For babies, learning about shapes is the first stage of recognizing letters. Talking about and playing with shapes with your young child is part of their learning experience. You might say, “Feel this big ball. It is round!” Later, talking about letters and the sounds they make will help them recognize individual letters.

### Level 1
- Point out shapes around the house

### Level 2
- Teach names of shapes

### Level 3
- Look for shapes in letters

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**Did you know...**

Read shape and alphabet books together. There is a wide variety of alphabet books to interest your child.

Point out and name letters while you are out and about in the community. Young children often recognize the M for McDonalds or the T in Toys R Us because it is meaningful to them.

Young children usually learn the letters in their name first. They are their favorite letters! Write your child’s name where he or she can see it often.

Go on a scavenger hunt to look for shapes around the house or in the community. Take a box or bag and collect round things, long things, blue things, etc.

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**Read**

**Shapes, a Scholastic Beginning Concepts book**

We can find shapes all around us. Children see circles, triangles, and other shapes in familiar objects, and discover that our world is shape-shaped!

Look for other Scholastic Beginning Concept books, available in English and Spanish:

- *Shapes, Shapes, Shapes*, by Tana Hoban
- *Color Zoo*, by Lois Ehlert
- *Brown Rabbit’s Shape Book*, by Alan Baker
- *The Shape of Things*, by Dayle Ann Dodds
- *Mouse Shapes*, by Ellen Stoll Walsh
- *Do You See Shapes? Rookie Toddler* by Scholastic
- *National Geographic Little Look and Learn: Shapes!* by National Geographic Kids
- *My Very First Book of Shapes*, by Eric Carle

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**Choosing Books**

**More books about shapes...**

- *Shapes, Shapes, Shapes*, by Tana Hoban
- *Color Zoo*, by Lois Ehlert
- *Brown Rabbit’s Shape Book*, by Alan Baker
- *The Shape of Things*, by Dayle Ann Dodds
- *Mouse Shapes*, by Ellen Stoll Walsh
- *Do You See Shapes? Rookie Toddler* by Scholastic
- *National Geographic Little Look and Learn: Shapes!* by National Geographic Kids
- *My Very First Book of Shapes*, by Eric Carle
Shape books typically do not have a lot of words. As you read with your baby/toddler use describing words and trace with your finger, or help your toddler trace the shapes with his finger. Point to the pictures and talk about what the children are doing. “Look, this boy is stacking blocks. Blocks have rectangle shapes. We played with your blocks this morning!”

Encourage your older toddler to make scribbles using non-toxic crayons or chalk. Choose larger crayons and thick sidewalk chalk, as these are easier for little hands to grasp. See if your toddler can copy you as you draw lines that go across, and lines that go up and down.

**Patty Cake**

Patty cake, patty cake, baker’s man.
*(clap baby’s hands in rhythm to rhyme)*

Bake me a cake as fast as you can.

Roll it,
*(roll baby’s hands around each other)*

Pat it,
*(clap baby’s hands)*

Mark it with a “B”
*(trace letter B on baby’s tummy)*

And throw it in the oven for Baby and Me!
*(raise baby’s arms above her head)*

**Song to Sing With Your Toddler**

**Hokey Pokey Shapes**

Cut out a circle, square, triangle, rectangle, and oval from thick paper. Help your child find the correct shape for each verse and do the motions with him.

You put your circle in,
You take your circle out,
You put your circle in and you shake it all about.
You do the hokey pokey and you turn yourself around.
That’s what it’s all about!

You put your square in...
You put your triangle in...
*Keep going!*

Challenge: If your older toddler can easily identify the shapes, make the shapes different colors. “Put your red circle in...”


You can read hundreds of free online books with your child by visiting your local library’s website and clicking on Tumblebooks™.

Funding for this project is made possible by the Idaho Commission for Libraries’ Read to Me program, and the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services under a provision of the Library Services and Technology Act. Printed 2016