

PARENT *handout*

24 to 36 Months: Your Child's Motor Development

Practice makes perfect – and your child is spending a lot of time practicing new skills like balancing, catching, building, drawing, and climbing. As she masters one skill, her brain starts to do it automatically, and she can move on to thinking about another skill.

Look for your child to:	What is happening and how you can help:	What I saw:
Catch a big ball.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Have many balls around. Play catch using a big ball and then a smaller ball. > Your child may get frustrated if she can't catch a ball. Praise her efforts and encourage her to continue trying. 	
Jump up with both feet off the floor.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Hold your child's hands and ask her to bend her knees, then jump up. Do it together. She will need lots of practice. > After she can jump, use tape to make shapes on the floor and ask her to jump into and over the shapes. 	
Start to balance on one foot.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Play a game to see who can stand on one foot the longest. 	
Ride a tricycle.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Let your child get comfortable with pushing her feet to move riding toys. Next, have her put her feet on the pedals while you push her so she can feel what it is like to pedal. Then let her try it. > Give her lots of chances to practice. Her brain is becoming organized in ways that let her do more than one thing at a time (like pedal and steer). 	
Walk up and down stairs without holding onto anything. She will start to alternate feet while climbing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Let your child practice going up and down two or three steps. Stay close until you are sure she can do it alone. > Give her plenty of time to practice. Her brain has enough pathways that she doesn't need to think about regular movements like walking. With repetition, climbing stairs will also become a habit. 	
Use her hands to make art and build things.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Give your child play dough so her hands become stronger. Squeeze, poke, and roll the dough to make snakes and balls. Use cookie cutters to cut it. > Give your child blocks so she can make towers and buildings. 	

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Look for your child to:	What is happening and how you can help:	What I saw:
Draw lines and copy a circle.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Show her how to make straight lines and circles on paper. Let her try. > Spend time drawing with chalk, crayons, or finger paints. 	
Start to cut with a scissors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Give her play dough so she can cut it with safety scissors. Then give her thin paper so she can snip the edges off it. > When she can control the scissors well, draw a straight line on paper and have her cut on the line. 	
String and lace.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Show your child how to poke a shoelace through big beads or pasta. Let her try. > Punch large holes around the edge of cards or cereal box fronts, Have her lace yarn or a shoelace through the holes. 	
Screw and unscrew.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Save empty plastic bottles, jars, and lids so she can practice matching the lids and screwing them on and off. 	



REFLECTION

Take time to watch your child.

What are your child's favorite actions to practice and use?

What are some ways you encourage your child to use and exercise her body?

How can you tell your child is working hard on a new skill? What facial expressions does she make?

How can you tell your child is ready to take a break from an activity?