

12-16 Month Play Ideas

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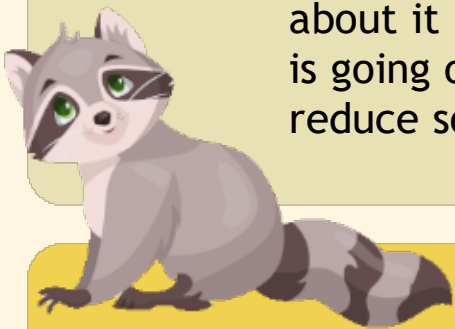
Play is a natural way for your young child to grow and learn. Activities in this list support key areas of development from your ASQ. Start with easy ones and see what they enjoy. Help your child build important skills while having fun.

Communication

Your child's language skills, what they understand and what they can say.

Play “pretend” with a stuffed animal or doll. Show and tell your baby what the doll is doing (walking, going to bed, eating, dancing across a table). See if your baby will make the doll move and do things. Take turns.

Prepare your baby for a future activity or trip by talking about it beforehand. Your baby will feel like a part of what is going on rather than just watching. It may also help reduce some fear of being “left behind.”



Gross Motor

How your child's moves their arms and legs.

Make an obstacle course with boxes or furniture so that your baby can climb in, on, over, under, and through. A big box can also be a great place to sit and play.

Arrange furniture so that your baby can work their way around a room by stepping across gaps between furniture. This encourages balance in walking.

Fine Motor

Your child's hand and finger movement and coordination.

Babies love games at this age (Pat-a-Cake, This Little Piggy). Try different ways of playing the games and see if your baby will try it with you. Hide behind furniture or doors for Peekaboo; clap blocks or pan lids for Pat-a-cake.

Make a surprise bag for your baby to find in the morning. Fill a paper or cloth bag with a soft toy, something to make a sound, a little plastic jar with a screw-top lid, or a book with cardboard pages.



Problem-solving

How your child thinks, plays with things and how they solve problems.

Let your baby “help” during daily routines. Encourage your baby to “get” the cup and spoon for mealtime, to “find” shoes and coat for dressing, and to “bring” the pants or diaper for changing. Following directions is an important skill for your baby to learn.

Your baby is learning that different toys do different things. Give your baby a lot of things to roll, push, pull, hug, shake, poke, turn, stack, spin, and stir.



Personal-social

Asks about feeding, dressing, and how they engage with others.

Let your baby help you clean up. Play “feed the wastebasket” or “give it to Mommy or Daddy.”

When your baby “asks” for something by making sounds or pointing, respond to their signal. Name the object your baby wants and encourage them to communicate again—taking turns with each other in a “conversation.”



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