



Movement Milestones: Babies 4 to 7 Months

Once your baby reaches about four to seven months old, get ready for some exciting movement milestones. Some of the big challenges they're working on at this age include rolling over both ways, for example, and sitting up!

Your baby will begin to master skills like these their back and neck muscles gradually get stronger. They're also developing better balance in their trunk, head, and neck.

First, they'll raise their head and hold it up while lying on their stomach. Encourage this by placing them on their stomach and extending their arms forward while they are awake. Then, get their attention with an attractive toy. Use it to coax them to hold their head up and look at you. This also is a good way to check their hearing and vision.



Getting ready to roll over

Once they're able to lift their head, your baby will start pushing up on their arms and arching their back to lift their chest. This strengthens their upper body. This is key to keeping steady and upright when sitting. At the same time, your baby may rock on their stomach, kick their legs, and "swim" with their arms. These skills, which usually appear at about five months, are needed for rolling over and crawling. By the end of this period, they'll probably be able to roll over in both directions. However, the time frame varies for different babies. Most children roll from stomach to back before the opposite direction, although doing it in reverse is perfectly normal.

Working on sitting up

Once your baby can raise their chest, help them practice sitting up. Hold them up or support their back with pillows as they learn to balance themselves. They'll soon learn to "tripod," which is leaning forward as they extends their arms to balance. Interesting toys in front of them will give them a focus as they gains their balance. It will be some time before they can get themselves to a sitting position without your help. But by six to eight months, if you position them upright, they'll stay sitting without leaning forward on their arms. Then they can discover all the wonderful things the world has to offer from this new vantage point.

Gaining more control of hands & feet

By the fourth month, your baby is also getting better control of their hands. For example, most babies can easily bring interesting objects to their mouth now. During their next four months, they'll begin to use their fingers and thumbs in a mitten- or claw-like grip or raking motion. They'll manage to pick up many things.

Your baby won't develop the pincer grasp with index finger and thumb until about nine months old. But by the sixth to eighth month, they'll learn to transfer objects from hand to hand, and turn and twist them. Be sure to remove any objects from his environment that he could choke on or injure himself with.

As their physical coordination improves, your baby will discover new parts of their body. Lying on their back, they can now grab their feet and toes and bring them to their mouth. While being diapered, they may reach down to touch their genitals. When sitting up, he may slap his knee or thigh. Through these explorations he'll discover many new and interesting sensations. They'll start to understand the function of body parts.

When you place their feet on the floor, they may curl their toes and stroke the surface, use his feet and legs to practice "bouncing," or bounce up and down. Watch out! These are all preparations for the next major milestones: crawling and sitting.

Toys Appropriate for Your 4- to 7-Month-Old

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- Unbreakable plastic or mylar mirror
- Soft balls, including some that make soft, pleasant sounds
- Textured toys that make sounds
- Toys that have fingerholds
- Musical toys, such as bells, maracas, tambourines (make sure none of the parts can become loose)
- See-through rattles that show the pieces making the noise
- Old magazines with bright pictures for you to show him
- Baby books with board, cloth, or vinyl pages

More information

- [Simple Ways to Entertain & Boost Your Baby's Development at Home \(/English/health-issues/conditions/COVID-19/Pages/Simple-Ways-to-Boost-Your-Babys-Development-at-Home.aspx\)](#)
- [The Power of Play: How Fun & Games Help Children Thrive \(/English/ages-stages/toddler/fitness/Pages/Caution-Children-at-Play.aspx\)](#)

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