

# Games you can play with your Baby

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(from Playgroup Victoria, [www.PLAYGROUP.org.au](http://www.PLAYGROUP.org.au))



Babies busily explore and experiment with everything around them. They see, touch, taste, feel and hear to discover new information. As they discover new skills they repeat and practice them until they are mastered.

Parents help by being a playmate and providing a variety of safe and developmentally play experiences.

## Music play

- Sing, chant, hum or whistle simple nursery rhymes. Add finger movements as you sing.
- Play different style of music.
- Offer shakers, rattles and musical toys.
- Make sounds with safe household items like spoons and saucepans.

## Floor play

- Lie baby on his back to stretch, kick and develop hands skills. Tummy time strengthens back, neck, shoulder and arm muscles and can help develop head control.
- Put a blanket on the floor and set up texture-rich play space for your baby to explore: a rough towel, satin sheet, lamb's wool rug or a patchwork rug made with different fabrics.

## Everyday play

- Turn everyday routines into opportunities for your baby to play, learn and build relationships.

- Massage, chat or sing at nappy change.
- Talk at meals times.
- Include baby in family activities.
- Chat and point out things of interest while outside or shopping.
- Have a special song or rhyme for putting him in the car seat.
- Sing a lullaby at sleep time.
- It is not necessary to buy expensive toys to satisfy your baby's need for new things to explore. Offer simple objects from around the home, even containers you would normally throw away.

### **Language play**

- Making and listening to sounds is the beginning of language. Every sound is new to a tiny baby: some will soothe, some will frighten. Let him hear different sounds by varying the tone of your voice.
- Start a conversation with your baby. Make eye contact then talk. If he replies, repeat his sounds or talk back.
- Name familiar objects.
- Use his name often in conversation, songs and storytelling.

### **Quiet play**

- Quiet relaxing play is as important to your child's well-being as social and physically active play. Babies need the opportunity to babble to themselves, lie quietly watching a mobile, look at themselves in a cot mirror or cuddle a favourite toy.
- By learning to read your baby's cues you will know when he needs your company and when he is content to be alone to set the pace of his own play and develop concentration.

This article is part of PIRI's Community HUGS group session handouts. If you would like more information on Community HUGS and how to join a group see [piri.org.au](http://piri.org.au)