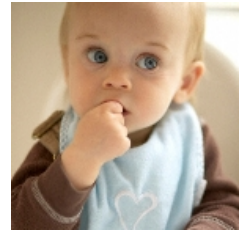




Self-Feeding

At twelve months, your baby was just getting used to drinking from a cup and feeding himself with a spoon and his fingers. By fifteen months, he'll be much more in control, getting food into his mouth with relative ease when he wants to and flinging it about the room when that seems like more fun. He'll be able to fill his spoon and get it to his mouth consistently, although occasionally it will tip the wrong way and spill at the last second.



Unbreakable dishes, cups, and glasses are essential, since they, too, may go flying when he's bored with their contents. Such behavior should be discouraged by a firm reprimand and replacement of the utensils in the proper location. If these behaviors persist, consider taking him out of the high chair and waiting until the next meal.

By eighteen months, your toddler can use a spoon, fork, and unbreakable glass or cup when he wants to, but he may not always want to. There will be times when he'd rather finger paint with his pudding or turn his plate into a soaring airplane.

Some children get over this chaotic eating behavior by their second birthday, at which time they actually may become upset when they spill or get even a little smudge of food on their hands. Others, however, will remain very messy eaters well into their third year.

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