



What's the best way to share books with your 1-year-old? Use the following tips, which cover 3 stages in your baby's life:

- **12 to 14 months**
- **15 to 17 months**
- **18 to 24 months**

One-year-olds are “on the go” learning to walk, run, climb, and jump. One-year-olds are starting to point to objects of interest and learning to name them too. They have developed their personality. Some are quiet and shy. Others are active and fearless. One-year-olds are very attached to their parents and caregivers. Looking at and talking about books with 1-year-olds strengthen all of these abilities.

One-year-olds often have very strong preferences and wishes. Never force your child to share a book together when your child makes it clear that he does not wish to do so. Instead, find another activity you can do together, like talking, singing, or pretend play, that he may find more interesting.

For each age range, there are examples of what your child can do and tips you can do to help you share and enjoy books with your 1-year-old.

Sharing Books With Your 12- To 14-Month-Old

- Babies enjoy sharing books with you, the most important person in their world.
- They love the special one-on-one attention you get when you read, talk, sing, and play with them.
- This special time strengthens your bond with your baby.
- It teaches her how important she is to you. It increases her self-confidence.
- Looking at, reading, and talking about books with babies help teach them to talk.
- Reading books with babies helps them get ready to listen and learn in school.
- Set aside a few quiet minutes every day for sharing books together, perhaps as part of your regular bedtime routine.

TALK



READ



SING



FAMILY RESOURCE: Sharing Books With Your 1-Year-Old



- This time should be free of TV, texting, and other distractions.
- Regular bedtime routines help prevent struggles at bedtime.
- At the end of your routine, teach your baby how to fall asleep alone by putting her in bed sleepy but awake without a bottle or sippy cup. This helps prevent night waking and dental problems.
- This may become the best time of your day!

12- to 14-month olds can:

- Choose a favorite book to read with you.
- Point to pictures in a book they want you to look at, too.
- Explore a book by putting it in their mouth, turning it upside down, opening or closing it, or dropping it and listening for the sound this makes.
- Copy your reactions to the book you are enjoying together.
- Pay attention to a book for a few minutes at a time, until they learn how much fun it is to read with you.

You can:

- Find a quiet, cozy place to cuddle up together with a few sturdy books.
- Name the pictures your baby is pointing to or looking at.
- Follow your baby's interest by helping her turn pages.
- Read with joy and enjoyment. Use different voices for different characters.
- Ask your child questions she can answer by pointing. You can say, *Where's the doggie?* or *Where's the happy baby?* or *Who says meow?*
- Imitate the sounds your child makes while looking at a picture. Then add a very short phrase, such as, *Moo, the cow says moo.*

Sharing Books With Your 15- To 17-Month-Old

- Babies enjoy sharing books with you, the most important person in their world.
- They love the special one-on-one attention they get when you read, talk, sing, and play with them.
- This special time strengthens your bond with your baby.
- It teaches him how important he is to you. It increases his self-confidence.
- Looking at, reading, and talking about books with babies help teach them to talk.
- Reading books with babies helps them get ready to listen and learn in school.
- Set aside a few quiet minutes every day for sharing books together, perhaps as part of your regular bedtime routine.
- This time should be free of TV, texting, and other distractions.



FAMILY RESOURCE: Sharing Books With Your 1-Year-Old



- Regular bedtime routines started with babies help prevent struggles at bedtime.
- At the end of your routine, teach your baby how to fall asleep alone by putting him in bed sleepy but awake without a sippy cup. This helps prevent night waking and dental problems.
- This may become the best time of your day!

15- to 17-month-olds can:

- Choose a favorite book to read with you.
- Look at familiar pictures in books and make their own sounds for some of them.
- Point to an animal and make that animal's sound.
- Pay attention to a book for a few minutes at a time, until they learn how much fun it is to read with you.
- Laugh, squeal, and point while enjoying a favorite book with you.

You can:

- Find a quiet, cozy place to cuddle up together with a few sturdy books.
- Let your toddler choose which books to read with you.
- Read the same book again if he wants this. Toddlers learn by repeating things over and over again.
- Name and say a few words about the pictures your child is pointing to or looking at.
- Read with joy and enjoyment. Use different voices for different characters.
- Copy the sounds or words he says while looking at a picture. Then add a few more words like: *Yes, eyes. The girl has pretty eyes.*
- Make up games while looking at pictures like: *Where's the girl's nose? Where's Mommy's nose? Where's your nose?*
- Name and then demonstrate actions or emotions in a book, such as: *Laughing. Look at the boy laughing.* Then laugh with your toddler!

Sharing Books With Your 18- To 23-Month-Old

- Toddlers enjoy sharing books with you, the most important person in their world.
- They love the special one-on-one attention they get when you read, talk, sing, and play with them.
- This special time strengthens your bond with your toddler.
- It teaches her how important she is to you. It builds her confidence and interest in learning.
- Looking at, reading, and talking about books with toddlers help teach them to talk.



FAMILY RESOURCE: Sharing Books With Your 1-Year-Old



- Reading books with toddlers helps them get ready to listen and learn in school.
- Set aside a few quiet minutes every day for sharing books together, perhaps as part of your regular bedtime routine.
- This time should be free of TV, texting, and other distractions.
- Regular bedtime routines started with young children help prevent struggles at bedtime.
- At the end of your routine, teach your toddler how to fall asleep alone by putting her in bed sleepy but awake without a sippy cup. This helps prevent night waking and dental problems.
- This may become the best time of your day!

18- to 23-month-olds can:

- Choose a book to share and tell you they want *More book* or *'Nother book*.
- Point to a favorite picture and say a word or two about it.
- Look at familiar animals and make their sounds.
- Finish some sentences from books they know very well, such as: *Happy faces. Sad... (faces) or Twinkle twinkle little... (star)*.
- Enjoy a trip to your local public library for story time or to borrow some books.

You can:

- Find a quiet, cozy place to cuddle up together with some sturdy books.
- Use reading together as a way to calm and comfort your child.
- Read the same book again if she wants this. Toddlers learn by repeating things over and over again.
- Help your toddler understand by speaking in slow, short sentences and waiting for her to take a turn talking.
- Make up games while looking at pictures, like: *Where's the girl's nose? Where's Mommy's nose? Where's your nose?*
- Copy the name your toddler gives a picture and then add a comment like: *Yes, a plane! The plane is flying. The plane is flying in the sky.*
- Read with joy and enjoyment. Use different voices for different characters.
- Help your child pretend to be a character in a book. You can pretend to feed a baby or be puppies, barking and running after each other.

Adapted from AAP Literacy Promotion Toolkit Web site (2008), Pamela C High, MD, FAAP, Natalie Golova, MD, FAAP, Marita Hopmann, PhD, and the AAP Council on Early Childhood, 2014





Other family resources related to early literacy and early learning include the following:

- Helping Your Child Learn to Read
- Sharing Books With Your Baby up to Age 11 Months
- Sharing Books With Your 2-Year-Old
- Sharing Books With Your Preschooler
- Sharing Books With Your School-Age Child
- The Secret to a Smarter Baby
- Why It Is Never Too Early to Start Reading With Your Baby

Pediatric Professional ePubs in this AAP series include the following:

- Evidence Supporting Early Literacy and Early Learning
- Finding the Right Book for Every Child
- Selecting Books for Your Program
- What Every Pediatric Professional Can Do to Promote Early Literacy and Early Learning

Please visit aap.org/literacy for further information about resources mentioned within this publication and additional resources on early literacy.

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