

## Parent Resource

Title : Developing Thinking Skills From 12 to 24 Months



Toddlers are little scientists. They are eager to figure out how everything works. Find strategies to support the development of your toddler's thinking skills during this fun time.

Toddlers are eager to figure out how everything works. They do this through “experiments.” They might throw a ball to the ground and see that it bounces, then throw a doll to see what it will do. They also learn to use objects as tools—for example, using a stick to try to get an out-of-reach toy. And their growing memory takes on an important role in helping them learn. For example, they imitate what they see others do, even hours or days later. So watch your toddler hold a cell phone up to her ear and have a chat, grab your briefcase and put on your shoes, or even pick up the newspaper and “read” it just like you!

## What Can You Do to Support Your Baby's Thinking Skills?

Offer your toddler lots of tools for experimenting—toys and objects he can shake, bang, open and close, or take apart in some way to see how they work. Explore with water while taking a bath; fill and dump sand, toys, blocks. Take walks and look for new objects to explore—pine cones, acorns, rocks, and leaves. At the supermarket, talk about what items are hard, soft, big, small, etc.

Play pretend with your toddler. When you see her cuddling her stuffed animal, you might say: "Bear loves it when you cuddle him. Do you think he's hungry?" Then bring out some pretend food. These interactions will help grow your child's imagination.

Provide the support your child needs to solve a problem but don't do it for him. If he's trying to make a sandcastle but the sand won't stick, show him how to add water but don't make the castle for him. The more he does, the more he learns.

Encourage your child to take on some self-care activities—combing hair, brushing teeth, or washing up. She'll learn how familiar objects work and develop confidence.

Give your child the chance to help around the house. He can wipe down the counter with a towel or sponge, or help bag leaves. These activities give your toddler many chances to solve problems: Is the spill all wiped up? How do you smash the leaves down to make them fit into the bag? They also make your toddler feel helpful which builds his self-esteem.

Give your child choices. Hold up two different pairs of pajamas and say: "Do you want the rocket ship or the motorcycle pajamas tonight?" Ask your child to pick out which story she wants to hear from a selection of a few books you have chosen.

Add a new twist. If your child loves pushing buttons over and over again, find other things he can push to make something happen, like the button on a flashlight. This will expand his thinking skills as he sees how the same action can have a different outcome.

Make everyday moments chances to categorize. Have your child help with the laundry. She can put all the socks in one pile and shirts in another. Go for a nature walk and collect leaves, pine cones, and rocks in a bag. Then sort them when you get home.

Source: Zero to three

Link:

<https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/1061-developing-thinking-skills-from-12-to-24-months>