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When Do Babies Sit Up? (and Other Important 8- to 12-Month Physical Milestones)



Judy Koutsky
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Your little one is starting to get around on her own. Here's what she will learn at this stage and how you can keep her on track.



As a new parent, you may be wondering "When do babies sit up?" Your baby will be conquering that feat, along with a slew of other physical milestones, between 8 and 12 months. You can tune into your baby's development and encourage her along with all kinds of activities.

According to the [American Academy of Pediatrics](#), your baby will learn lots of gross motor skills at this age, and tackling milestones such as crawling, standing and cruising will keep your little one on the move. Enjoy this fun, busy time in your baby's development!

And read [our guide to developmental milestones for kids](#).

Sitting, Crawling, Cruising and Pinching

By around 8 months, you'll have an answer to the question "When do babies sit up?". Many babies are reaching this milestone at this age. Of course, your baby may fall from her seated position sometimes, but she's learning to put her hands out to steady herself. As she practices more, her abdominal muscles will strengthen and she'll be able to hold herself up and reach for toys (and anything in sight!). All this is helping your baby get ready for her next big move: crawling.

While many children do begin to crawl between 7 and 10 months, don't be alarmed if your little one doesn't. "Some babies crawl and some babies go straight to standing and walking, so try not to stress if your baby does not crawl. As long as they are meeting other milestones, they will surprise you one day and take their first steps," says [Dr. Nicole DeVincenzo Garcia](#), a new mom, health educator and pediatrician. What if your baby is crawling in a funny way? "There are many styles of crawling, all of which are normal," adds Dr. Garcia. Of course, when

you see your doctor, let her know if your child isn't crawling or is doing it in a way that may indicate a problem (for example, if she's only using one arm or leg).

Once she's mastered crawling, your baby will be cruising along -- literally. Cruising (walking while holding onto furniture) usually occurs by the 12-month mark. This is where your babyproofing becomes important, notes Dr. Garcia. Your child will initially use furniture to pull herself to a standing position before she starts cruising around the room. Be sure that furniture is secured to the floor or wall to prevent your tot from pulling something down onto herself.

As your baby learns to get around on her own, she'll discover all sorts of new objects. She'll even learn new ways of picking up her finds. "Babies begin to pick up objects by using a raking grasp, in which they use their whole hand. The pincer grasp develops at 9 to 14 months of age," says Dr. Garcia. After your child develops the pincer grasp (the ability to pick up a small object using the thumb and index finger), it's especially important to be on the lookout for choking hazards. "Once babies can pick up small objects with ease, chances are that the small object is going straight into their mouth," says Dr. Garcia. Clean floors and low surfaces often to keep your tot safe.

Encouraging Development and Staying Safe

At this age, kids learn through play, but you don't need expensive toys. Kids are often happiest with a bowl and a pot -- banging can be hours of fun, says [Dr. Gary C. Morchower](#), a Dallas-based pediatrician and author of the book "[1,001 Healthy Baby Answers](#)." Put a toy a few feet in front of your baby and cheer her on as she crawls toward it. You may also stack up pillows, blankets or empty boxes to create a little obstacle course for your little one to practice crawling through.

Dr. Garcia cautions parents to help their child develop in a safe way. "At the 9-month visit, I always review with parents that they should push heavy objects back from the edge of the counter, " she says. "Cabinets, as well as drawers, should have protective mechanisms, because your baby will quickly learn how to open a drawer and climb on top of it. Lastly, avoid the use of long tablecloths or table runners in order to avoid the risk of the child pulling something down onto herself." By taking a few extra steps, you can safely help your baby get moving in this active stage.

Need a hand with your little one? Find a [caregiver on Care.com](#)

And check out this [Overview of Milestones from 8 to 12 Months](#).

Judy Koutsky is the former editorial director of KIWI magazine, a green parenting publication. She was also executive editor of [Parenting.com](#), AOL On Parenting and BabyTalk. Follow her on [Twitter](#).

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