulties in this area.

INDEPENDENCE SKILLS

Independence skills are those skills that children need to achieve to lead an independent life from their parents - and importantly, they are also the daily tasks that will make the life of a parent a whole lot easier. Learning to go to the toilet, feeding themselves, dressing, washing their hair, pouring a glass of water and unpacking a school bag are a few examples.

SELF-REPRESENTATION

Self-Representation is the child's awareness of self.



BY 3 YEARS OF AGE

FINE MOTOR SKILLS

- ▶ Construct a tower using 9 small blocks
- ▶ Completes a 4-5 piece puzzle
- ▶ Cuts paper in half
- ▶ Beads 5-10 medium sized beads
- ▶ Copies a horizontal line, circle and cross
- ▶ Draws a person with a head
- ▶ Holds pencil with a digital pronate grasp

INDEPENDENCE SKILLS

- ▶ Is toilet trained (might not be toilet trained at night)
- ▶ Feeds themselves using a spoon, fork or fingers
- ▶ Understands common dangers: hot objects, stairs
- ▶ Can distinguish between urination and bowel movements
- ▶ Takes shoes and socks off
- ▶ Attempts to brush teeth

COMMUNICATION SKILLS

UNDERSTANDING

- ▶ Follows more complex two-part instructions (e.g. give me the teddy and pick up your book)
- ▶ Understands simple 'Wh' questions, e.g. 'what', 'where' and 'who'
- ▶ Understand the concepts of 'same' and 'different'
- ▶ Sort items into groups when asked (e.g. toys vs food)
- ▶ Recognise some basic colours
- ▶ Understands on/off, up/down, open/shut, big/little

SPEAKING

- ▶ Can say 4-5 words in a sentence
- ▶ Vocabulary is 1000 words
- ▶ Uses a variety of words for names, actions, locations and descriptions
- ▶ Ask questions using 'what', 'where' and 'who'
- ▶ Talks about something in the past, but may use '-ed' a lot (e.g. 'he goed there')
- ▶ Names body parts correctly

GROSS MOTOR SKILLS

- ▶ Walks smoothly and turns corners
- ▶ Begins running
- ▶ Can pull or carry a toy while walking
- ▶ Climbs onto/down furniture without assistance
- ▶ Walks up and down steps with alternating feet
- ▶ Jumps in place with two feet together
- ▶ Picks up toys from the floor without falling over
- ▶ Rolls a ball
- ▶ Can ride a scooter with coordination

SOCIAL SKILLS

- ▶ Can have a conversation, but may not take turns or stay on topic
- ▶ Expresses emotions
- ▶ Verbalise their desires/feelings (e.g. 'I want a drink')
- ▶ Can obey and respect simple rules

SELF-REPRESENTATION

- ▶ Can describe themselves by physical appearance and ability e.g. eye colour
- ▶ Can describe themselves by behaviours: 'I can run fast'
- ▶ Can understand: happy, mad, sad and scared

PLAY SKILLS

- ▶ Children understand that play occurs with others
- ▶ Children show delight in play and self-initiate play ideas
- ▶ Engages in parallel play: playing alongside other children but not playing with them
- ▶ Begins to use symbols in their play such as a stick becoming a sword
- ▶ Play themes reflect less frequently experienced life events e.g. visiting the doctor
- ▶ Use or plan a story-line during play.
- ▶ May begin cooperative play; group play with shared ideas and toys
- ▶ Treats doll or teddy as if it is alive

SEEK HELP IF:

- ▶ Is not understood by other adults, children
- ▶ Has speech fluency or stammering issues
- ▶ Has limited vocabulary
- ▶ Has limited attention
- ▶ Is not able to have a conversation
- ▶ Is not playing with other children
- ▶ Finds it difficult to play independently
- ▶ Play is simple and repetitive: lines up cars
- ▶ Is not able to go to the toilet independently
- ▶ Falls over or movements appear awkward
- ▶ Appears clumsy
- ▶ Has difficulty using their hands in a coordinated manner to complete simple tasks
- ▶ Frequent meltdowns or tantrums
- ▶ Displays self-stimulating behaviours such as flapping hands, spinning, clapping or making repetitive sounds
- ▶ Copies movie, tv shows, public announcements repetitively




Checklist: By 3 Years of Age

DEVELOPMENTAL MILESTONES

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INSTRUCTIONS: Place a tick in the YES or NO column if your child can independently complete this task (no assistance). If they have only partially acquired the skill, please answer NO. Add up all the 'YES' and enter it in the total score.

SKILL	Yes	No
Communication: Understanding		
1. Follows 2-part instructions for example: 'take your shoes off, sit on the floor'		
2. Understands: What, Where & Who questions		
3. Knows the difference between big & small		
4. Recognises basic colours: red, yellow, blue, green		
Communication: Speaking		
5. Speaks 4–5-word sentences		
6. Names body parts (at least 5)		
7. Asks what, where & who questions		

SKILL	Yes	No
Fine Motor		
8. Completes 4–5-piece puzzle		
9. Cuts paper in half		
10. Copies a horizontal line, circle and cross		
11. Draws a person with a head		
12. Holds pencil with a digital pronate grasp: 		

SKILL	Yes	No
Gross Motor		
13. Climbs onto/down from furniture without assistance		
14. Walks up and down steps with alternating feet		
15. Rolls a ball		
16. Jumps in place with two feet together		

SKILL	Yes	No
Play		
17. Plays alongside others but not together with them (parallel play)		
18. Uses symbols in play e.g.; a stick is a sword		
19. Treats doll or teddy as if it's alive; feeds it or talks to it etc.		

SKILL	Yes	No
Independence Skills		
20. Is toilet trained during the day		
21. Eats by themselves using a spoon, fork, or fingers		
22. Takes shoes and socks off		

TOTAL SCORE	
YES	
NO	

Scores:
19-22: No intervention required
14-19: Monitor
14 or below: Seek Advice from an Occupational Therapist, Speech & Language Therapist, Early Years Teacher or Doctor.



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