

Speech Sound Developmental Milestones

Age	Consonants used	Description of speech	Strategies to develop and support speech sounds
9-18 months	m, n, p, b, t, d, w and most vowel sounds. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sounds present in 50% of 2 year olds and 90% of 3 year olds. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parts of words repeated e.g. "dada" for Daddy and "bibi" for biscuit. • End sounds missed off words e.g. "ba" for ball and "do" for dog. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look at your child when you talk to them. • Develop general listening and discriminations skills; use environmental noises or musical instruments to develop their ability to discriminate between sounds. • Develop early sound awareness skills including rhyme and syllables. • Encourage your child to make lots of sounds including animal or transport noises. • Play a copying game; can your child copy sounds or funny faces in the mirror?
18 months – 3 years	As above plus k, g, ng (as in ring or sing). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sounds present in 50% of 3 year olds and 90% of 4 year olds. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using more recognisable words. • k and g beginning to be used in some words. May still use t, d instead e.g. "tar" for car and "date" for gate. • Some end sounds are still missed off. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model correct speech sounds for your child; interpret and repeat back what the child has said using the correct sounds. • Encourage other ways of communication if you cannot understand what your child is trying to tell you; can they tell you something more/show you?



<p>3-4 years</p>	<p>As above plus f, s, h</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sounds present in 50% of 3 year olds and 90% of 5 year olds. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • f and s beginning to be used in some words. May still use other sounds instead e.g. "tea" for sea. • Most words now have a sound at the end but this may not always be the correct sound e.g. "fis" for fish. • Some sounds beginning to be used in the middle of words e.g. "dinner" and "paper." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model correct speech sounds for your child; interpret and repeat back what the child has said using the correct sounds.
<p>4-5 years</p>	<p>As above plus l, v, z, sh, ch, j, y</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sounds present in 50% of 3- 4½ year olds and 90% of 6 year olds. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sh, ch, j beginning to be used in words e.g. "shoe", "jam", "chair." • Not yet using th or r e.g. "gween" for green or "paf" for path. • Child may be beginning to use some clusters (2 consonant sounds together) such as 'bl' in blue and 'sp' in spoon. Sometimes one of these sounds will be missed off e.g. "nowman" for snowman. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model correct speech sounds for your child; interpret and repeat back what the child has said using the correct sounds.
<p>5+ years</p>	<p>As above plus r, th</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sounds present in 50% of 4- 5½ year olds and 90% of 7 year olds. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mature pronunciation of most words • Some children still have difficulty with r, th and clusters 	

Presence of processes that indicate a referral should be made	Lateral 's'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> After age 7, produces a 'slushy' s sound 	
	Initial consonant deletion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Missing off first sounds in words e.g. "ate" for gate or "at" for cat 	
	Backing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using k and g instead of t and d e.g. "cak" for cat or "gog" for dog 	
	Unusual or non-English speech sounds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using unusual substitutions such as "pit" for "sit" 	
	Nasal speech	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child speaks like they always have a cold or that air is coming down their nose 	

Speech sounds not present in 2 age categories below their actual age e.g. not saying f, s, h, l at over 5 years
Speech sounds not present in 1 age category below their actual age e.g. not saying l, v, z, sh, ch, j, y at over 5 years
Speech sounds are age appropriate