

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY DEVELOPMENTAL MILESTONES

Note: These milestones are meant to be interpreted as fluid, with early developing skills listed toward the beginning of each age group and later developing skills listed toward the end of each age group.

Fine & Visual Motor

Gross Motor

Self-Care

3 MONTHS

- Involuntarily grasps objects with all fingers (2-3 mos.)

- Lifts head momentarily while on belly and turns side to side (0-2 mos.)
- Able to bear weight on forearms (0-2 mos.)
- Holds head in line with middle of body in all play positions (3-4 mos.)
- Rolls from back to side (3-4 mos.)
- No head lag when adult pulls from lie to sit (apparent at 4-5 mos.)

6 MONTHS

- Accurately reaches towards object
- Grasps toy at middle of body, transfers toy between hands, and brings to mouth
- Plays with toys while sitting (5-10 mos.)
- Uses a radial digital grasp¹ on blocks (8 mos.)

- Rolls from belly to back and back to belly (4-6 mos.)
- Brings feet to mouth and hands to feet (5-6 mos.)
- Able to weight bear on forearms and reach forward while on belly (5-6 mos.)
- Sits independently for several minutes (6-7 mos.)
- Crawls forward on belly (6-8 mos.)
- Transitions from belly or back to sitting (7-9 mos.)
- Pushes up onto hands when on belly (7-9 mos.)

- **Feeding:** Holds own bottle during feeding; bangs spoon; drinks from open cup with assistance (6-12 mos.); finger feeds self with pincer grasp (8-11 mos.)

1. SEE IMAGE 1

9 MONTHS

- Attempts to imitate scribble
- Uses an inferior pincer grasp² to pick up small items
- Visually tracks with eyes horizontally, vertically, and in a circular motion (9-10 mos.)

- Crawls on hands and knees (8-10 mos.)
- Pulls to stand at furniture (9-11 mos.) and walks around while holding on (10-12 mos.)
- Stands alone momentarily (10-12 mos.)
- Walks with hands held (10-14 mos.)

- **Feeding:** Drinks from a straw (9-18 mos.)

2. SEE IMAGE 2

12 MONTHS

- Plays with toys at middle of body
- Points with index finger
- Uses a refined pincer grasp³ to pick up small items
- Scribbles on paper
- Holds writing utensil with a fist (palmar supinate) grasp⁴ (1-1.5 yrs.)

- Climbs up stairs on hands and knees (10-15 mos.)
- Walks independently (12-15 mos.)
- Climbs down stairs backwards (12-15 mos.)
- Squats to pick up toys (12-18 mos.)
- Flings a ball (14-18 mos.)

- **Feeding:** Uses spoon appropriately though messy; holds and drinks from open cup (12-18 mos.)
- **Dressing:** Cooperates with dressing; takes off shoes and socks (1-2 yrs.)
- **Grooming:** Tolerates bathing, diaper changes, and grooming activities (1-2 yrs.)
- **Toileting:** Expresses discomfort when diaper is soiled

3. SEE IMAGE 3
4. SEE IMAGE 4

1.5 YEARS

- Uses two hands during play
- Turns cardboard pages of book

- Runs stiffly
- Walks up and down stairs while holding on (18-24 mos.)
- Climbs on jungle gym, slides, and furniture (18-24 mos.)
- Kicks ball forward (18-24 mos.)

- **Feeding:** Uses a spoon with spillage
- **Dressing:** Puts on socks; pushes arms and legs through holes of clothing

2 YEARS

- Imitates vertical, horizontal and circular marks
- Completes 3-piece insert puzzle
- Holds and snips with scissors
- Uses a digital pronate grasp⁵ on a writing utensil (2-3 yrs.)

- Begins to throw and kick ball with little accuracy
- Jumps down from step
- Walks up and down stairs without support (2-2.5 yrs.)
- Catches large ball against chest (2-3 yrs.)
- Rides tricycle (2 - 4 yrs.)

- **Feeding:** Good use of spoon; beginning to use fork
- **Dressing:** Able to remove coat when unfastened; helps pull down pants; locates armholes in shirt
- **Grooming:** Participates in bathing self; assists in brushing teeth; may see some resistance to grooming (i.e. face/hair washing, toothbrushing, nail cutting) (2-3 yrs.)
- **Toileting:** Begins to show interest in toileting

5. SEE IMAGE 5

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Fine & Visual Motor

Gross Motor

Self-Care

2.5 YEARS

- Strings beads
- Cuts across a 6 inch piece of paper

3 YEARS

- Cuts on a straight line 6 inches long (3-3.5 yrs.)
- Copies a vertical line, horizontal line, and circle

3.5 YEARS

- Cuts out a circle (3.5-4 yrs.)
- Uses a static tripod grasp⁶ on a writing utensil (3.5-4 yrs.)

6. SEE IMAGE 6

4 YEARS

- Colors within the lines
- Cuts out a square (4-5 yrs.)
- Copies a cross, diagonal lines, a square, some numbers/letters, and may copy name (4-5 yrs.)
- Completes puzzles up to 10 pieces (4-5 yrs.)

4.5 YEARS

- Uses a dynamic tripod grasp⁷ on a writing utensil (4.5-5 yrs.)

7. SEE IMAGE 7

5 YEARS

- Draws a stick figure
- Completes puzzles up to 20 pieces (5-6 yrs.)
- Copies a triangle, prints own name, and copies most lowercase and uppercase letters (5-6 yrs.)

6 YEARS

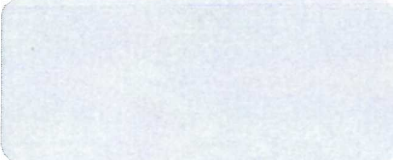
- Cuts a variety of shapes (6-7 yrs.)



- Walks up stairs alternating feet (3-3.5 yrs.)
- Jumps, climbs, and runs (3-4 yrs.)
- Jumps with two feet off floor
- Jumps over objects (3-5 yrs.)

- Stands on one leg for 5 seconds
- Walks down stairs with alternating feet (3.5-4 yrs.)
- Throws ball and hits target (3.5-4.5 yrs.)
- Hops on one foot (3.5-5 yrs.)

- Jumps forward
- Gallops proficiently (4-4.5 yrs.)
- Catches ball with two hands without trapping against body (4-6 yrs.)



- Stands on each foot for 10 seconds
- Skips proficiently (5-6 yrs.)
- Kicks with accuracy (5-6 yrs.)

- Runs with speed and endurance (6-10 yrs.)
- Jumps, hops, and skips with endurance and for long distances (6-10 yrs.)
- Throws ball well at long distances (6-10 yrs.)
- Catches ball with accuracy (6-10 yrs.)

- **Feeding:** Proficiently uses a fork
- **Dressing:** Pulls down pants with an elastic waistband; helps with putting on socks, coat, and shirt; unbuttons large buttons
- **Grooming:** Washes hands independently
- **Toileting:** Indicates need to go to bathroom; can wipe after urinating

- **Dressing:** Puts on front open shirt or jacket; puts on shirt, shoes, and socks with little assistance; buttons large buttons; zips/unzips after engaged
- **Toileting:** Goes to the bathroom independently; may need assistance wiping after a bowel movement

- **Dressing:** Can find front of clothing items; manages snaps and hooks; unzips zipper completely; can button buttons; unbuckles shoe or belt; puts on mittens; dresses with supervision

- **Dressing:** Removes pullover garment; buckles shoes and belt; engages and zips zipper; puts on shoes and socks with correct orientation
- **Grooming:** Requires supervision for brushing teeth and grooming; requires assistance for bathing to manage water, and wash hair and body thoroughly (4-5 yrs.)
- **Toileting:** Independent with toileting, washing hands, and clothing management (4-5 yrs.)

- **Dressing:** Able to weave belt through belt loops

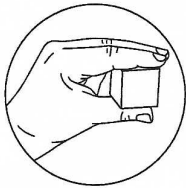
- **Dressing:** Ties and unties knots; dresses without supervision
- **Grooming:** Brushes teeth and grooms with supervision; bathes with assistance to set up water, wash hair, and supervision for safety; may need cues for thoroughness (5-6 yrs.)

- **Feeding:** Proficient use of knife
- **Dressing:** Manages fasteners on the back of garments; ties bows; ties shoes

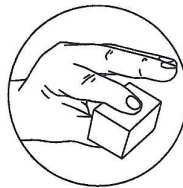
OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY DEVELOPMENTAL MILESTONES

Image Key:

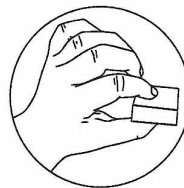
1. Radial Digital Grasp



2. Inferior Pincer Grasp



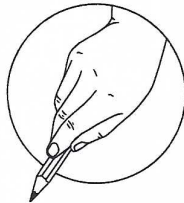
3. Refined Pincer Grasp



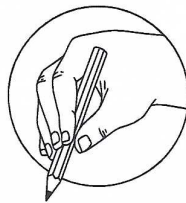
4. Fisted (Palmar Supinate) Grasp



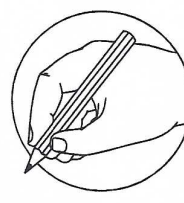
5. Digital Pronate Grasp



6. Static Tripod Grasp



7. Dynamic Tripod Grasp



Signs Your Child May Benefit From Occupational Therapy:

Fine Motor

- Does not have a consistent hand preference by age 5
- Not using two hands together during play, or to complete activities such as stringing beads
- Uncoordinated, jerky, or slow motor movements
- Drooling, or significant mouth movement, when completing tasks
- Arms and hands seem weak or are stiff

Gross Motor

- Falls frequently when walking past 1.5-2 years of age
- Continues to walk on toes, after 6 months of walking independently
- W-sitting on the floor
- Slouched posture when sitting on floor or at table
- Complaints of pain and fatigue
- Excessively clumsy
- Floppy or stiff movements

Sensory

- Decreased engagement in, and attention to, age-appropriate activities
- Does not enjoy being held or physical touch from others
- Demonstrates risky or unsafe behaviors
- Dislikes a variety of textures (environmental, clothing, etc.)
- Fearful when feet are lifted off the ground, or when head is tipped backwards
- Difficulty self-soothing; frequent or long temper tantrums
- Does not enjoy a variety of movements (spinning, swinging, bouncing, etc.), or seeks these movements excessively
- Decreased eye contact and social interaction with others
- Reacts strongly to loud noises
- Picky eating
- Difficulty transitioning to new environments or activities
- Frequent mouthing of non-food objects past 1.5 years
- Challenges navigating environment without bumping into items or falling

Sources: Occupational Therapy for Children and Adolescents. 7th Ed. 2015. | TherapyEd's National Occupational Therapy Certification Exam Review & Study Guide. 8th Ed. 2017. | Occupational Therapy Evaluation for Children: A Pocket Guide. 2nd Ed. 2013. | Pathways.org. | Peabody Developmental Motor Scales (PDMS-2). 2nd Ed. | Physical Therapy for Children. 4th Ed. 2011. | YourKidsTable.com (<https://yourkidstable.com/eatingfeeding-milestones-for-babies-and/>)