

# Developmental Skills for Ages 6–9 Months

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Following are developmental skills typically seen in infants 6–9 months of age.

## ***Sensory Development***

- The baby enjoys frisky play.
- The baby exhibits protective reactions by extending his arms to his sides and front when his balance is challenged.
- The baby investigates objects with vision, touch, and taste.
- The baby shows increased tolerance to various social and environmental situations.

## ***Gross Motor Development***

- The baby lifts her head and helps when being pulled up from lying on her back to sitting.
- The baby bears weight on one hand when lying on her stomach and reaches with the other hand.
- The baby bounces and bears a larger portion of weight on her legs with an adult supporting her at her trunk.
- The baby sits independently.
- The baby can stand for a short period of time when holding onto a sturdy object.
- The baby crawls backward well and is beginning to crawl forward.
- The baby moves from sitting to and from lying on her stomach independently.

## ***Fine Motor Development***

- The baby rakes tiny objects with his fingers.
- The baby uses his thumb and fingertips to grasp objects.
- The baby uses his thumb and side of index finger to grip objects.

- The baby extends his elbows when reaching and grasping things.
- The baby systematically drops objects and then plays with them, using active wrist movements.
- The baby transfers objects from one hand to the other.
- The baby holds small objects, one in each hand.
- The baby reaches for small objects with one hand.

## ***Language/Social Development***

- The baby has a repertoire of gestures and verbalizations to signal her wants and needs.
- The baby visually tracks fast-moving objects.
- The baby looks for objects that are somewhat hidden.
- The baby plays with one toy for 2–3 minutes.
- The baby visually recognizes parents and lifts her arms to them.
- The baby exhibits anxiety when separated from her parents or when confronted by an unfamiliar adult.
- The baby reacts to a caregiver's facial expressions.
- The baby participates in games such as peek-a-boo or "This little piggy."
- The baby feeds herself finger foods and holds her bottle.
- The baby responds to her name being called.
- The baby communicates "Bye" by waving or moving her hand, wrist, or arm.

## Activities for Ages 6–9 Months

Following are activities you can perform to encourage development in infants 6–9 months of age.

### *Sensory Development*

- Sing short melodic songs to your baby.
- Make sure your baby's toys are clean and large enough for him not to swallow when he puts them in his mouth. Let him explore a variety of textured objects. Encourage him to look at or feel the toys.

### *Gross Motor Development*

- Place toys and other objects 2–5 inches beyond your baby's arm length so she must reach for them. Encourage her to hold them.
- Place your baby on her stomach on a clean, obstacle-free floor. Put colorful, blinking, or sparkling toys within 5 feet of the baby. Encourage her to crawl toward the objects.
- Have your baby grab a sturdy object (e.g., couch) while standing and facing it. Sit or kneel on the floor at least arm's distant away, ready to catch the baby if she loses her balance. Show her picture books or toys to encourage standing balance.
- Sit on the floor with your legs separated. Have your baby stand between your legs facing you, while you hold her hips for support. If more support is needed, place your hands below the baby's armpits and near her chest. Play lively, fun music. Encourage her to dance.
- Play "sit-ups." Lay your baby on her back in front of you. Hold her wrists and slowly pull her to a sitting position. Praise her for lifting her head. Slowly bring the baby's head back to a soft surface. Repeat several times.

### *Fine Motor Development*

- Place your baby in a supported seated position. Show him an interesting object or toy. When the baby is looking, cover him with a cloth. Play a game of, "Where is that \_\_\_\_\_?" Then uncover the toy as the baby watches and shout, "Here's the \_\_\_\_\_!" Repeat.
- Sit on the floor next to your baby. Place a box of toys next to the baby and ask him to give you toy from box. Repeat until all the toys are out. Practice putting the toys back into the box.
- As your baby sits in a crib or playpen, place next to him three different sized boxes that are nested inside each other. Have the baby pull the boxes out. Show him how to put the boxes in each other and let him practice.

### *Language/Social Development*

- Sit face-to-face with your baby. Use your fingers to demonstrate actions while you sing songs such as "The itsy-bitsy spider." The baby will follow you with her eyes and try to move her arms and hands.
- Have your baby look at herself in a mirror. Name and describe her facial features and other body parts. Point to the named body part on the baby.
- Place a drop cloth under your baby's high chair. Let her practice eating with a bowl and spoon.
- Throughout the day, hum, sing, and talk to your baby. Encourage her to imitate the sounds you make.
- Read to your baby. Point out common objects and name them. Encourage her to repeat your words.