

# What are Fine and Gross Motor Skills?



- **Fine Motor:** the ability for children to control the small muscles in their body such as grasping, drawing, building, etc.
- **Gross Motor:** the development of large muscles in a child's body that enable him to walk, jump, climb, etc.

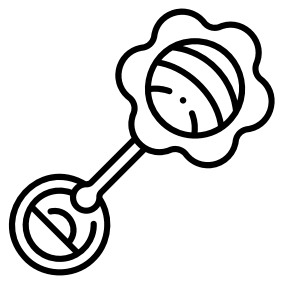
As you observe and interact with your child while she plays, learns, speaks, acts, and moves, you will begin to notice her fine and gross motor skills. Below is a list of examples for both fine and gross motor skills that infants, toddlers, and preschoolers should be doing as they grow and develop.

	FINE MOTOR	GROSS MOTOR
Infants	<p>Follows bright objects with eyes.            Holding a toy in his hand.            Bringing hands to her mouth.            Transferring objects from one hand to another.            Pointing to objects.</p>	<p>Turning head to both sides.            Performing tummy time on floor.            Rolls from belly to back.            Pulls to a standing position.            Pushing up on hands.            Crawling.</p>
Toddlers	<p>Using a spoon &amp; cup.            Turns pages of a book.            Pick up and put down objects.            Scribbles with crayons.            Building a block tower with 3-4 blocks.</p>	<p>Walking alone well.            Kicking a ball forward.            Goes up and down a slide.            Jumping off the ground with both feet.            Walks up and down stairs alone.</p>
Preschoolers	<p>Holding a pencil.            Cutting with scissors.            Coloring or drawing with markers/crayons.            Playdough manipulation.            Opening &amp; closing things.</p>	<p>Balancing on one foot.            Catching a large ball.            Running, jumping and climbing well.            Riding a bike with or without training wheels.            Skipping on alternating feet.</p>

\*If your child is not meeting the expected developmental milestones then he may benefit from a developmental screening.

# Activities to help advance fine and gross motor skills:

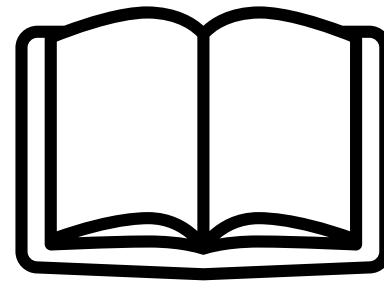
## Infants:



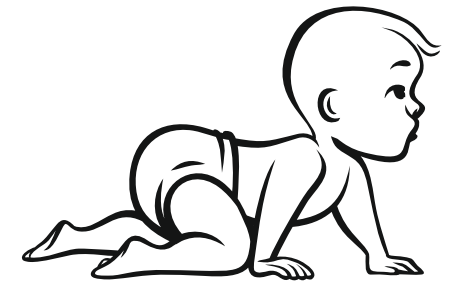
Give your baby safe toys to play with that are easy to hold, like rattles or cloth books.



Lay your baby on his tummy when he is awake and put toys at eye level in front of him to practice lifting his head.



Read to your baby every day and let her point to pictures in the story. Show her how to turn the pages.

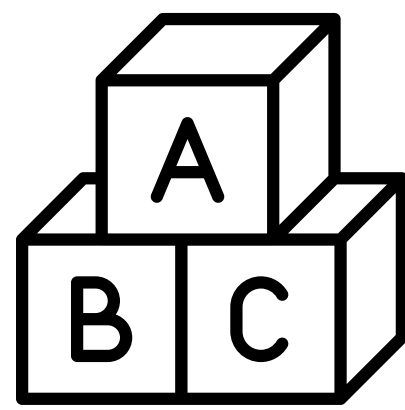


Place toys on the ground out of your baby's reach and encourage him to crawl, roll, or scoot to get to them.

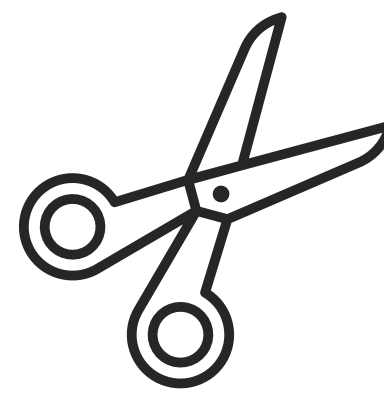
## Toddlers:



Throw the ball, overhand, back and forth with your toddler. Gradually decrease the ball size.



Build block towers and see who can stack the most blocks. Next, grab Legos and let your child pull them apart.

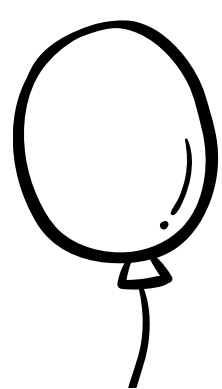


Introduce scissors! Let your toddler practice cutting with paper, playdough, and yarn.

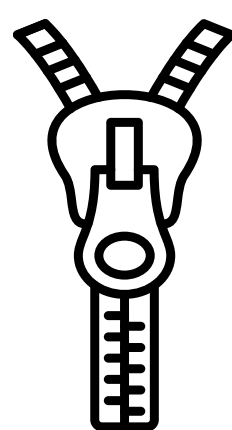


Go on a bear hunt. Pretend to jump over grass, stomp through mud, and step over river rocks!

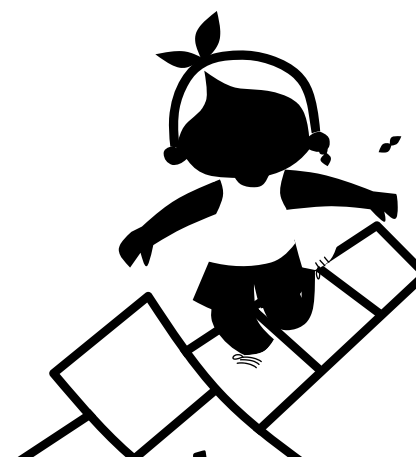
## Preschoolers:



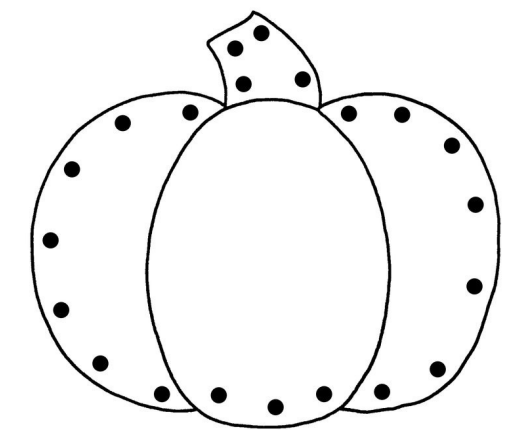
Play "keepy uppy" as you hop around hitting the balloon in the air. Don't let it touch the ground!



Encourage your preschooler to practice buttoning, snapping and zipping her own clothes.



Get outside! Play hopscotch, ride bikes, kick a ball, and climb a ladder.



Hole punch a coloring sheet and let your preschooler lace yarn through the holes.

\*For more ideas check out the CDC's *Learn the Signs. Act Early.* campaign online.