

HANDY CLAP

Materials

- Soft blanket or an infant seat
- Fingerplays, songs, and rhymes
- Your hands and baby's hands
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Instructions

Lay your baby on a soft blanket or sit her upright in her infant seat, and sit close by so she can see you.

- Sing or chant songs and rhymes while you play with your baby's hands and fingers. Try one of the following Handy Clap games:

Pat-A-Cake

Pat-a-cake, pat-a-cake, baker's man, (clap your baby's hands)

Bake me a cake as fast as you can; (repeat clapping)

Roll it (roll baby's hands) and pat it; (pat baby's hands)

Mark it with a B. (draw a B in the middle of baby's hand)

Put it in the oven for baby and me. (gently poke baby in the tummy)

If You're Happy

If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands. (clap baby's hands)

If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands. (clap baby's hands)

If you're happy and you know it, then your hands will surely show it.

If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands. (clap baby's hands)

Whoops! Johnny!

(Start by spreading your baby's fingers open.)

Johnny (touch your baby's baby fingertip),

Johnny (touch baby's ring finger fingertip),

Johnny (touch next fingertip),

Johnny (touch next fingertip),

Whoops! Johnny! (slide your finger down in between the forefinger and the thumb, then repeat going backwards)

Whoops! Johnny! Johnny, Johnny, Johnny.



FINGER FACE

From birth, your baby prefers to look at a human face above all other objects. Something about the eyes, nose, and mouth attracts your baby's attention. Finger Face is based on that fascination.

Materials

- Knit glove
- Scissors
- Your hand
- Colorful felt-tip pens

Instructions

- Cut the fingers off a knit glove.
- Using felt-tip pens, draw a face in the middle of the glove's palm. Make the eyes and mouth large, bright, and colorful.
- Slip the glove onto your hand.
- Hold your baby in your lap and turn the glove face toward him.
- Now wiggle your fingers and move the face around slowly so your baby can enjoy his new Finger Face friend, who can help you sing songs, tell stories, or just chat.

SPOTLIGHT

To help your baby enhance his visual skills, play a game of Roaming Spotlight. This is a quiet game you can play at night, just before your baby goes to sleep, or to calm him down.

Materials

- Dark room
- Flashlight

Instructions

- Find a room that can be made completely dark.
- Sit on a chair or on the floor, with your baby in your lap.

- With the lights off, turn on the flashlight and shine it on the wall, catching your baby's attention.
- Say something about the light, such as, "Oh, look at the light!"
- Move the light beam around slowly, resting it on interesting objects.
- Say something about the object as it lights up, such as, "There's baby's teddy bear!"
- Continue moving the light around until your baby grows tired of the game.

Safety

Don't shine the light in your baby's eyes. If your baby becomes afraid in the dark, turn on a night-light, which should not diminish the flashlight's beam too much.



STRIKE UP THE BAND

Your baby enjoys exploring new sounds, and he especially likes making noises. Here's an opportunity for him to join his first band—and he can play all the instruments!

Materials

- Noise-making items from the kitchen: aluminum or tin pie pans, pots and pans, plastic bowls, wooden spoons, basting brushes, whisk, empty oatmeal or cereal boxes, empty milk cartons, spoons, plastic cups, and jars of seeds or beans
- Kitchen floor

Instructions

- Collect a number of noise-making items from the kitchen and place them on the floor.
- Seat your baby in the middle of the kitchen instruments and let him explore their properties.
- Teach your baby how to make a variety of sounds—pound, tap, beat, shake, rattle, even roll.
- After your baby has some fun with the instruments, turn on some music and teach him how to keep rhythm.

Safety

Be sure all kitchen items are safe for playing—no sharp edges or corners.



POP GOES THE BUBBLE

Just when your baby thinks he's got the world figured out, play a game that will confound him all over again! But don't worry—your baby will have fun, since he will quickly realize what's happening!

Materials

- Bottle of bubble solution
- Large area for playing

Instructions

- Place your baby in the center of a large room where he is free to move about.
- Begin blowing bubbles near your baby. (If you like, create your own bubble blower out of a pipe cleaner: twist the top of a cleaner into a small circle, leaving a little of the cleaner straight to hold when dipping into a soapy solution.)
- Demonstrate how to chase and pop the bubbles, then encourage your baby to follow your example.
- Note: Some babies get very excited during this game and try to pop the bubbles before you've had a chance to blow them. This is a good time to teach your baby patience by waiting a few seconds before you release the bubbles.

Safety

Watch your baby so he doesn't drink the bubble solution.

STICKY TOYS

Now that your baby has mastered the skill of picking up her toys, challenge her by making that task a little more difficult. See if she can figure out how to solve her problem!

Materials

- Clear Contact paper
- Variety of small toys that are too large for baby to swallow

Instructions

- Cut off a length of clear Contact paper, about two feet long.
- Peel off the protective back layer.
- Place the Contact paper, sticky-side up, on the floor.
- Set a number of medium-size toys, such as a block, a plastic doll, a cardboard book, a puzzle piece, and so on, on the sticky paper.
- Bring your baby over to the toys and set her down nearby.
- Try to lift a toy from the paper and show your baby that you are having trouble. Ask for help.
- Watch your baby as she tries to figure out what is happening and how to get the toys off the paper.

Safety

Watch your baby with the paper, so she doesn't cover her face with it. Help her if she gets frustrated, and teach her how to release the toys from the paper.

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