

Reach Up

- ✓ Builds baby's arm strength
- ✓ Helps baby learn to focus

Hold a small soft toy or a colorful sock above your baby's chest, 10 to 12 inches away. At first your baby will try to focus on the toy. In time, your baby will reach for it and maybe hit it. Encourage your baby. You can say,

Reach up, baby!

You got it! Yay!

No time for toys? Your baby can focus on your face. Guide your baby's hand to touch your face. Your touch and eye contact will help your baby feel secure.

A one month old baby can begin to reach up for objects when lying on their back.



Let's Move Our Legs!

- ✓ Builds baby's leg muscles

Place your baby on their back. Be sure their head is supported. Hold their feet in your hands. Slowly bend both legs, then straighten them. You can say,

Bend and stretch! Bend and stretch!

Now bend one leg and straighten one leg. Switch. If your baby likes this, go a little faster and say or sing,

Run, baby, run!

Hold your baby's feet up. Cross their feet at the ankles. Open their legs and cross the ankles again. You can say,

Open and close or criss cross or any fun words you choose!

When your baby uses their leg muscles to play, they grow strong. This will help them learn to crawl, stand, and one day, walk. So, make time for moving play every day!



Tummy Time

- ✔ Builds baby's neck, back, arm, and shoulder muscles
- ✔ Prevents a flat head

Place your baby on their tummy on a soft blanket on the floor. Put a colorful toy, ball, or block just out of their reach. Your baby will try to lift their head to see the toy. In time, they will try to reach for the toy.

When your baby can reach it, move it away a little bit. Move it to the right. Then move it to the left. Praise your baby while they learn to lift their head and try to reach.

No toys handy? Your baby will reach for you if you sit nearby. Put your hands out or lie down so they can see your face.

Your baby needs tummy time every day. They learn to push up, roll over, and before long, sit up during tummy time. Start with three to five minutes a couple of times a day. Add more time as baby grows stronger.

If your baby doesn't seem to like tummy time at first, try lap time. Place baby tummy down on your lap. Be sure their head is supported. Always stay with baby during tummy time.



Let's Move Our Arms!

- ✔ Builds baby's arm strength
- ✔ Builds baby's upper body and trunk muscles

Place your baby on their back. Be sure their head is supported. Hold baby's hands. Slowly raise their arms over head. Lower them down by their sides. Each time you do this say,

Up and down! Up and down!

Open your baby's arms out to their sides like the letter, "T". Then bring their arms together above their chest. You can say,

Open and close! Open and close!

Hold your baby's hands and gently clap them together. You can say,

Clap, clap, clap! Or make up a rhyme about clapping.

Your older baby will love clapping fast and slow or high and low. Clap to the left and to the right.

Your baby's grip will grow stronger in time. When your baby can hold on to your fingers, they can begin to pull up. This strengthens muscles that will help them sit up. Sing or say something fun about pull ups.



Play Ball

- ✔ Baby learns to move an object
- ✔ Baby learns how to play together
- ✔ Builds baby's coordination

When your baby can sit up, you can play ball together. Use a soft ball that is big enough for your baby to see easily. Sit on the floor facing your baby. You can say,

See the ball?

Look at the ball!

Roll the ball on the floor to your baby. Roll it slowly so your baby can see it coming. Reaching for the ball helps your baby balance and build their core muscles. Let them touch, hit or lift the ball. Then take it away and roll it to your baby again.

It can take many tries, but soon your baby will push the ball toward you. In time your baby will roll it to you.

When you play ball, your baby is learning how to move an object and how to play together.

