



MOVE,
PLAY
AND GO

Active ideas for babies

Babies need plenty of room to stretch and move. Moving every day helps their bodies, senses and movement skills to develop. At your service make sure you provide babies with the opportunity to practice:

- Tummy time
- Reaching
- Sitting up
- Crawling
- Pulling themselves up

There are fun activity ideas for each of these on the following pages...



Tummy time activities

Exploring surfaces

What you will need:

- Different floor surfaces
- Toys and various objects (see below)

What to do:

- Place baby on a variety of floor surfaces including different textured rugs and mats and vinyl. Use fabric, blankets or towels to create different surfaces.
- A crunchy surface can be made by filling a doonah cover with plastic bags and lightly scrunched newspaper. Remember to always supervise baby with this activity.
- On top of the surfaces place a range of different toys or objects just out of reach. This will encourage baby to try and move towards them and reach out.

Why is this activity good for baby?

This will strengthen baby's head, neck and trunk muscles.

Fun toys for tummy time

What you will need:

- **Picture books** or magazines – flick through these with baby and point to pictures to encourage baby's eyes to move around the page and focus.
- **Mirror** – place this in front of baby so he or she can see their reflection.
- **Balls** – roll balls towards baby and encourage he or she to reach out towards the ball. Try spikey, squidgy and foam balls.
- **Musical/sound making toys** – show baby toys that have buttons that make sounds or wind up musical toys.
- **Colourful and bright toys**
- **Textured toys** – try squidgy balls, bumpy objects, soft toys like teddy bears and clear plastic bottles filled with water and glitter.

Reaching activities

Bubble catch

What you will need:

- Bubble mixture
- Bubble blower

What to do:

- Have baby/toddler sit or stand.
- Blow the bubbles in their direction asking them to watch them.
- Blow more bubbles in their direction and ask them to 'reach' and 'catch' the bubbles.
- Blow them in a different direction and ask them to 'chase' the bubbles or 'stomp' or 'jump' on the bubbles.

Why is this activity good for baby?

This activity will help baby develop hand eye coordination and balance.

Push and reach

What you will need:

- A range of balls or objects that will roll
- A space free from obstacles

What to do:

- Sit opposite baby and roll various balls or objects towards them.
- Talk about what your doing as you do it 'push', 'rolling', 'reach', 'catch'.
- Encourage baby to 'reach' for the ball and then push it back.
- Try rolling containers with beads in them for a different sound, toy cars or different textured balls.

Why is this activity good for baby?

This activity will help baby develop balance, spatial awareness and upper body motor skills.

Sitting up activities

What's in the box?

What you will need:

- An old cardboard shoe box
- Coloured paper or paint
- Various small items

What to do:

- Decorate an old shoe box with coloured paper or paint.
- Cut a hole in the lid.
- Place some small items such as plastic animals, a small ball, bells, puzzle pieces, soft fabric inside.
- Encourage baby to sit and reach into the box to pull an item out.

Why is this activity good for baby?

This activity will help baby develop sitting/stability, balance and reaching and grasping skills.

Aim and throw

What you will need:

- Empty washing basket or box
- Small soft ball or rolled up socks

What to do:

- Sit a washing basket on the floor.
- Encourage baby to sit a short distance from the basket/box.
- Let baby hold the ball or socks.
- Demonstrate throwing the ball into the basket.
- If this is too hard for baby hold the basket in front of baby and encourage baby to practice putting the ball in the basket.

Why is this activity good for baby?

This activity will help baby to develop sitting, stability and balance skills as well as hand eye coordination.

Crawling activities

Tunnel time

What you will need:

- A tunnel or improvise with a sheet over some chairs.
- Balls
- Toys
- Torch

What to do:

- Set up the tunnel and encourage baby to look inside.
- Move up to the other end of the tunnel and call baby's name and wave.
- Encourage baby to crawl through the tunnel.
- Place a toy in the tunnel and ask baby to come to it.
- Roll a ball through the tunnel to baby and encourage baby to push it back.
- Shine a torch in the tunnel and encourage baby to follow the light.

Why is this activity good for baby?

This activity will help baby to develop crawling, sitting, balance and stability skills

Crawl and climb

What you will need:

- Cushions
- Old phone books
- Contact

What to do:

- Place cushions around the room and stack some higher than others.
- Help baby crawl up and over the cushions.
- Add some phone books for baby to crawl and climb over.
- Make these more attractive by covering with colourful contact.
- Encourage baby to crawl up and over these and sit on top of them.

Why is this activity good for baby?

This activity will help baby to develop crawling, sitting, balance, stability and climbing skills.

Move Well Eat Well

Pulling up activities

Exploring heights

What you will need:

- A space with a range of sturdy surfaces
- A variety of toys and objects

What to do:

- Place a variety of toys and objects on tables, benches and chairs around the room.
- Provide toys or objects that can make a sound like; rattles, containers filled with beads or wooden spoons to tap on the surface.
- Show baby the different toys and objects up on the surfaces to encourage them to try to pull themselves up.

Why is this activity good for baby?

This activity will help baby to develop muscles in the legs and balance skills and prepare baby for walking.

Activities adapted from the following resources:

- Be active Play Time 2008. Government of South Australia.

- Raising Children Network 2012. <http://raisingchildren.net.au/newborns/newborns.html>