

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 and one way they do this is to look, taste, listen to, and feel objects. This helps them sort the objects into categories, such as round objects/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 that recognize shapes and are able to tell the difference between them have an easier time learning about letters.

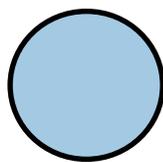
Level 1

Point out shapes around the house



Level 2

Teach names of shapes



Level 3

Look for shapes in letters

Q P
q p

Here's how...

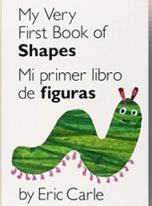


- Read shape books together. There are a wide variety of shape board books to interest your child.
- Go on a scavenger hunt to look for shapes around the house or in the community. Take a box or bag and collect round things, long things, blue things, etc.
- Point out shapes in familiar objects. "Your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

Read



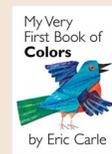
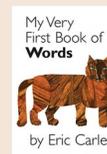
My Very First Book of Shapes/ Mi primer libro de figuras, by Eric Carle



This colorful board book features ten shapes that your child can match to similar shaped objects. The half pages create the opportunity to make reading this book more like a game to play together.

Some of the shapes are more abstract than others, so start with concrete shapes like circles, squares, and triangles.

Other books in this series:



Special Edition:

50th Anniversary of *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*



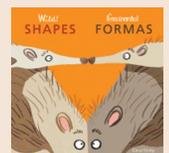
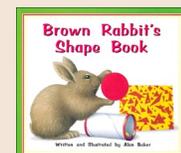
Choosing Books



More books about shapes...

- Shapes, Shapes, Shapes*, by Tana Hoban
- Color Zoo*, by Lois Ehlert
- The Shape of Things*, by Dayle Ann Dodds
- Mouse Shapes*, by Ellen Stoll Walsh
- Wild! Shapes (Bilingual edition)* by Courtney Dicmas

Brown Rabbit's Shape Book, by Alan Baker



Talk



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 make a connection to your child's world. "Look, here is a picture frame. The frame is a square. It is the same shape as the picture by your bed. Can you see it?"

Ready to Write



Learning shapes is one of the basic skills children need to know before they learn letters of the alphabet. Big body movements help children learn how shapes are drawn. Place masking or painter's tape in different shapes on the floor. Help your children walk on the lines and name the shape as they do it. "You are walking on a square" (or circle, rectangle, etc.). "Let's count the sides as you walk on them...1, 2, 3, 4."

Play



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)



Sing



Shape Song

(to the tune of "The Farmer in the Dell")

A circle is like a ball,
A circle is like a ball,
Round and round
It never stops.
A circle is like a ball!



A square is like a box,
A square is like a box,
It has four sides,
They are the same.
A square is like a box!



A triangle has 3 sides,
A triangle has 3 sides,
Up the mountain,
Down, and back.
A triangle has 3 sides!



A rectangle has 4 sides,
A rectangle has 4 sides,
Two are long, and two are short,
A rectangle has 4 sides!



Hear tune at <http://bussongs.com/songs/the-farmer-in-the-dell.php>

At your library...



Don't have a library card? You can still visit your library for storytimes or to read with your child. Ask your librarian about how to apply for your own card today!