Language Milestones Checklist
What is receptive language?

Receptive language is the ability to understand information. It is the act of comprehending language.

What is expressive language?

Expressive language is the ability to communicate your wants and needs. It is the act of communicating thoughts and ideas to others.
# Communication Checklist

## Receptive Language

### 3-6 MONTHS
- Watches a person’s face when they’re talking
- Turns head to locate sounds
- Recognizes familiar objects/people (family, bottle, bed)

### 6-9 MONTHS
- Begins to recognize words with eye gaze
- Understands gestures
- Looks at objects/families/pictures when named
- Responds to “no”

## Expressive Language

### 3-6 MONTHS
- Cooing
- Smiles in response to smile/voice
- Attempts to imitate sounds/facial expressions
- Starts laughing
- Responds to being spoken to by making sounds

### 6-9 MONTHS
- Enjoys social interaction with familiar people
- Vocal play
- Babbling (p, b, m, n, t, d, y)
- Attempts to imitate gestures
- Tries to make word-like sounds
# Communication Checklist

**Receptive Language**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>9-12 MONTHS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□ Responds to “come here”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Searches for hidden/dropped item</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Understands simple command with gestures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Looks at correct pictures in book when named</td>
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<tr>
<td>□ Responds to own name</td>
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<tr>
<td>□ Follows simple commands with body (wave, clap)</td>
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<tr>
<td>□ Gives item when asked</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Responds to simple questions with searching movements (e.g., looks around when you ask, “Where’s Dada?”)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Expressive Language**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>9-12 MONTHS</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□ Says a few words around 1 yr</td>
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<tr>
<td>□ Tries to imitate words/repeats sounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Uses simple gestures “clap” or “no”</td>
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<tr>
<td>□ Responds to being spoken to by making sounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Enjoys playing games like “peek-a-boo” and listening to songs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Babbles or makes sounds with changes in pitch/tone</td>
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<tr>
<td>□ Says first word (“Mama”, “Dada”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Looks toward an item they want</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Imitates functional play</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Shouts or coughs to gain attention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Points/reaches to what they want</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Waves hi/bye</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Communication Checklist

Receptive Language

12-18 MONTHS

- Follows one-step commands like, “go get the ball”
- Points to wanted/recognized object
- Identifies 1-3 body parts
- Identify 2 or more objects in book
- Demonstrates functional play (using more than one toy approp.)
- Copies simple pretend play (feed the baby)
- Follows one-step verbal commands without gestures (sit down)

Expressive Language

12-18 MONTHS

- Imitates a word
- Jargon (sentence like intonation
- Vocalizes with gestures
- Answers basic “what” questions
- Protests by saying no/shake head
- Names a few animal sounds
- Says between 10-50 words by 18 months
- Points to show items
Communication Checklist

**Receptive Language**

- Follows commands with spatial concepts, “put it IN the box”
- Responds to yes/no questions
- Understands verbs (eat, sleep)
- Follows commands w/out gestures (you only say the command)
- Listens to simple stories during reading time
- Points to named items
- Imitates others’ behaviors and gestures

**Expressive Language**

- Says between 10 words at 18 months - 300 words at 24 months
- Starts to combine 2 words together
- Names familiar objects
- Says own name
- Asks, “what’s that”?
- Imitates words more frequently and clearly
- Starts to answer basic questions verbally

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Communication Checklist

Receptive Language

24-30 MONTHS

- Listens to a 5 minute story
- Follows 2 step related commands
- Identifies actions in pictures
- Understands pronouns “I” & “You”
- Understands quantity words like “one” and “all”
- Consistently points to named objects in a book

Expressive Language

24-30 MONTHS

- Uses between 50 words (minimum at 24 months) to 500 words around 30 months
- Starts using plurals & -ing verbs
- Uses a few pronouns (“my” or “I”)
- Combines 2-3 words together
- Answers what and where ?’s
- Begins to ask what/where ?’s
Communication Checklist

30-36 MONTHS

- Listens to a 10-15 minute story
- Follows 2-3 step commands
- Understand adjectives “big”/”little”
- Understands many pronouns
- Points to 10 objects described by use (“Point to the one you can EAT.”)

30-36 MONTHS

- Uses between 250 words to 1000 words around 36 months
- Uses past tense -ed verbs (walked)
- Uses a variety of pronouns
- Combines 3+ words together
- Consistently answers wh- ?’s
- Consistently asks wh- ?’s
- Verbally expresses emotions
- Names most familiar things & people
- Can hold a basic conversation by 36 months
Not as many checks as you’d like?

Take a deep breath! We’ve got you covered.

Our two online courses use evidence-based, practical strategies to help your child meet their communication milestones.

We believe YOU are the best person to get your child talking (after all, you’re with them the most, right?)!

Click the button below to find a class, use the strategies as a part of your every day routines, and get your child meeting their milestones.

*If your child is not meeting milestones we also recommend that you reach out to your child’s pediatrician and consult with a certified speech-language pathologist.