

At Home Learning Guide for Infants (0–1 years old)

Week of April 13, 2020



Typically our centers spend the month of April exploring the natural world through the theme of gardens. Even though you're at home, there are lots of fun things you and your baby can do to learn about all the growth and change that come with spring.

For this age group, our activities include:

- Opportunities to include **music and songs** for your baby.
- Tips for involving babies in everyday learning opportunities and turning **ordinary moments** into curriculum.
- Activities from each of our [developmental domains](#) so you know your child is getting a **variety of experiences** to support every area of their development.

This Week's Theme: Growing Gardens



What you'll find in this guide. . .

We've organized this content the way your child would be learning it in their center, but you and your child can choose your own adventures and do the activities in any order.

MONDAY

Get the Wiggles Out!
(Physical Development and Wellness)



Clapping Hands: Your child hears a clapping rhyme and explores how they can move to the beat.

TUESDAY

Express Yourself (Creative Expression)



Exploring Spring Colors: While spring blooms are popping up outdoors, your child explores spring colors indoors through everyday activities.

WEDNESDAY

Baby Book Club (Language and Literacy)



Garden Stories: You and your child dig into books about gardens and explore the illustrations for signs of spring.

THURSDAY

Get the Wheels Turning
(Cognitive Development)



Take It Out of the Bucket: What's in the bucket? Help your baby find out! Your little explorer investigates different items hiding in a container.

FRIDAY

Growing Flexible Brains
(Executive Function)



"Dirt": Share the poem "Dirt" with your little one while they explore creative movement.

EVERYDAY LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Babies are constantly learning, even through experiences grown-ups might not consider "educational". Pick an activity to weave learning experiences into your everyday routines—no preparation needed!

FOCUS ON SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING

Teaching social and emotional skills can be intertwined in everything you do. You'll find tips and activities to help your child continue developing these essential skills at home.

Getting Ready for the Week: Materials to Gather

- Picture books
- board books
- touch and feel books about plants and gardens
- Plastic tub or container, large
- Small toys that will fit inside the tub such as blocks, rattles, or cups
- Everyday objects in green, yellow, and red

Tip: At the beginning of your week, gather materials and place them in a container so you're ready to go!

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MONDAY

Get the Wiggles Out: Clapping Hands



Length of activity:
5-10 minutes*

*Duration will vary depending on your child's interest.

**Level of Engagement
Required by Adult: High**



Level of Prep Required: N/A



What you need:
N/A



What your child is learning: Your child is beginning to learn about cause and effect, including the idea that their words and movements inspire a reaction from you! This activity not only lets your baby know that their actions cause a response, but also strengthens your relationship with them.

What you do: Get familiar with the words and clapping portions of the song "Clap, Clap, Clap Your Hands." Sit with your baby facing you, either sitting or laying down. Sing the song and perform the claps for your child. Notice how your baby responds. If they show interest, continue singing the song for as long as you're both enjoying the experience. You can revisit the song throughout the day and week. Try building on the experience by creating other versions of the song by replacing "clap your hands" with other phrases, like tap your legs, pat your tummy, or wave your hands.

"Clap, Clap, Clap Your Hands"

(sung to the tune of "Row, Row, Row Your Boat")

Clap, clap, clap your hands,
As slowly as you can. (clap hands slowly)
Clap, clap, clap your hands,
As slowly as you can. (clap hands slowly)

Clap, clap, clap your hands,
As quickly as you can. (clap hands quickly)
Clap, clap, clap your hands,
As quickly as you can. (clap hands quickly)

If your child is ready: Invite your child to clap along as you sing the song. Respond with excitement and encouragement if they clap or begin to make the movement. Smile, nod your head, or say something like "Yay, I see you clapping! Clap, clap, clap!"

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TUESDAY

Express Yourself: Exploring Spring Colors



Length of activity:
5-10 minutes*

*Duration will vary depending on your child's interest.

**Level of Engagement
Required by Adult: High**



Level of Prep Required: Low



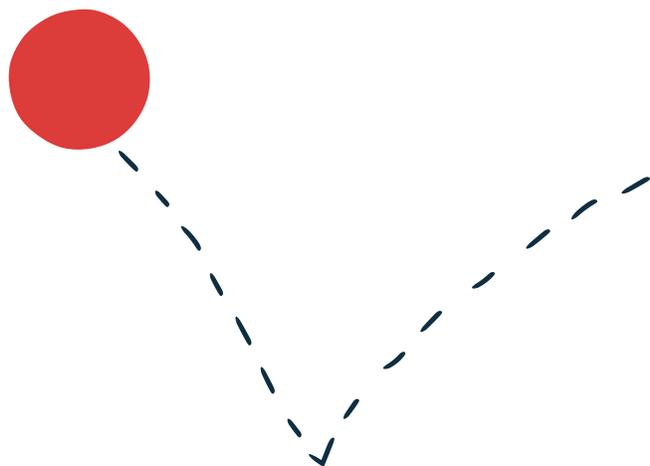
What you need:
Everyday objects in green, yellow, and red



What your child is learning: Your baby is developing the ability to distinguish between colors, explore different textures, and understand words we use to describe what we see and feel. This activity gives them the chance to flex those skills, while making connections to the spring blooms popping up outdoors.

What you do: As you and your little one go about your day, draw your child's attention to objects that are green, yellow, and red. This could be the clothes you're wearing, bottles or spoons used during mealtimes, or toys they're playing with. Talk with your baby about the name of the object, what color you see, and any observations you can make about texture, sounds, or comparisons to other objects of the same color.

If your child is ready: Sit or lay your child on the floor and place the objects where your child can reach them. Invite your baby to select items that interest them and talk with them about the objects they choose.



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WEDNESDAY

Baby Book Club: Garden Stories



Length of activity:
5–10 minutes*

*Duration will vary depending on your child's interest.

Level of Engagement Required by Adult: High



Level of Prep Required: Medium



What you need:

Picture books, board books, or touch and feel books about plants and gardens. You can use any child's book for this activity if you don't have a book on plants or gardens.



What your child is learning: Your baby is developing the ability to pay attention to what you say and connect your words with images and objects. This is an important skill that helps children understand the relationship between words and the objects they describe.

What you do: Sit with your baby on your lap. Share the cover and title of the book with your child, then begin reading the book. As you read, pause to talk about the illustrations and help your baby engage with the book. For example, you could say "Here is a pot with pretty purple flowers in it. I wonder how they smell?" and pretend to smell the flowers in the book, commenting on how nice they smell. Repeat this activity throughout the week with any book.

If your child is ready: Invite your baby to mimic you as you interact with the book, such as holding book close to their face so they can pretend to smell the flowers.





THURSDAY

Cognitive Development: Take It Out of the Bucket



Length of activity:
5-10 minutes*

*Duration will vary depending on your child's interest.

Level of Engagement Required by Adult: High



Level of Prep Required: Low



What you need:

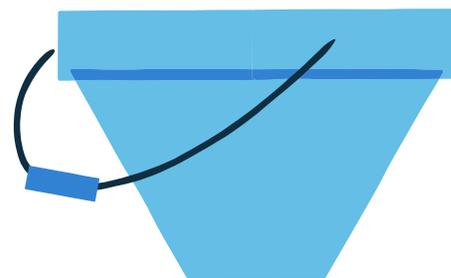
- Plastic tub or container
- Small toys that will fit inside the tub, like blocks, rattles, or cups



What your child is learning: In addition to tracking your movements with their eyes, your baby is learning to imitate simple actions and perform actions on objects.

What you do: Place the toys you've collected inside the tub. Sit on the floor with your child, either with your child on your lap or next to your child if they can sit on their own. Place the tub of toys in front of your baby. Pick one toy out of the tub, show it to your child, and name the toy. Then, describe the toy to your child, and talk about what it looks, feels, or sounds like. Invite your child to touch or hold the toy. Explore the other toys in the tub with your baby, taking time to observe their reactions. Comment on what you notice about how they react to each of the different toys.

If your child is ready: Place the tub of toys within reach of your baby. Invite your child to choose a toy from the tub and make comments and observations about the item they've selected and what they are doing with it.





FRIDAY

Growing Flexible Brains: "Dirt"



Length of activity:
5-10 minutes*

*Duration will vary depending on your child's interest.

**Level of Engagement
Required by Adult: High**



Level of Prep Required: Low



What you need:
N/A



What your child is learning: As your baby observes your movements throughout the poem, they are learning to focus their attention, and building their vocabulary as they listen and observe. They may even begin to express themselves by responding to the movements you are making or the words in the poem!

What you do: Become familiar with the poem "Dirt." Then, sit with your baby facing you, either sitting or laying down, and recite the poem for your child. As you say the poem, use moments that go with each line. So, for example, touch your feet when you say, "Dirt feels cold beneath my feet." **Note: The goal is to draw association between word and object.** If your baby seems interested, include them in the movements as well. Repeat the poem several times throughout the day or week, performing the movements you created.

"Dirt"

Dirt feels cold beneath my feet.
Dirt gives life to things we eat.
Plants sprout up and grow and grow
From seeds I plant in the dirt below.

If your child is ready: Explore different ways of saying the poem and see how your child reacts. Try saying it fast, slowly, in a whisper, or in a deep, squeaky, or silly voice.



Everyday Learning Experiences

Any time is a good time to learn! Here are some ways to keep your kiddo learning and growing through everyday experiences.

1 While touching a natural substance like water or food, talk to your baby about how it feels and how it helps us in our daily lives. Make up a **movement** to represent each idea, like splashing water on your face or rubbing your belly to show you're nice and full. Try to repeat the action throughout your day—does your child remember the action and repeat it?

2 Pump up the jams while you're folding laundry or unloading the dishwasher. **Dance or clap** to the beat—does your child notice your movements? Do they clap or move in response to the beat?

3 When you notice your child looking at an object, talk about what color it is. Then show them a different object and **observe their reaction**. Do they notice the color difference? Is there a texture difference that they notice when they touch the objects?

4 While cleaning up around the house, make eye contact with your child and use **slow, repetitive movements**, such as reaching down to pick up a cup and reaching up to put it on the shelf. Pause after each item is put away—does your child mimic your movement?

5 Point at an image in a book or an object in your immediate space. **Demonstrate** for your baby what it looks like to smell, hear, or touch the object. Wait for a response from your child. Are they connecting the object with the action?



Focus on Social and Emotional Learning: The Power of Play

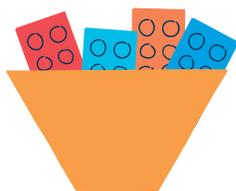
Play might look random or disorganized, but it's actually the most meaningful and natural way for young children to learn. During play, children are engaged in active learning and developing skills from head to toe. Check out the information and resources below to understand the power of play and what you can do to guide it.

Power of Play: Building Skills and Having Fun

Young children learn so much through play. Take a look at [this video](#) to learn how play develops brains and bodies, especially for our youngest learners.

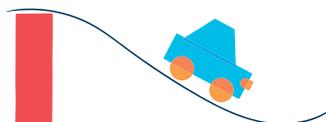
Active Learning: What's Really Happening During Play

Children love to play, and for good reason. Play is powerful! During play, children are active learners — they make choices, create meaning, and form connections.



Making Choices

Do you want red paint or blue? A rattle or some crinkly paper? To look out the window or into a mirror? Children are naturally curious, and letting them follow their curiosity by making choices means they're guaranteed to be interested in what they're doing.



Making Meaning

Children are natural-born scientists! They experiment, form theories, and test those theories during play. Even if they can't explain the science behind things, children are constantly paying attention to what happens during play and using it to make sense of the world.



Making Connections

The more children play, the more they learn. Do blocks roll the way that balls do? Does this toy squeak like that one? Children make meaning and connections from the experiences they have through play. These connections aren't just passing thoughts— they are real neural pathways in the architecture of a child's brain that help them build skills and knowledge over time.

For more on the importance of play, check out [this article](#) from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

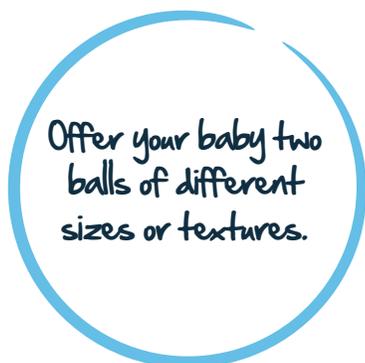


How To Encourage Active Learning During Play

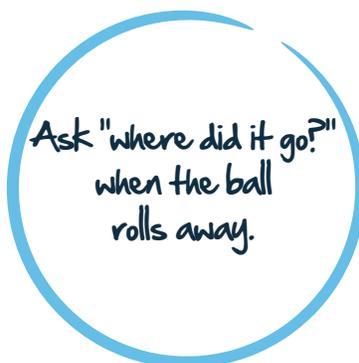
- **Offer choices** like where to play and what to play with.
- **Ask open-ended questions** (not “yes” or “no”) to encourage curiosity about what’s happening during play.
- **Make comparisons** between different materials and experiences.

Look at the example below for how to guide active learning during play. Then come up with some examples of your own!

Offer Choices



Ask Questions



Make Comparisons



Try It! Set your child up for some purposeful play time. Offer them choices at the beginning and throughout the activity. During play, ask questions that encourage them to think about what’s happening and help them make connections between other experiences. **How does play look different to you when you approach it this way?**