

## 9-12 Months

1. **Pots & Pans**-Babies love to make noise. In some low cupboard place pots, pans and wooden spoons that babies can use to bang on, stir in and make noise. **Skills:** Fine motor, cognitive.
2. **Pull to Stand**-By now your baby is ready to start pulling up at low furniture. Use overturned cardboard boxes or an overturned laundry basket and place toys of interest on top and encourage your child to pull up on knees and eventually stand to obtain the toys. **Skills:** Gross motor, weight shift, weight bearing, strength.
3. **Watch Me Cruise**-When your baby is able to pull to stand on her own, begin to place toys just out of reach to the left and right sides and encourage her to take steps sideways to secure the toys. **Skills:** Gross motor, stepping, weight bearing, cruising, weight shift, balance.
4. **Taking Steps**-Instead of holding your baby's hands while he is stepping, kneel down so you are close to your baby and hold a broom or mop sideways in your hands. Get your child to grasp onto the broom handle and then slowly knee walk backwards as your baby takes forward steps toward you while holding the broom handle for support. **Skills:** Gross motor, stepping, weight bearing, weight shifting, balance, coordination.
5. **Turning Pages**-Using cardboard board books, help your child turn pages as you name pictures in books. **Skills:** Fine motor, cognitive, language.
6. **Babble Time**-Play babbling games with your child face to face or while looking into a mirror together. Repeat sounds your baby currently makes and make new sounds to see if you baby can repeat you. **Skills:** Receptive/expressive language, socialization.
7. **Laundry Basket Stroll**-Fill a laundry basket with heavy items such as book and allow your child to push it around the floor on a smooth surface to practice supported walking. **Skills:** Gross motor, walking, balance, coordination, strength.
8. **Tip Me Over**-Sit your child on your lap and gently tip him from side to side encouraging him to bring himself back up into a tall sitting position. **Skills:** Gross motor, trunk strengthening, balance, body righting.
9. **Body Parts**-Touch, kiss, tickle or pop bubbles on your baby's hands, feet, tummy, nose as you name body parts for him. **Skills:** Cognitive, receptive/expressive language.
10. **Over/Under**-Let your child crawl and/or walk over cushions, pillows and under tables, chairs, etc to challenge their balance and body in space awareness. **Skills:** Gross motor, weight bearing, body in space awareness, motor planning.
11. **Straw drinking**-Use juice boxes or store bought no-spill straw cups to encourage drinking from a straw cup instead of a spouted cup at snacks and meals. **Skills:**
12. **Poke, Push, Point**-Encourage finger isolation by using toys with buttons that require pushing and poking. Cell photos work too. **Skills:** Fine motor, finger isolation.
13. **Tunnel Time**-Make a tunnel using furniture or use a store bought play tunnel. Have an adult sit at one end and encourage your child to crawl through and greet them at the other end. **Skills:** Gross motor, motor planning, social games.

- 14. Bye Bye**-Whenever someone leaves the house, say and demonstrate waving “bye bye”. Use hand over hand assistance to help your child wave if needed until they can do it on their own. **Skills:** Expressive, receptive language, gestures, socialization.
- 15. Animal Sounds**-Sing songs like old MacDonald or make animal sounds in response to pictures in books or stuffed toys. Encourage your child to imitate these fun sounds. **Skills:** Receptive/expressive language, imitation.
- 16. Roll the Ball**-Sit on the floor a few feet from your child. Gently roll a ball his way. Encourage him to roll it back. **Skills:** Gross motor, visual tracking, imitation, fine motor.
- 17. Baby Signs**-Babies learn language by involving gestural cues. You can communicate with your baby and they can communicate back to you using gestures such as pointing. You can build in actual signs from American Sign Language to help your baby learn language. Babies as young as 6-7 months can sign such things as “eat, drink, more, hat, all done”. You can Google baby signs to come up with gestures that may be helpful to your child’s communication. **Skills:** Language, gestural imitation, socialization.
- 18. Stair creeper**-When supervised allow your child to attempt to climb up a few steps in a crawling position. Always stay behind him and help him come back down since this skill is much more difficult. **Skills:** Gross motor, motor planning, coordination, balance.
- 19. Stroller Push**-Instead of riding baby in the stroller, let your child walk behind the stroller and push it to practice walking with support. **Skills:** Gross motor, balance, independent walking.
- 20. In and Out**-Let your child practice putting a variety of sizes and shapes of toys into boxes, bags, baskets, etc with various size openings. Also let them dump the containers back out and refill them again. **Skills:** Fine motor, grasp, voluntary release.
- 21. Bounce**-Hold your child’s hands and let him bounce by bending his knees and returning to stand. You can repeat “bounce, bounce, bounce” or “jump, jump, jump” for him. **Skills:** Gross motor, sensory, language
- 22. Horsey Rides**-Place your child on your knee and gently bounce him up and down or side to side. **Skills:** Gross motor, sitting balance, sensory.
- 23. Making Music**-Use store bought or homemade instruments such as pianos, drums, tambourines, shakers, bells, etc to make music with your child. Sing, dance or simply make noise. **Skills:** Fine motor, gross motor, language, socialization, rhythm.
- 24. Bedtime Story**-It’s never too early to start making a bedtime story part of your child’s daily routine. You do not need to read anything lengthy for this age group, something as short as 3 minutes is fine and simply naming pictures rather than reading works well. **Skills:** Language, listening, attention, building routines.
- 25. Smelling Games**-Use perfumes, spices, lotions and talk about the smell of them. This is a fun game as children get older too, when they can begin to identify things by smell. **Skills:** Sensory, language.
- 26. Lotion massage**-Massage is relaxing for any age, use lavender scented lotion to gently massage your child after bath time and before bedtime in order to relax and soothe them to sleep. **Skills:** Sensory

- 27. Nursery Rhymes/Finger Plays**-Begin to recite nursery rhymes such as Humpty Dumpty, This Little Piggy, etc to your child on a daily basis. Build in gestures with your words as you recite the rhymes and use inflection in your voice to hold your child's attention.  
**Skills:** Receptive/expressive language, cognitive, attention, memory, socialization.
- 28. Sock Puppets**-Use an old pair of socks to make hand puppets. Color or sew on a face and make the puppet talk to your child and watch them giggle. Allow them to place the puppets on their own hands. **Skills:** Language, fine motor, socialization
- 29. Sink or float**-Use different types of toys in the tub, one that both sink and float. Encourage your child to reach for and grasp toys both floating and under the water.  
**Skills:** Fine motor, reach, grasp, cognitive, object permanence, cause/effect, sensory.
- 30. Hooray I Did It!**-When your baby does something he is proud of, or completes a task, cheer for him and say "Hooray you did it!" and clap for him and show him how to clap for himself. Pretty soon he will be calling attention to himself by saying "yay" or clapping and wanting you to join in too. **Skills:** Socialization, concept of self, cognitive, joint attention, self esteem.