

Did you know ...



For babies and toddlers, talking about and playing with shapes is the first stage of recognizing letters.

Babies and toddlers are trying to make sense of their world. One way they do this is to look, taste, listen to, and feel objects. This helps them to sort the objects into categories, such as round objects or soft objects, and to tell one object from another, such as a blanket from a ball. Once they are toddlers, they can begin learning about shapes and colors.

Children who recognize shapes and are able to tell the difference between them have an easier time learning about letters.

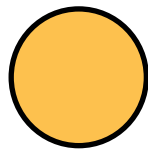
Level 1

Point out shapes around the house



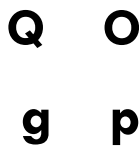
Level 2

Teach names of shapes



Level 3

Look for shapes in letters



Here's how ...

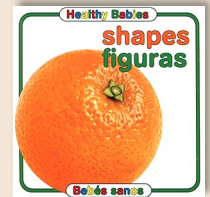


- ✦ Read shape books together. There are a wide variety of shape board books to interest your child.
- ✦ Go on a scavenger hunt to look for shapes around the house or in the community. Take a box or bag and collect round things, long things, blue things, etc.
- ✦ Point out shapes in familiar objects. "Your sandwich is a square shape. See, it has four straight sides, 1-2-3-4."

Read



Healthy Babies: Shapes/Figuras from Chosen Spot Publishing



Using colorful photos and early concepts, this bilingual board book provides a fun introduction to the world of healthy foods and the many shapes they take. It also includes reading tips for parents and caregivers on the back cover page.

You may also like these other Healthy Babies books:



Choosing Books



More shape books ...

- Baby's Shapes* by Karen Katz
- Bear in a Square* by Stella Blackstone
- Black and White* by Tana Hoban
- Brown Rabbit's Shapes* by Alan Baker
- Color Zoo* by Lois Ehlert
- Freight Train* by Donald Crews
- Llama Llama Shapes* by Anna Dewdney
- My Shapes / Mis formas* by Rebecca Emberley
- My Very First Book of Shapes* by Eric Carle
- Shape by Shape* by Suse MacDonald

Talk



Talk to your baby/toddler while you are shopping. Talk about the fruits and vegetables you see -- their colors, shapes, how they taste, how you plan to use them. Let your child hold the fruit or vegetable and feel the textures, and use lots of describing words. Be sure to talk *with* your child, so that you are having a conversation with your toddler, or using the “serve and return” method with your baby (see the November 2023 issue).

Ready to Write



Cut up fruit and vegetables in small chunks and allow your older baby or toddler to practice picking them up and putting them in their mouths. Children begin by grabbing food with all their fingers and palm, and then begin picking up small objects with their thumb and first finger, which is called a “pincher” grip. This muscle motion usually develops when your child is between nine months and one year old, and it will help them to be able to hold a pencil or crayon correctly when they are older.

Play



Five Plump Peas

Five plump peas in a peapod pressed.

(press two fists together)

One grew, two grew, so did all the rest!

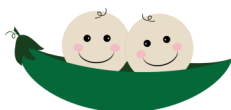
(fingers slowly pop up from fist)

They grew and they grew and did not stop,

(slowly move hands apart)

Until one day the pod went pop!

(bring hands together with a big clap)



Sing



Apples and Bananas

(The original song changes the vowel sound for each verse; for babies and toddlers, this version changes the beginning sounds.)

I like to eat, eat, eat apples and bananas,
I like to eat, eat, eat apples and bananas.

*Now change the beginning sound to “b”,
and sing twice:*

I like to beat, beat, beat bapples and bananas

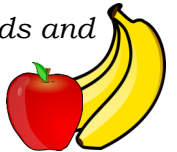
*Now change the beginning sound to “s”,
and sing twice:*

I like to seat, seat, seat sapples and sananas

*Now change the beginning sound to “d”,
and sing twice:*

I like to deat, deat, deat dapples and dananas

*Continue changing the beginning sounds and
keep singing!*



Hear the original song at <https://bussongs.com/songs/apples-and-bananas>

At your library ...



Your family is welcome in the library, and your librarians care very much about you and your children. They are committed to helping every child get a great start, succeed in school, and create lifelong learners.

Libraries are for everyone!