

ACTIVITIES FOR INFANTS 4–8 MONTHS OLD

Put a windup toy beside or behind your baby. Watch to see if your baby searches for the sound.	Give your baby a spoon to grasp and chew on. It's easy to hold and feels good in the mouth. It's also great for banging, swiping, and dropping.	While sitting on the floor, place your baby in a sitting position inside your legs. Use your legs and chest to provide only as much support as your baby needs. This allows you to play with your baby while encouraging independent sitting.	Gently rub your baby with a soft cloth, a paper towel, or nylon. Talk about how things feel (soft, rough, slippery). Lotion feels good, too.	Let your baby see him- or herself in a mirror. Place an unbreakable mirror on the side of your baby's crib or changing table so he or she can watch. Look in the mirror with your baby, too. Smile and wave at your baby.
Make your own crib gym. Attach kitchen tools (measuring spoons and cups, potato masher or whips, shaker cup with a bell inside) to yarn tied across your baby's crib. Place the crib gym where your baby can kick it. <i>Take it down when your baby is not playing.</i> Always supervise.	Play voice games. Talk with a high or low voice. Click your tongue. Whisper. Take turns with your baby. Repeat any sounds made by him or her. Place your baby so you are face to face—your baby will watch as you make sounds.	Fill a small plastic bottle (medicine bottle with child-proof cap) with beans or rice. Let your baby shake it to make noise.	Make another shaker using bells. Encourage your baby to hold one in each hand and shake them both. Watch to see if your baby likes one sound better than another.	Place your baby on his or her tummy with favorite toys or objects around but just slightly out of reach. Encourage him or her to reach out for toys and move toward them.
Fill an empty tissue box with strips of paper. Your baby will love pulling them out. (Do not use colored newsprint or magazines; they are toxic. Never use plastic bags or wrap.)	Safely attach a favorite toy to a side of your baby's crib, swing, or cradle chair for her or him to reach and grasp. Change toys frequently to give her or him new things to see and do.	Place your baby in a chair or carseat, or prop him or her up with pillows. Bounce and play with a flowing scarf or a large bouncing ball. Move it slowly up, then down or to the side, so your baby can follow movement with his or her eyes.	With your baby lying on his or her back, place a toy within sight but out of reach, or move a toy across your baby's visual range. Encourage him or her to roll to get the toy.	Play Peekaboo with hands, cloth, or a diaper. Put the cloth over your face first. Then let your baby hide. Pull the cloth off if your baby can't. Encourage her or him to play. Take turns.
Place your baby in a chair or carseat to watch everyday activities. Tell your baby what you are doing. Let your baby see, hear, and touch common objects. You can give your baby attention while getting things done.	Place your baby on your knee facing you. Bounce her or him to the rhythm of a nursery rhyme. Sing and rock with the rhythm. Help your baby bring his or her hands together to clap to the rhythm.	Your baby will like to throw toys to the floor. Take a little time to play this "go and fetch" game. It helps your baby to learn to release objects. Give baby a box or pan to practice dropping toys into.	Once your baby starts rolling or crawling on his or her tummy, play "come and get me." Let your baby move, then chase after her and hug her when you catch her.	Place your baby facing you. Your baby can watch you change facial expressions (big smile, poking out tongue, widening eyes, raising eyebrows, puffing or blowing). Give your baby a turn. Do what your baby does.