

Movement - Infant





Infants prefer to discover the world by crawling, climbing, and walking. With these tips, you can help your infant move, play, and embark on their own explorations. They will also help you create a safe, playful environment at home where your child can practice at their own pace.

Crawling

- Give your child the space to crawl. Take him out of the playpen regularly.
- Challenge your child to go on an adventure on all fours. For example, create a small obstacle course using chairs that they can crawl under and behind. You can also drape a blanket over the chairs to create a tent or tunnel that your child can crawl in and out of.
- Give your child moving toys that he can crawl after. This way, you challenge him to move while having fun.
- Fun toys for your crawling child include for example: a large soft ball, a self-driving toy car or a rolling toy.
- Give your child toys that he can pick up and let go of himself.
- A mattress or air mattress also makes for a fun toy for your child. He can climb on it, roll off it, and play on it. Are you using an air mattress? Then do not inflate it too much. This allows your child to practice his balance while playing.
- Let your child crawl around barefoot when in a warm room.
- Put non-slip socks on your child when they are on a smooth floor. This allows them to move around more easily without constantly slipping.

- It is best to avoid putting slippers with hard soles on your child. These prevent your child's feet from developing in the optimal way. Hard soles also make it impossible for him to sit on his knees. Opt instead for soft, flexible wool slippers.
- Dress your child in flexible, comfortable clothing while they play. Large seams and zippers, for example, can make movement difficult.

Walking

- Give your child plenty of opportunity to pull themselves up on different types of furniture. In the playpen, your child will mainly pull himself up on the bars using only his arms, but on the sofa, your child does not have enough grip and must also use leg strength. Variety is important.
- Give your child room to move past a table, cupboard, or other piece of furniture. This allows him to practice walking.
- Is your child starting to stand up? For safety reasons, remove any toys hanging above the playpen.
- Let your child walk around barefoot in warm rooms. This allows their feet to develop in the best possible way.
- Just as with crawling, it is best not to put hard-soled slippers on your child. Instead, opt for soft, flexible wool slippers.
- Put non-slip socks on your child indoors so that he has good grip for walking.
- Don't put real shoes on your child until he starts actually walking independently outdoors.
- Is your child not yet attempting to walk on their own? Then don't let them walk holding your hand too often. It will happen in due time.
- Stay with your child when he starts climbing and clambering (for example, walking up stairs). Help your child, but do not intervene too quickly. Your child learns a great deal by exploring his environment on his own.
- Falling doesn't have to be bad if there are no dangerous materials or situations. Your toddler is still so close to the ground that he cannot fall very far. By falling, your child learns how to catch himself properly.
- Do not place your child in a baby walker or bouncer. These devices do not help your child learn to walk any faster, nor do they teach them to use their legs in a natural way. The seat prevents your child from exercising their muscles. It is harmful to your child's back and hips.
- Does your child spend a lot of time pushing a ride-on car or walker? Try putting it away for a while. Your child might then learn to stand on their feet 'unsupported', which is better preparation for walking.

Sitting

- It is best not to place your child upright in a bouncer, stroller, high chair, or bicycle seat if they cannot yet sit up on their own. Doing so places too much demand on their balance. Your child has not yet practiced sitting enough and does not yet have enough muscle strength for it. Since it will be difficult for them to maintain a sitting position, they will also be unable to play effectively. Give your child the time and space to learn to sit up on their own.
- If your child is sitting on your lap, support him on all sides.
- If your child cannot yet sit up independently but you would still like to place them in the bouncer chair near you for a moment, you can remove the support boards from the chair so that it functions like a hammock. In this case, the chair must be set to the reclining position.
- Once your child is able to sit up independently, choose a good 'grow-along chair.' A grow-along chair ensures good posture for every age.