

Top Tips for Talking

Say what you see

- ✓ As your child is playing model language by **commenting** on what they are doing or what you are giving them.
- ✓ This helps your child to link what they hear to what they are doing or seeing.

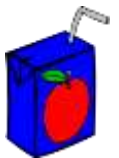


Comment don't question

- ✓ **Describe what they are doing** rather than what you think they should be doing.
- ✓ *For example*, instead of saying: "Build me a tower!" stick to what they are actually doing: "Bang, bang, bang go the bricks".

Repetition, repetition, repetition

- ✓ The more times your child hears a certain word the more likely they will be able to try and say it.
- ✓ When you are **repeating words** make sure they are **in context**.
- ✓ *For example* say "up" each time you pick your child up, repeat "down, down, down" when you go down the stairs or say "juice" every time you hand them a drink of juice.



Keep it simple

- ✓ Before a child can say a word, they first need to understand what the word means. **Keep your language clear and simple** to make this as easy as possible for them.
- ✓ *For example* use phrases of 1-2 words if your child is one and 2-3 word phrases if your child is two and so on.
- ✓ **Focus on the key words** in a sentence and don't worry too much about using correct grammar. A sentence like "the teddy has fallen out of the push chair" can be simplified to "teddy fall down", or "teddy gone."



Be consistent

- ✓ As well as being simple and clear aim to be **consistent** with the words you use.

- ✓ *For example there are lots of different ways of describing having a drink: you might say "Are you thirsty?" or "Do you want juice/drink/water/milk/a bottle/a cup?"*
- ✓ Your child will learn more quickly if you keep to just one particular word, so try to **pick one and stick to it** in the early stages of language development.



Be responsive

- ✓ Your child might point things out to you and babble or vocalise if they can't yet use the word. Try to respond positively when they do this.
- ✓ *For example if they say "ah" as they point to a cat, **praise their effort** and **repeat the correct word back to them**: "Oh yes, cat! Clever boy/girl. Cat."*

Listen to what they say not how they say it

- ✓ If your child is starting to use some words but they are not clear **repeat** anything they say back to them correctly and clearly.

Special times

- ✓ Try to spend at least **5 minutes** of uninterrupted quality time playing with your child when you can focus on modelling language using the above tips and do this as often as possible.



Set the scene



- ✓ **Turn off all your gadgets** (TV, radio, computer, phone etc.) so you can focus all your attention on your child.
- ✓ This also means that your child has only one source of information to process and helps them hear you clearly.
- ✓ Make sure you are at your child's **eye level and face to face**.

HAVE FUN!

- ✓ Language develops through play and children are most open to learning when they are feeling happy and relaxed.
- ✓ **Speak with a really interested tone of voice**. Use exclamations like 'wow' and laugh!
- ✓ **Use animated facial expressions**.

