

At Home Learning Guide for Infants (0–1 years old)

Week of May 11, 2020



At home and in our centers this week, infants are exploring **shapes and colors**. Infants are drawn to bright colors and clearly defined shapes, and this week's content will provide you with lots of opportunities to explore shape and colors at home with your baby.

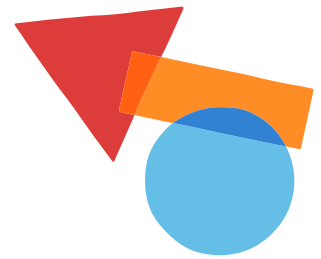
Whether you're out for some fresh air and observing how shapes and colors appear in nature, or snuggling up and sharing some of your own favorite childhood songs and nursery rhymes, this week you'll help your baby understand that **shapes and colors are everywhere!**

There are so many fun and easy ways to help your baby learn about shapes and colors. Look for opportunities outside of these activities to point out shapes and colors to your baby. Using descriptive language when you talk to them will not only help them learn these concepts but help them build **rich vocabularies** as well!

Developmental Domains are the areas of focus that support development of the whole child. Interested in learning more? Click [here](#) to discover the six developmental domains.

This Week's Theme:

Colors and Shapes



What you'll find in this guide. . .

We've organized this content the way your baby would be learning it in their center, but you can choose your own adventures and do the activities in any order.

MONDAY

Get the Wheels Turning!
(Cognitive Development)



Round and Square Explore physics baby-style as you and your little one observe how different shaped objects move.

TUESDAY

Express Yourself!
(Creative Expression)



Color Mash Brighten your baby's day by exploring primary colors and combining them to make new colors!

WEDNESDAY

Baby Book Club
(Language and Literacy)



Songs and Nursery Rhymes It's a good thing nursery rhymes never go out of style—they teach our babies so much about language!

THURSDAY

Get the Wheels Turning
(Cognitive Development)



We're Going on a Shape Hunt Discover the shapes and colors in your neighborhood while getting some exercise.

FRIDAY

Growing Healthy Brains
(Executive Function)



Peek-a-block Now you see it, now you don't! Help develop baby's executive function skills with this simple shape-finding game.

EVERYDAY LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Pick an activity to weave learning experiences into your everyday routines—no preparation needed!

Materials to Gather:

Monday:

- Blocks
- Ball

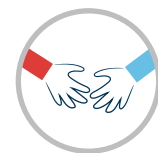
Tuesday:

- Tempera Paint in primary colors (shaving cream and food coloring will work too, or check out this [website](#) to make your own)
- Packing tape
- Resealable plastic bags
- Tablespoon

Friday:

- Blocks or other items in a several shapes
- Medium-sized piece of cloth (dishtowel, receiving blanket, t-shirt)

Tip: At the beginning of your week, gather materials and place them in a container so you're ready to go!



FOCUS ON SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING

Help your child develop important social-emotional skills by working on your family project! The new prompt for this week focuses on **Flexible Mindsets!**

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MONDAY

Get the Wheels Turning: Round and Square

Explore physics baby-style as you and your little one observe how different shaped objects move.



Length of activity:
5-10 minutes*

*Duration will vary depending on your child's interest.

**Level of Engagement
Required by Adult:** Medium



Level of Prep Required: Low



What you need:

- Blocks
- Ball



What your child is learning:

- Imitating other people's movements and actions
- Paying attention to bright or contrasting colors
- Developing coordination and interact with objects

What you do: Sit on the floor with your baby and place a few blocks in front of you. Play with the blocks with your baby by pushing them on the floor or stacking them. Talk to your baby about what you see them doing by saying something like "These are blocks. You're pushing the blocks across the floor. I'll push some blocks, too." If your baby's interest in the blocks starts to fade, roll a ball toward them and observe their reaction. You can say something like "Can you push the ball across the floor? See if you can push the ball just like you pushed the blocks." Talk with your baby about how the ball rolls, and how the blocks stack because they have flat sides. Continue for as long as your baby is interested.

If your child is ready: When you show your baby the blocks and balls, ask "Do you want to play with the blocks, or do you want to play with the balls?" Allow them to choose, or offer them the object they show the most interest in. As your baby plays, comment on what you see them doing: "You have two blocks, and I have two blocks. Watch me stack the blocks! Can you stack your blocks?"



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TUESDAY

Express Yourself: Color Mash

Brighten your baby's day by exploring primary colors and combining them to make new colors!



Length of activity:

15 minutes*

*Duration will vary depending on your child's interest.

Level of Engagement

Required by Adult: Medium



Level of Prep Required: High



What you need:

- Tempera Paint in primary colors (shaving cream and food coloring will work too, or check out this [website](#) to make your own)
- Packing tape
- Resealable plastic bags (remember never to leave babies unattended with plastic bags! If you need to walk away briefly, take these with you!)
- Tablespoon



What your child is learning:

- Paying attention to bright or contrasting colors
- Beginning to explore different textures
- Using hands to explore objects

What you do: Pour a couple tablespoons of paint into each bag, creating three, different colored bags. Then, make three more bags of mixed colors, like yellow and blue, yellow and red, and blue and red. Close the bags tightly and seal them with packing tape. Hold up one of the paint-filled bags. If your baby reaches for it, let them take it from you. Observe and comment on what your baby does with the bag. "What do you see in the bag? Do you see those bright colors? What happens to the colors when you squeeze the bag?" Next, take a paint-filled bag and place it in front of your baby. Push the paint around in the bag. Say, "Here's another way you can mix the paint. Watch what happens to the colors when I push them with my hand." Continue for as long as your baby is interested.

If your child is ready: As you and your baby explore the bags, talk about how the colors mix together. "When you squeezed the bag, the color yellow mixed with the color blue. They made a new color: green!" Give your baby another bag with two colors of paint in it and encourage them to mix the colors together. "This bag has red and yellow in it. What color will they make when you mix the colors together? Red and yellow make the color orange!"

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WEDNESDAY

Baby Book Club: Songs and Nursery Rhymes

It's a good thing nursery rhymes never go out of style—they teach our babies so much about language!



Length of activity:
10–15 minutes*

*Duration will vary depending on your child's interest.

**Level of Engagement
Required by Adult: High**



Level of Prep Required: None



What you need:

Your favorite songs or nursery rhymes!

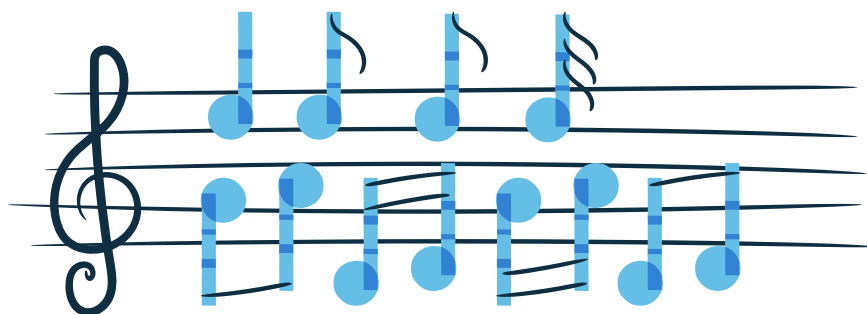


What your child is learning:

- Engaging in back and forth communication
- Expressing themselves verbally by babbling or attempting first words
- Developing vocabulary by listening, observing, and engaging

What you do: Get comfortable with your baby. Sing a song or recite a nursery rhyme, like “Baa, Baa, Black Sheep” or “This Little Piggy.” Your baby will respond to your level of energy, so be sure to express enthusiasm through your voice and facial expressions. Observe your baby's responses and use them to guide the activity. For example, invite your little one to repeat sounds or words in songs, or help them wiggle their toes during the rhyme “This Little Piggy”. If your baby is having fun, keep it up!

If your child is ready: Use toys or other objects that may be mentioned in the songs and rhymes as props, like stuffed animals and puppets. Encourage back-and-forth communication by asking your baby questions, like “Which piggy comes next?” or “Do you want to sing the song again?”



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THURSDAY

Get the Wheels Turning: We're Going on a Shape Hunt

Discover the shapes and colors in your neighborhood while getting exercise.



Length of activity:
20 minutes*

*Duration will vary depending on your child's interest.

Level of Engagement Required by Adult: High



Level of Prep Required: None



What you need:
Your observation skills

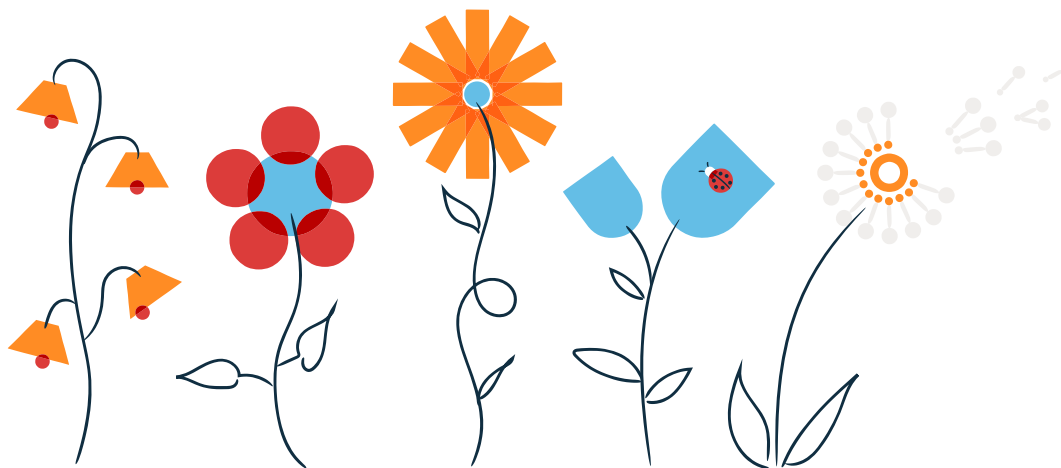


What your child is learning:

- Noticing colors and shapes
- Interacting with and responding to their environment
- Classifying objects

What you do: Head out for a walk (observing social distancing protocol) or out to your porch or yard. As you spend time outdoors, point out the colors and shapes you see around you to your baby. Use descriptive language as you point out the bright green leaves that look like triangles, the round, pink flower petals or anything else that captures your baby's attention.

If your child is ready: Collect different colored items during your time outdoors and show them to your baby. "Look what I found. It's a big, green leaf! There are more green leaves up in that tree." You can give your baby items like leaves or flowers to hold and explore close-up.



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FRIDAY

Growing Healthy Brains: Peek-a-block

Now you see it, now you don't! Help develop baby's executive function skills with this simple shape finding game.



Length of activity:
10 minutes*

*Duration will vary depending on your child's interest.

**Level of Engagement
Required by Adult:** Medium



Level of Prep Required: Low



What you need:

- Medium-sized piece of fabric (hand towel, receiving blanket, t-shirt)
- Blocks or other objects in distinct shapes (square, triangle, rectangle, etc.)

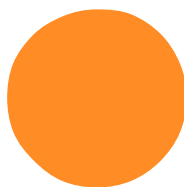


What your child is learning:

- Developing working memory skills
- Recognizing shapes and colors
- Understanding object permanence

What you do: Show your baby the shapes you gathered, telling them the name of the shape as you show it to them. Select one shape and show it to your baby. Set it in front of your baby and cover it with the piece of cloth. Ask your baby "where's the square?" Watch how your baby responds. After a moment, lift the cloth up and say, "there's the square!"

If your child is ready: Encourage your baby to lift the cloth off to find the shape. You can also lay all the shapes out around your baby and let them explore. As they investigate each shape, tell them the name and color of the shape.





Everyday Learning Experiences

Pick an activity to weave learning experiences into your everyday routines—no preparation needed!

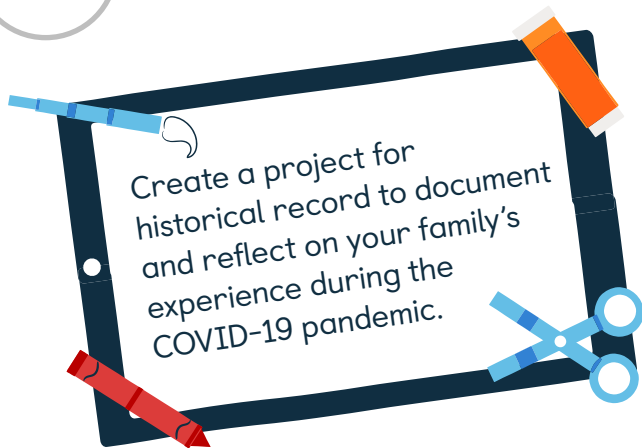
Opportunities to learn are all around you. As you go through your day with your baby, use **descriptive language** to talk about the colors and shapes of things around you. While getting ready for bed you can tell your baby that they're wearing their yellow pajamas, and as you read your bedtime story, you can point out that the book is square, and count each side.

Have **conversations** with your baby! As silly as it may feel to talk to someone who can't talk back yet, babies have lots of ways of letting you know they enjoy connecting with you. Engaging in a back-and-forth with your baby is known as "Serve and Return" and is a really important part of building healthy brain architecture and solidifying the connection between you and your baby.

Help your baby develop great social-emotional skills by talking about **emotions**. When your baby is sleepy and fussy you can say "I hear you crying. You look so tired!" When your baby is excited and having fun, you can say "I see you smiling at me. You look so happy!" Understanding emotions and having the language to talk about them is one of the most important things children learn in early childhood, and modeling these skills from your baby's earliest days lets them know they're seen and cared for.



Focus on Social and Emotional Learning



Did your family decide on a family project idea? In case you missed it, last week we released our [Stay-at-Home Story: A KinderCare Family Project](#). By working on your project together, you're helping your child develop important social-emotional skills in fun new ways! Each week, we'll reveal a new project prompt that explores one of the following themes:

THEMES:

- **All the Feels:** Explore and identify your hopes, worries, gratitude, or frustrations.
- **Building Connections:** Find a way to embrace your family and community from a distance.
- **What Is Essential:** Redefine what *essential* means through your everyday actions.
- **Flexible Mindsets:** How are you learning and growing together as a family?
- **Who Are the Helpers:** Who is helping us? How are we helping others?

As your family project takes shape, talk together about how you can add new entries to it through the lens of the project themes. Our first three themes were *All the Feels*, *Building Connections*, and *What Is Essential*. If you've worked your way through those, try exploring this week's theme: *Flexible Mindsets*.

Try this!

Flexible Mindsets

Over the past two months we've all had our flexible thinking skills put to the test. We've had to adjust to new and often challenging ways of working, playing, and learning. As you consider this theme, think of ways you can creatively express how your family has learned to be flexible during your time at home.