

Playing with your baby

Play is the main way that babies and toddlers learn about the world. With your help, it's also a wonderful way to support their language development.

- As a parent, you are your child's best playmate so try to spend time every day playing together.
- Newborns love physical play, especially when you gently tickle their face or count their fingers and toes.
- When your baby gets a little older and stronger, offer her lots of toys or things that are safe to go into her mouth, and talk about the objects for her.
- Make lots of play sounds to go with what's happening, like "brmm, brmm" as you push a car along. That way, your child will hear different speech sounds and learn that listening to voices is fun.
- Your baby will love hearing the same little rhymes and stories, and playing games like peek-a-boo, over and over again.



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- You don't need lots of toys to play – your baby can play with safe, simple things around the house. But toy libraries offer toys on loan for free or a small fee. For your nearest call 020 7255 4604.
- As your baby gets older, don't try to teach him anything during play. He will learn best if he chooses what to play and you follow his lead.