

# Speech Sounds



Talk Box

The words people say are made up of different speech sounds. Each language has its own set of speech sounds. Your child learns to use the sounds in your language by hearing you talk. At first, your baby practices making easy sounds by babbling. As they get older and say more words, they learn how to use more sounds in your language. By the time your child is 7 years old, their speech usually sounds like the speech of an adult. Below is a checklist for the development of English sounds.

## Check off the things your child is doing.

### What to expect

#### Under 12 months:

- By 3 months old your baby coos, goes, grunts, gurgles, and makes different noises, like “ahh.”
- From 4 to 7 months old your baby starts to make babbling sounds, like “ahah,” “baba,” “mama,” and “gaga.”

#### Your 1 year old:

- Babbles using different sounds, like “bababa” or “putudume.”
- Copies different sounds you say.
- May say first words.

#### Your 1½ year old:

- May start using sounds like m, p, b, d, w, and h.
- Babbles sounds together like real sentences, such as “bapotimawabe.”

#### Your 2 year old:

- May use sounds like m, p, b, w, t, d, n, h, and several vowel sounds, like ah, ee, oh and oo.
- Is understood by parents and caregivers about half the time and less by unfamiliar people.
- May only use these sounds at the beginning of words.

#### Your 2½ year old:

- Uses some sounds at the beginning and end of words.
- May repeat easier sounds like “bubu” for bubbles or leave off harder sounds like “ba” for ball, bat, or bus.
- May say many different words that sound the same, like “ba” for ball, bat, or bus.

#### Your 3 year old:

- Uses the following sounds correctly: p, b, m, d, n, h, and w.
- May start using sounds like g, k, f, t, ng (as in sing), and y.
- Uses vowel sounds correctly almost all the time.
- Is understood by parents and caregivers most of the time and about half of the time by unfamiliar people.



To find Talk Box resources scan this QR code or go to....

### Your 3½ years old:

- Uses sounds at the beginning of words (bus instead of “us”) and at the end of words (boat instead of “boa”).
- Shows an interest in rhyming words in stories, books, and songs.

### Your 4 year old:

- Uses the following sounds correctly: p, b, m, d, n, h, w, g, k, f, t, ng (as in sing), and y.
- May also be using sounds like s, z, l, sh, ch, j, and v.
- Is understood by parents and caregivers almost all the time and most of the time by unfamiliar people.
- Can say all sounds in a consonant cluster that has two or more consonants in a row, like tw in tweet or -nd in hand. Your child might not say all the sounds correctly, like “bwue” for blue.
- Can think of simple rhymes, like mat and cat.

### Your 5 year old:

- Uses the following sounds correctly: p, b, m, d, n, h, w, g, k, f, t, ng (as in sing), y, s, z, l, sh, ch, j and v.
- May also be using sounds like r, zh (as in measure), and th (as in the).
- Is understood by everyone almost all of time.
- Can clap out syllables or count syllables, like truck has one syllable and caterpillar has 4 syllables.

### Your 6 year old:

- Says most sounds correctly, except for maybe th (as in teeth).
- Is understood by everyone almost all of time.
- Knows the first sound and some of the last sounds in short words (soup starts with s and ends with p).
- Can pick out the first sound in a word, like sock starts with s.

### Your 7 year old:

- Says all sounds correctly.
- Is easily understood by everyone all the time.
- Says each sound in a word that has two or three sounds, like she has two sounds sh-e and man has 3 sounds like m-a-n.

## When to get help

### Reach out for help if:

- you didn't check off the skills listed for your child's age.
- your child is frustrated or hard to understand.
- your child is making a sound expected for their age in an unusual way. For example, they say s but it sounds slushy.

## Where to get help

Are you concerned about your child's speech and language development? Speech-language pathologists can help. For more information go to: [AHS.ca/PedRehab](https://www.ahs.ca/PedRehab)



For information about language, go to the Talking and Listening Checklist.