



# peek-a-boo

fun games and useful advice on how to play with your baby



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## learning through play

The fun games you play with your baby during their first year are vital to stimulating their social, mental and physical development. It's also great bonding, and fantastic fun for you both.

This advisory card is full of great games to play with your baby, and different ways to stimulate their learning.

## what you may need...

### newborn to 6 months

- soft rattles – for squeezing and shaking
- cot mobile
- baby gym and play mat
- bouncing chair or baby bean bag
- cuddly toys
- soft fabric books
- rattles for chewing and holding
- soft cubes
- bath toys
- CD of music for babies
- indoor swing

### 6 to 12 months baby

- baby mirror
- toy telephone
- baby books – fabric and board books
- building beakers for stacking
- door bouncer/jumper
- first jigsaw puzzle

## playing with your baby

### newborn up to 6 months

- at this age, babies are fascinated by faces – after just one day, a baby will prefer their mother’s face to that of a stranger.
- tiny babies love to have ‘conversations’ – so copy his smiles, frowns and gestures and talk baby talk with him.
- even though they can’t hold things yet, babies still enjoy watching you wiggle a teddy or a rattle for their entertainment.
- look out for ‘cues’ that show that your baby is ready to play – eg face-to-face contact, reaching out hands, turning eyes or head towards you, smiling, babbling and cooing.
- remember, babies of this age need lots of sleep and tire very easily.
- from 4 months your baby will now be reaching out and grabbing things, and will be much more physical too, maybe starting to roll or sit.
- to help your baby become more ‘body aware’, play physical games such as gentle swooshing them into the air, or blowing raspberries on their tummy.
- reading to your baby is very important – he or she will love hearing your voice, and over time will pick up language skills quicker and develop a love of books.
- at this stage babies can’t focus on two things at once – so give them a new toy and they will drop and forget the one they are playing with.

### 6 to 12 months

- sorting and playing comes along tremendously as your baby has more control over their hand to eye coordination.
- allow plenty of time for tummy play, rolling and crawling.
- from baby books to shape sorters and stacking beakers – allow your baby to play with these toys one by one and find out how things work for themselves, with on hand help from you if needed.
- intricate rattles with more parts, loops and textures can be really interesting to your baby now.
- consider toys for the pushchair, highchair and in the car, to help avoid your baby getting bored.
- start bedtime stories from around 6 months (or before) – even if only short and sweet your baby will love the attention.
- baby swimming, tumble tots or baby yoga might also be worth trying at this stage – ask your health visitor for details.

### great games to play

- carry your baby, and dance and sway to music.
- plenty of singing, chatting and making funny faces.
- play gentle tickling games.

### where to find out more

visit [www.mothercare.com.au](http://www.mothercare.com.au) or call 1300 217 700

## soft toys for grabbing



## learning through play



## educational toys



## reading is important

