

# Gross Motor Skills Development for 6-12 Month Olds

## What Are Gross Motor Skills?

- Gross motor movements involve large muscle groups, such as the muscles of the arms, legs, and trunk. Gross motor skills are needed for actions like walking, running, reaching, and even just sitting upright. It is important for children to develop gross motor skills because they aid in a child's awareness of where their body is in space and many of the skills act as precursors to more intricate movements, known as fine motor skills.

(Pathways, 2021)

## What Should You do if Your Baby is Not Reaching Milestones?

- If you notice that your baby is not reaching developmental milestones on time, it is important to speak with your pediatrician to determine the cause of the delay. This could indicate a developmental condition, but many times there is nothing to worry about because there is a lot of variation in when babies meet these milestones.

(Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2021)

## What Gross Motor Milestones Should a Baby be Reaching?

### - At 6 Months a Baby Can:

- Roll from back to belly
- Bring feet to mouth while laying on back
- Sit with some support
- Reach for Toys

### - At 9 Months a Baby Can:

- Sit without support
- Turn head to watch moving objects
- Creep and crawl

### - At 12 Months a Baby Can:

- Maintain balance while sitting and throwing objects
- Pull themselves up to stand
- Stand alone and take several independent steps

(Pathways, 2021)

# Gross Motor Activities For 6-12 Month Olds

Developing your baby's gross motor skills can be both easy and fun! You just need to know where to start. Here is a list of simple activities and games you can play with your little one to make them a gross motor expert!

## Furniture Follow

- For this activity you will need a couch, or any furniture that is sturdy, and has a flat surface as well as your baby's favorite toy. Help your baby pull themselves to stand while holding onto the couch. Once standing, push toys around the couch and have your baby follow you while still holding onto furniture to cruise around. This activity will help the baby's strength, endurance, and coordination as well as encourage independence while walking.

## Baby Barrow

- Begin by having the baby lie on their belly. Then, gently lift the baby by their hips off the floor as the baby's hands remain on the ground. Allow them to extend their arms to help support their upper body. As a safety precaution, you can place your hand on the baby's shoulder to prevent falling forward too much. With this activity, the baby's upper body will be strengthened as they put weight on their arms.

## Ball Chase

- For this activity you will need a soft ball. Sit or lay the baby on the floor. Roll the ball across the room and encourage the baby to crawl towards the ball. Encouraging the baby with words such as "ready, set, go!" This activity helps strengthen the baby's core, arms, and legs.

## References

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2021, July 28). *Concerned about your child's development?*. <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/concerned.html>.  
Pathways.org. (2021, April 20). *Developmental milestones for all ages*. <https://pathways.org/all-ages/milestones/>.