



Welcome Words for your Twelve Month Old

How Babies Learn Limits: Laying the Foundation for Discipline

Your baby has just reached for your steaming cup of coffee, even though you've warned him that it's "hot!" This act isn't willful disobedience; it's part of his inborn drive to learn through hands-on exploration. He's trying to learn through trial and error, the cornerstone of scientific inquiry. The challenge for you is to keep your young scientist safe and yourself sane.

Doing this means setting limits—the foundation of discipline. The word "discipline" comes from the Latin meaning "to teach." Rather than punishment, discipline is a lengthy process of teaching children about limits. The goal, as children mature, is to help them learn self-control: You want your child to behave even if you aren't there watching.

Here are some tips for your 1-year-old:

- Combine words and action. If he's off-limits, scoop your child up, saying, "No throwing books," and move him to a substitute activity: "You can throw the ball."
- If your baby is biting or pinching, resist the temptation to pinch or bite back. The message it sends is that these painful behaviors are allowed when performed by someone bigger and stronger.
- The same is true of spanking. Instead, say, "Biting (or pinching) hurts! Hurting is not allowed." Move your child to another activity. Sometimes biting is the result of teething discomfort; try offering something soothing for his gums.
- Keep your cool. Though all parents lose their tempers once in a while, try to give yourself a time out when you feel this happening. If you yell in anger, apologize later. Give your child a reassuring hug and explain simply, "I'm sorry I yelled. I was very angry." If you feel you can't control your anger, let someone know, either your partner, a friend, your health care provider, or call Welcome Baby.
- Catch your child being good. He wants your attention, and if he gets it for positive behavior, you'll see more of it. Describe what he's doing when he's being cooperative: "Look at how you've put all the blocks away."
- Divert a bad mood. Impersonate Big Bird or Cookie Monster, make a silly face or sing a funny song. Don't worry that this is spoiling your child. It's not, and if it works, you'll both feel better.
- Try not to laugh at your child's anger or misbehavior, no matter how tempted you are. (Save your response for later when you can share it with another adult.) Children recognize when they've charmed you into letting them ignore some limit, and they're justifiably upset if you don't take their feelings seriously.
- **Remember that your child isn't bad, but has a limited memory at this point in life.** It will be a long time before you can expect him to remember and obey rules.



MILESTONES

Between 12-13 months, you

- can cruise (walk holding on to furniture).*
- probably can clap hands or wave bye-bye.
- may be able to drink from a cup (though many babies can't do this until nearly 17 months).
- may pick up a tiny object neatly with the tips of your thumb and forefinger.
- may stand alone for a moment.
- may call parents "Mama" or "Dada" (most babies do this by 14 months).
- may take your first steps.

Over the next 6 months, you

- will alternate demands for independence with new fears and clinging.
- may have tantrums in response to limits or when you are overloaded (tired, hungry and/or over stimulated by people, places and/or things).
- need gentle, but firm, reminders of limits. Your memory is too short for you to remember and consistently follow safety or other rules.
- find security in predictable routines, particularly getting dressed, meals and snacks, baths, and nap and bedtime.

* If your baby is not able to walk holding on to furniture by 13 months, check with his health care provider. Though this may be normal for his developmental timetable, there could be a problem. Remember that premature infants reach milestones closer to the age they'd be if they had been born at term, or later.

Adapted from What to Expect the First Year (Workman, 1989)

The First Birthday Party

While your baby's first birthday is an important milestone, the celebration is mostly yours. He's still a baby and too young to have much of an idea about what's going on. Some parents choose to celebrate with a quiet family dinner and cupcakes; others invite family, friends and playmates.

Whatever your choice, here's how to keep things safe and enjoyable:

- Time it right. Be sure your baby is rested and has eaten so he'll be at his best. Dress him for comfort and keep a bib handy for spills.
- If you're inviting guests, include those your baby knows well. It is not a good time to introduce a lot of new faces.
- Keep balloons (both inflated and uninflated), crepe paper, ribbon, candles and other hazards safely out of children's reach.
- Watch your baby and other children closely. Accidents are more likely during the commotion of a party.
- Honor his wishes. If he shows signs of becoming overwhelmed, offer comfort and/or a break from the festivities. If there are lots of gifts, you may need to save some for opening later.
- Don't forget to preserve the memories with pictures (and/or words written in a journal for him). It may be helpful to ask someone else to serve as photographer.

Fun with your One Year Old

One of the best ways to play with any child is to get on his level, which usually means getting down either on the floor or on the ground with him. That's probably at least part of the appeal when your child is with another 1-year-old: Here's someone who's his size and on his level! And it's not too early for your baby to have a friend. Studies have shown that babies as young as 10 months enjoyed being around certain playmates more than others, cooing and babbling or even reaching out to touch each other's hair or hands. If your baby's in childcare, he's probably already developed friendships. If not, try to offer him the chance to interact with other babies on a regular basis, perhaps as part of a weekly playgroup.



Here are some playthings and activities that most 1-year-olds will enjoy:

The joy of boxes: Whether it's a discarded appliance box you've converted into a playhouse, a discard from the grocery store that you've made into a "car" to pull or push your baby around in, or milk cartons you help him stack into a tower, young children love boxes.

Dancing on toes: Turn on your favorite music and let your child balance on your shoes (sturdy ones are most comfortable) as he holds your hands. When he tires of this, move him into your arms.

Floor time: Climb on pillows, read a picture book, roll a ball, play hide 'n seek or just look up at the ceiling or, if you're outside, the clouds and sky. You don't really have to do anything. Just enjoy being together.

Laugh together: You'll get more cooperation more quickly with laughs than frowns. Making funny faces is more fun if you pretend that —

- 1) your tongue pops out when you pull on one ear;
- 2) goes back in when you press on your nose;
- 3) comes back out and moves to one side when you pull the opposite ear; and
- 4) disappears into your mouth when you pull your hair. Let your child have a turn at doing the pushing and pulling, when see if his tongue moves when you push or pull.

Wheelbarrow rides: If you have one, a wheelbarrow makes for a great ride. If it's especially dirty, throw an old towel over it before loading your toddler.

Make paper airplanes: Let your child watch you make a paper airplane. If he likes, let him do his own version with a bit of gentle assistance. Fly your planes, experimenting with them both indoors and out.

Indoor ball: Roll up newspaper and tape to make a bat or golf club. Wad another piece into a ball and tape it together. You're ready to play a simplified version of golf, croquet, T-ball, or (with a bigger wad of papers) soccer.

Family albums: Pull out your photo albums and show your child pictures of himself as a younger baby. Tell stories about when he was a "little baby."