

Early Communication Milestones

12 months old

Understanding:

- Understand about 10 words
- Recognise gestures (e.g. hello and goodbye)
- Recognise familiar people and objects (e.g. mummy, blankie and teddy)

Speaking:

- Use sounds, gestures, and a few words
- Make eye contact
- Copy sounds and noises

15 months old

Understanding:

- Understand 50 words
- Follow simple instructions (e.g. "throw the ball")
- Point to familiar objects when named

Speaking:

- Say 6-20 single words
- Use objects in pretend play (e.g. hold toy phone and say "hello?")
- Use gestures (e.g. shaking head for no)

2 years old

Understanding:

- Follow simple two part instructions (e.g. "give me the ball and the car")
- Respond to wh- questions (e.g. "what is it/where is it?")
- Understand prepositions (e.g. in, on, under)

Speaking:

- Say more than 50 words including "mine" "my" and "no"
- Put two words together (e.g. "bye teddy")
- Use most vowel sounds and a variety of consonant sounds (m,n,p,k,g,h,w,t,d)

3 years old

Understanding:

- Follow complex two part instructions (e.g. "give me the teddy and throw the ball")
- Have knowledge of different colours
- Understand the concepts of 'same' and 'different'
- Sort items into groups (e.g. toys vs. food)

Speaking:

- Use four to five words in a sentence to have a short conversation
- Use a variety of words to describe names, actions and locations
- Ask questions using 'what' 'where' and 'who'
- Talk about something in the past, but may use -ed a lot ('he goed there')

4 years old

Understanding:

- Answers wh- questions relating to a story they have heard
- Understand some numbers
- Show awareness that some words start and finish the same sounds

Speaking:

- Use "and" "but" and "because" to make longer sentences
- Describe recent events using personal pronouns (e.g. he/she, me/you)
- Count to five

5 years old

Understanding:

- Follow three part instructions (e.g. put on your shoes, get your bag and line up)
- Understand time related words (e.g. "before" "after" "now" and "later")
- Recognise letters and sounds

Speaking:

- Take turns in increasingly long conversations
- Tell stories with a beginning, middle and end
- Use past and future verbs correctly (e.g. "went" "will")
- Use most speech sounds except 's' 'r' 'l' 'th'.

