

# 0-6 months In the bath



## 1. Floating & Movement

With your baby lying on their back, place your arm under their shoulders so their head rests on your forearm. Place your other hand under your baby's bottom and gently lower them in to the bath, removing your hand from their bottom. Keeping this position, move their body gently backwards and forwards to encourage movement. To start with, avoid water flowing over the baby's face.



## 2. Aquatic Breathing

With your baby in a sitting position, sprinkle water over their shoulders and head. Sprinkle over the back of their head first and then gradually onto the face. Use "1-2-3" as a cue and once you feel your baby is confident, try this activity with a sponge.



## 3. Floating Front & Back

Sit in the bath, holding your baby over their tummy with them facing away from you. Their head should be out of the water, against your chest to encourage skin-to-skin contact.

You can also try floating your baby on their back; holding them with two hands on their shoulders. Bring your wrists and forearms close together so the baby's head can rest on them.

Sing a nursery rhyme to your baby or read to them from a bath book.

# Top Tip

Keep eye contact to reassure your baby. Singing, chatting and smiling will keep your baby calm and also help develop language skills.



# 6-12 months In the bath



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2



3

## 1. Movement in Water on Front

Encourage crawling in the bath, beginning to get your baby to move through the water alone. Using a bath mat will help. Encourage your baby to move towards toys.

## 2. Baby Splashing by Themselves

Get your baby into a sitting position. Encourage them to splash their hands and feet by themselves with you demonstrating to them. This improves their motor control and gives them power over their own movement.

## 3. Aquatic Breathing

Work up to continuous pouring of water over the head. Start with gentle trickles of water from a sponge and build up to pouring from a cup of water. Encourage your baby to have fun and blow raspberries. A nursery rhyme helps.

# Top Tip

Toys can be easily made for example, by piercing small holes in the bottom of a plastic container. Sponges, watering cans and floating objects can also be used.

## Nursery Rhyme

*"Rain rain go away  
come again another day,  
all the children want to play.  
Rain rain go to Spain,  
never show your face again."*

# 12–18 months In the bath



## 1. Imagination Games

Play "Peek-a-boo". Place a damp face cloth over toddler's face and encourage them to take it off and then you do the same. Show excitement and smiles as your toddler removes the cloth from their face. Toddlers enjoy repetition.

## 2. Body Awareness

Encourage your toddler to lift and use toys and trickle or pour water over different parts of their body, naming parts of the body as they do this.

## 3. Toys

Sinking toys encourage reach and grasp. Let your toddler play with a variety of toys: cups with handles, sieves, strainers, sponges, floating balls and sinking objects.

## 4. Language

Reading a bath book encouraging your toddler to copy the actions in the book as you do them. Be enthusiastic when reading the book and exaggerate actions like splashing hands and feet.

# Top Tip

Encourage your toddler by demonstrating to them how to do different actions. Try blowing bubbles into a cup and encourage them to do the same. If your toddler sees you doing an action they are more likely to try it.



## 18-24 months In the bath



### 1. Body Awareness

While your toddler is sitting in the bath sing and do the actions to "Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes" encouraging your child to touch each part of their body as you sing it.



### 2. Co-Ordination & Motor Skills

Use a pouring toy and gradually empty, allowing your toddler to catch the water in a stacking cup/jug or in their hands. If the stacking cup has holes, then they can feel the sensation of the water hitting their legs. To progress the activity move the pouring object so they have to move their container/ hands to catch it.



### 3. Language

Use bath letters to spell out different names. Point out the different colours of the letters.

### 4. Rotation

Roll your child in the bath singing a nursery rhyme.

*"There were five in the bed and the little one said 'roll over, roll over' so they all rolled over and one fell out. Please remember to tie a knot in your pyjamas single beds are only made for ..."*

## Top Tip

Don't forget the activities from previous cards and move at a pace where you and your toddler are comfortable. When they have completed an activity move on to the next, to keep them stimulated.◦



## 24–36 months In the bath



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2



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### 1. Breath Control

Blow floating toys around the bath and look down in to the water to spot the sinking toys. Encourage your child to blow bubbles into the water and if they feel comfortable put their face in the water and collect the sinking toys at the bottom of the bath.

### 2. Co-Ordination & Buoyancy

Take a few hand-sized plastic balls, play a 'pop up' game by showing your child how balls pop back up after holding them under the water and letting them go.

### 3. Floating

Encourage your child to float on their back with their ears in the water looking up at the light on the ceiling. You could sing "Twinkle twinkle little star" pretending the bathroom lights are stars.

### 4. Body Awareness & Language

Encourage your child to touch different parts of their body or do different actions from your instruction. "Simon says put your hands on your head" "Simon says go splash splash splash" ... and so on.

## Top Tip

Keep instructions simple. Be encouraging and give praise, this will give them the confidence to keep trying.

