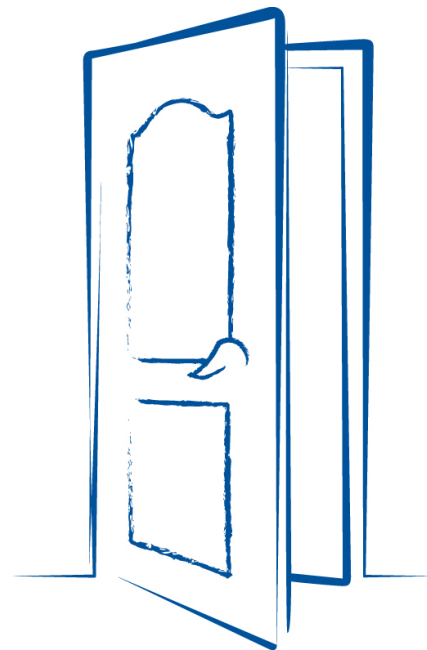


Activities for your Baby (Birth to 1 year)



Introduction

- © The following activities are to help your baby get stronger and develop their gross motor skills as they progress through early life.
- © **Please note:** the age ranges used for the purposes of this leaflet are rough guides of how a typically developing baby might progress through the stages but remember that **every child develops at a different rate**. If your child is not yet able to perform the activities in their specified age range, this does not necessarily mean there should be immediate cause for concern. Some babies will skip certain stages, some will be slower to develop certain skills but quicker with others, some babies will develop 'slowly' but will catch up. **Monitor your babies progress over time** and seek support from your health visitor if you still have concerns.

What activities can I practice from birth-3 months?

- © The following slides show activities that are good to practice with your baby from roughly **birth-3 month**.

Nesting and using 2 hands together

Learning to use my 2 hands together in the middle is a really important stage of development for future skills (grasping, releasing, hand eye co-ordination, body awareness, problem solving etc)

Even if I can reach up with one hand when flat on the floor a nested position will help me to bring my hands together

- Try a hand and foot massage to help me become aware of my hands and feet.
- Try gentle clapping games with me and help me explore your face with my hands.



Side Lying

Practicing side lying will :

- *help me to learn to rotate or turn my body*
- *Support the development of my confidence in movement.*

- Start with me laying on my back.
- With lots of support help me to roll over on to my side, help me to stay here until I relax and can maintain it on my own.
- Having a toy and you talking to me when I'm on my side can help to calm me.
- Start very slowly and calmly,
- As I gain confidence help me to increase the speed and develop my independence with rolling.
- Repeat on the other side.



Encourage rotation and reaching across my body by placing a toy on the side I am going to roll to, hand over hand will help to show me what to do.

Rolling - side to side in a flexed position

It's never too early or late to start me to getting used to movement from side to side! This activity will:

- Help me to get used to the movement of fluid in my ears as I move.*
- Help me to learn that I have 2 sides to my body.*
- Help me to activate my tummy and neck muscles*
- Help me prepare for rolling*
- Helps me develop the side to side movements of my tongue which will help with feeding and later speech.*

Help me to hold my feet and hands together in the middle.

Slowly move me from side to side, giving me time to turn my head myself.



Tummy Time

Tummy time helps me to strengthen the muscles in my neck, trunk and shoulders I need to go on my tummy for a few minutes, lots of times through the day:

- Try putting me on my tummy over your lap or on your chest .
- If my head and shoulders are higher than my bottom it will be easier for me to lift my head and push up.

I may be unhappy when first trying this but keep trying and don't give up and I will get used to it in the end!

[What To Do If Baby Keeps Rolling Over During Tummy Time \(pathways.org\)](https://pathways.org)



Movement and flying

Give me a lot of support so I feel safe. Start of with small movements and gradually build as I gain in confidence.

Include movements in all directions as this will help my understanding of movement to develop. Make sure you support my head as I can't fully do this on my own yet 😊

- Fully support me flying through the air...
 - On my back
 - On my tummy
 - Rolling
 - Flying up to the ceiling
 - Scooping back down.
 - Rotating forward
 - Rotating backwards like on a swing.



What activities can I practice from 3-6 months?

- © The following slides show activities that are good to practice with your baby from roughly **3-6 months** (in addition to the previous activities).

Rolling

Rolling helps me to:

- develop the movement in my hips.
- develop my body awareness as I learn about my body in 3 dimensions as you help me to roll.

- Start with helping me at the shoulder and hips
- Bring one leg over the other so that my lower body is turned towards the side you want to go.
- Do this slowly so that I can start to join in the movement

As I get better you can :

- Help me from only my hips
- roll me the whole way onto my tummy and over again.



Tummy time with a roll under my Chest

Tummy time helps me to strengthen the muscles in my neck, trunk and shoulders.

- A roll under my chest helps me to lift my head and shoulders my moving my weight back on my legs
- I need to practice getting my hands down on the floor and reaching out. But sometimes when I'm teething I will just want to lay on my tummy and chew my toys like in the middle picture. This is ok too, it's still tummy time



Little and often is best, 2 minutes 10 times a day is still 20mins of tummy time!

On my tummy leaning through my forearms

Tummy time helps me to strengthen the muscles in my neck, trunk and shoulders

- Help me to bring my elbows underneath me like in the first picture so that I can get used to leaning through them.
- This will make tummy time easier and less frustrating for me as I will be able to look around and as I get used to leaning on my arms I might be able to reach forward for toys.



Sitting

Practice the sitting position with me but give me lots of support in this position

Hold me:

- High up around my chest or at my shoulders
- Encourage me to place my hands on the floor in front of me and lean through my arms.

It is best to concentrate on practicing sitting while I am watching you/ a musical/light up toy or looking at myself in the mirror as sitting is hard work at the moment and I may not be able to use my hands to play with a toy at the same time.

We can sing songs and you can help me to work on adjusting my posture by moving me gently side to side or back to front. Do this really slowly so I have time to adjust.



What activities can I practice from 6-9 months?

- © The following slides show activities that are good to practice with your baby from roughly **6-9 months** (in addition to the previous activities).

Rolling by myself

Rolling helps me to:

- develop the movement in my hips.
- develop my body awareness as I learn about my body in 3 dimensions as you help me to roll.
- It helps me to move around so I don't get so frustrated being stuck in one place!
- Encourage me to practice this as much as possible by putting toys just out of reach slightly in front and to the side.



Tummy Time (push ups!)

Tummy time helps me to strengthen the muscles in my neck, trunk and shoulders.

- Now I am happy doing on my tummy and leaning through my forearms I need to start to push through my hands so my arms are straight.
- You can help me from the shoulders to lift up a little and push through my hands
- To start with I will only be able to do this momentarily, but as I get stronger I will be able to do it myself.



Tummy Time- reaching, stretching and steadying

Tummy time helps me to strengthen the muscles in my neck, trunk and shoulders.

- As I start to reach on out for toys on my tummy I am learning about transferring my body weight from side to side and steadying my self with one hand while I use the other.
- Offer toys that I like to me in all different directions so I need to reach out for them.



Pivoting on my tummy

Now that I can push up through my arms and move my weight from side to side without falling over, I can learn to turn on my tummy

- You can encourage me to do this by placing toys just out of my reach to the sides.
- This is often easier to practice on a slippery floor like laminate flooring
- As I get stronger I can do this on the carpet.
- This is hard work so encourage me by giving me lots of praise!



Sitting with support at the pelvis

Now I am good at sitting with support around my middle you can challenge me more by practice sitting while supporting me lower down on my pelvis

Place your thumbs at the back of my pelvis and your fingers on my thighs

I will probably lean forwards more in this position as it is hard work. Encourage me to lean forwards on my arms so that I support myself.



Sitting with support at my trunk and reaching

This position will help me to practice using my hands while I am sitting

Place your hands around my trunk, making sure that they aren't too high up under my armpits as this will restrict my arm movement.

Use your thumbs to gently encourage my shoulders forward like in the picture

Encourage me to reach forward for toys in this position.



Side Sitting leaning on one arm

Practicing side sitting will :

- Help to mobilise my hips
- Help me to learn to rotate or turn my body
- Will increase my muscle strength around my shoulder and arm
- Prepare me for kneeling and crawling

From a ring sitting position turn one leg inward so that both knees are pointing the same way. Support me to lean through a straight arm on one side by holding my shoulder or upper arm. Encourage me to play with the other hand. If you need to you can start with me leaning through my forearm on your leg.



Sitting with my feet on the floor

Sitting with my feet on the floor helps me to learn that my feet are not just for playing with but that they are for supporting my body.

Practicing some of the positions in the pictures will help me to prepare for standing

It is important to encourage me to lean forward so that some weight goes through my feet.



4 point Kneeling over an adults leg

This position will help me to:

- Strengthen my arms and shoulders
- Learn to transfer my weight from side to side
- Develop stability and strength around my pelvis and trunk
- Put me on my tummy over your leg,

Tuck my knees in under my hips and help me to keep the position by holding my leg and keeping my weight back

Use toys like this paper that are easy for my to explore and a mirror in front of me will help us to be able to see each other!



4 point kneeling over a roll

This position will help me to:

- Strengthen my arms and shoulders
- Learn to transfer my weight from side to side
- Develop stability and strength around my pelvis and trunk



- Put me between your legs in a kneeling position
- Lean me forward onto my tummy a rolled up towel or blanket,
- Help me to keep the position by keeping my weight back over my legs so that my arms don't have to work too hard
- Use toys like this paper that are easy for my to explore
- A mirror in front of me will help us to be able to see each other!



4 point kneeling with support under the chest and tummy

This position will help me to:

- Strengthen my arms and shoulders
 - Learn to transfer my weight from side to side
 - Develop stability and strength around my pelvis and trunk ready for crawling and walking
-
- Put me between your legs in a kneeling position
 - Lean me forward onto my arms
 - Help me to keep the position by keeping my weight back over my legs and supporting me under my chest and tummy like in the picture.
 - Help me to use one hand to reach for toys while I lean through the other arm.
 - If this is a little to difficult you can start with two hands on the floor and moving my weight forwards and backwards and side to side to a song.
 - It might help to have a mirror in front so we can see each other!



Creeping Forward

Once I am good at moving my weight from side to side I might be ready to start creeping forward on my tummy

- Don't do this activity unless I am awake, alert and keen to play
- Make sure there are some toys I am really interested in that I want to play with.
- Bend one leg up and keep one leg straight as in the picture
- Hold this position so that I am able to push through the bent leg to move forward
- Then repeat with the other leg bent up



High Kneeling

Kneeling up tall like with will help me to develop the muscles in my trunk and bottom, ready for crawling and standing

- Position me in kneeling with a support in front such as your leg or a low table or step
- Help me to keep upright by supporting me at my chest and bottom
- Encourage me to keep this position myself by encouraging me to reach up for toys.
- Keep your hand light so that I don't lean on you too much and gradually reduce the support as you feel that I can maintain the position myself.



What activities can I practice from 9-12 months?

- © The following slides show activities that are good to practice with your baby from roughly **9-12 months** (in addition to the previous activities).

Box Sitting

Sitting with my feet on the floor helps me to learn that my feet are not just for playing with but that they are for supporting my body.

- Find a support that allows me to sit with my ankles hips and knees at a 90° angle, a toddler bathroom step my work well for if I am little or a wooden stool if I am a bit bigger
- Placing a hand on my knees might help me to lean through my feet
- Encourage me to reach forward for toys or to the floor in this position as I will need to put weight through my feet to do this.



Lying to sitting

If I help you every time you pick me up from the floor I will quickly learn to do it myself and increase the muscle strength in my shoulder and tummy muscles.

With my legs in a ring or side sitting position, guide one hand across my body and forward

Don't pull me, but guide me slowly so that I have time to join in with the movement and can start to push up through one arm.

If I'm not quite stronger enough to push up yet then help me with some support at my shoulder on the side I am pushing through.



Lying to sitting

Start with me in side lying.

Place one hand on top of my hip and when ready using verbal prompts help me to get up into sitting. Gently press down on my hip toward my toes, whilst helping me with your other hand under my torso.

Give me time to joint in, placing my under arm/hand on the floor to help push myself up.

Even pause half way and let me take some weight through my arm will help me to realise it can help me 😊



Transitions to 4 point kneeling

- Practice moving between side sitting towards a 4 point kneeling position and back again like in the pictures
- Use your hands to guide your child, but keep them light and move slowly to allow them to join in with the movement.
- Make sure that you encourage your child with a toy they are interested in.



4 Point Kneeling- leaning through one arm to play with the other

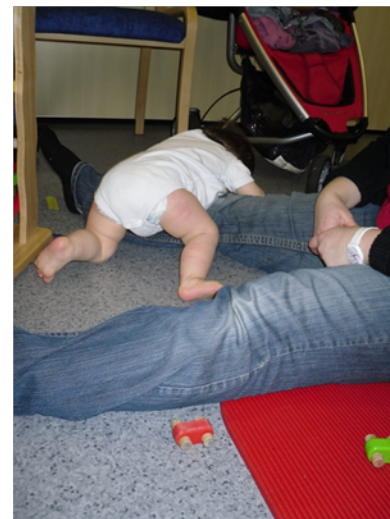


Once I am able to maintain a 4 point kneeling position on my own then I can start to learn to move my weight from side to side ready for crawling

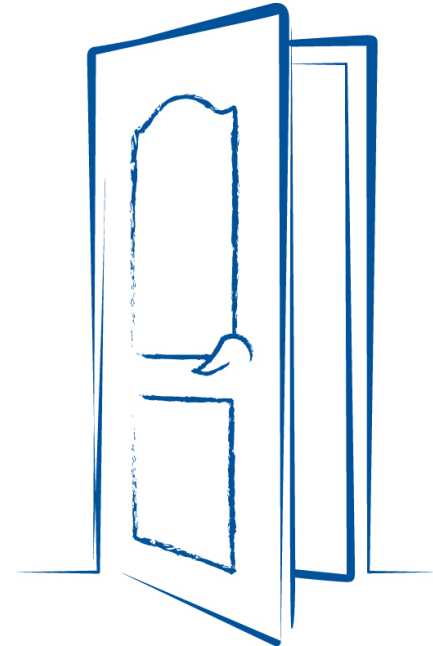
You can help me to do this by encouraging me to play in this position and use one hand to play. Like pointing to pictures in a book.

Crawling and Climbing

- Now I am crawling well you can encourage me to climb. This will help me to continue to develop my muscle strength in preparation for walking
- You can put obstacles in my way, any thing from my toy box, your own leg to the cushions off of the sofa!
- Once I get good at dealing smaller with obstacles I might start to pull up on to the sofa or a small chair
- Soft play is great fun too!



Baby Stretches



Please Note

These stretches are only to be completed following recommendation from a physiotherapist who will also demonstrate how to perform them correctly.

If your child is not known to a physiotherapist but you are concerned about tightness in their muscles, please seek a referral from your Health Visitor or contact us to discuss this further.

* If you choose to undertake these stretches without support from a physiotherapist, you do so at your own risk

Tendo Achilles (Calf) Stretch

This stretch will help to keep the length in the muscles on the back of my legs and ankles, which is important for sitting, standing and walking.

- With me lying on my back, bend my hip and knee.
- In this position bend up my ankle with my big toe leading the movement.
- Slowly straighten my knee while maintaining the bend in my ankle
- Hold of a count of 30 and repeat 3 times
- Remember to move slowly and steadily. If I feel very stiff then move my ankle up and down a few times before doing the stretch. This will make me more comfortable by loosening up tissues and moving fluid around my joint before the stretch.
- Do on both sides



Hip Flexor Stretch (Cycling my legs)

This stretch will help to keep the length in the muscles on the front of my hips, which is important for moving on the floor, standing and walking. This will also help to protect my hip from dislocating

- With me lying on my back, bend one hip and knee, while fully straightening the other leg. I will feel the stretch in at the front of my hip on the straight leg.
- Hold of a count of 30 and repeat 3 times
- Remember to move slowly and steadily. If I feel very stiff then cycle my legs a few times before doing the stretch. This will make me more comfortable by loosening up tissues and moving fluid around my joint before the stretch.
- Do on both sides



Hamstring Stretch

This stretch will help to keep the length in the muscles on the back of my legs, which is important for comfortable sitting and walking and to reduce the risk of hip dislocation.

- With me lying on my back , bend my hip to 90°, hold this position and slowly straighten my knee to bring my foot up towards the ceiling.
- Hold of a count of 30 and repeat 3 times
- Remember to move slowly and steadily. If I feel very stiff then move my knee up and down a few times before doing the stretch. This will make me more comfortable by loosening up tissues and moving fluid around my joint before the stretch.



Long Sitting (sitting with Legs out straight)

Most children start to sit with their legs in a ring shape. For those that have a tendency to have tight muscles at the back of their legs (hamstrings), it is important to have some time in long sitting to stretch these muscles out.

Sit behind me and gently encourage my legs to straighten as I sit.

You might need to turn my legs inward (knees pointing up) before you can straighten my legs.

If it's difficult to straighten both my legs at the same time, try one at a time to begin with.



Long Sitting 2 (sitting with Legs out straight)

Most children start to sit with their legs in a ring shape. For those that have a tendency to have tight muscles at the back of their thighs (hamstrings), it is important to have some time in long sitting to stretch these muscles out.

In this position you can also support my trunk and encourage me to bring my hands forward.

- Sit me sideways between your legs
- Place one leg over my knees so my legs are straight
- Encourage me to lean forward onto your leg
- A thumb behind my shoulder blade might help
- Use your other hand to give me toys to explore



Hip Adductor Stretch

This stretch will help to keep the length in the muscles on the insides of my legs, which is important for movement, nappy changes and to reduce the risk of hip dislocation.

- With me lying on my back bring my legs out to the side at the same time.
- Hold of a count of 30 and repeat 3 times
- Remember to move slowly and steadily. If I feel very stiff then move my hips in and out a few times before doing the stretch. This will make me more comfortable by loosening up tissues and moving fluid around my joints before the stretch.
- Do this stretch with bent hips and straight hips



Torticollis (Neck) Stretches

These exercises will stretch the sternocleidomastoid muscle which tilts the head one way and turns it the other.

- With me lying on my back place your hands on each side of my head, avoiding my ears. Gently and steadily tilt my head to the _____ as far as you can go. Hold for a count of _____ and repeat _____ times. You can gently support my shoulders with your forearms to prevent me wiggling too much!
- Still lying on my back hold my _____ shoulder still and turn my head to the _____ like in the 2nd picture. Hold for a count of _____ and repeat _____ times.



If any activities or recommendations within this programme cause undue pain or discomfort please **stop** and contact our team immediately.

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