

# Speech & Language Milestones

## 12-24 months



By age 2, most children have about 50 words and begin using two-word phrases like "more juice."  
If your child isn't doing this, it might be worth consulting a speech-language pathologist.

- **12-15 months**
  - Demonstrates use of objects (e.g., brushes teeth, feeds others).
  - Shakes head "no."
  - Says 8-10 words spontaneously.
  - Follows 1-step directions during play.
  - Points to 2 action words in pictures.
  - Understands a few prepositions (in, on).
  - Makes 3 animal sounds.
- **15-18 months**
  - Plays independently.
  - Hands a toy to an adult for help.
  - Asks "What's that?"
  - Follows directions for 2 objects (e.g., "Get \_\_ & \_\_").
  - Identifies objects by category (e.g., food, animal, clothes).
  - Says 15 words meaningfully.
- **18-21 months**
  - Uses two turns during conversation.
  - Indicates when pants are wet.
  - Leads caregiver to desired object.
  - Plays with a group of toys (e.g., farm animals).
  - Engages in pretend play (e.g., animals eating, caring for baby).
  - Uses single words frequently.
  - Repeats a few phrases (e.g., "What's that?").
- **21-24 months**
  - Chooses 1 object from a group of 5.
  - Uses 50 different words.
  - Puts toys away on request.
  - Follows a 2-step related direction.
  - \*By 24 months, the average vocabulary is 50-300 words. 50 words by age 2 is the milestone. Meaning, we become concerned if we don't see at least 50 words.

**What to do:**

**If under 3, you can and are encouraged to inquire about early intervention services in your area (SoonerStart).**

**Contact pediatrician to discuss milestones and referral to a Speech-Language Pathologist for a comprehensive evaluation.**

**Ensure your child has a hearing test, as hearing loss can impact speech and language development. Ear infections and non-infected fluid build up in the ear should also be considered.**

**Encourage communication at home through interactive play, reading together, and using gestures and signs if verbal skills are limited.**