

## THE BATH SET PLAY GUIDE 9+ MONTHS

- Ways to play
- Expert tips
- Development info

LOVE

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**Hi, You**

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**Hi, you!**

**You may not think of it this way, but the bathtub is one of the best learning environments in your home.**

**Of course, there's the sensory experience of water and bouncy acoustics. But the real secret ingredient is you. You're right there, you can make eye contact and talk back and forth. The Lovevery Bath Set is designed to help you make the most of your time together.**

**The activities in this guide were developed in collaboration with Brooke Dwyer and Bridget Hillsberg, known as The Speech Sisters. They're pediatric speech-language pathologists with more than 20 years of experience. As your child plays in the tub, they'll practice following directions with one or two steps and learn to use gestures with functional and exclamatory words.**

**These activities are meant to be repeated—regular exposure with lots of repetition makes all the difference in language development. Watch for an expert trick that motivates your child to communicate!**

**And now, for some reassurance. You're capable of building your child's speech and language skills, and you don't have to talk to your child constantly to do it. Think quality, not quantity.**

**Enjoy all the bubbles and babbles!**

**XO,**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jessica", with a large, elegant flourish at the end.

**Jessica Rolph  
Cofounder and CEO**

## Included with The Bath Set



**SCOOP & SPIN  
BATH CUP**



**IN THEN OUT  
BATH TUBE**



**FAST & SLOW  
WATER WHEEL**



**I SEE YOU  
BATH MIRROR**



**TALK & PLAY  
BATH BOOK**



**PEEK-A-BOO  
BOAT**



**SHAKE & SPLASH  
BATH BALL**



**BIG & LITTLE  
DUCKS**

Important safety note: Always keep your child within an arm's reach when they're in or near water and supervise them closely.

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# Language Progression

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## Gestures come before words

AGE	GESTURE
9 to 12 months	Clap
9 to 12 months	Wave
9 to 12 months	Arms up
9 to 13 months	Blow kiss
12 to 15 months	High five
12 to 18 months	Point
13 to 15 months	Shake head for <i>no</i>
16 to 18 months	Nod head for <i>yes</i>

## 9 to 12 months

### Your baby may:

- Recognize and respond to their own name.
- Use their voice to get attention.
- Babble first with repeated syllables (*da-da-da, ma-ma-ma, ga-ga-ga*), then with a mix (*ba-da-ma*).
- Understand the word *no*, even if they don't always respond to it.
- Imitate sounds like coughing, sneezing, and blowing through their lips.
- Imitate the rhythms and voice variations of adult speech.
- Say their first words, like *ball* or *uh-oh*.
- Point to objects they want or are interested in.

## 9 to 12 months

### Give your baby:

- Your full attention when they gesture or use their voice.
  - Songs and games of peekaboo.
  - A chance to copy sounds you make and repetition of their sounds, like “raspberries,” giggles, and coughs.
  - First words to try. For example, model and frequently repeat bath words like *duck*, *cup*, *ball*, *splash*, *drip*, and *bubbles*.
- Simple commands paired with gestures. For example, you might say, “Put your arms in the air like this—so big!”

## 13 to 15 months

### Your child may:

- Understand a new word almost every day—about 50 words at 13 months and up to 120 at 15 months.
- Use around 2 to 10 words—like *dada* or *mama*—or word approximations like “ba” for *ball* or “baba” for *bottle*.
- Imitate gestures like clapping, waving, or splashing.
- Respond to simple questions or requests by nodding or shaking their head.
- Recognize and point to familiar objects or people when prompted—“Where’s Grandma?” They may also vocalize as they point. For example, they may say “woof” while pointing to a dog.
- Follow simple one-step commands—like “sit down” or “give me”—if you prompt them with a visual cue or gesture.
- Continue to babble and imitate sounds they hear.

## 13 to 15 months

### Give your child:

- Your full attention when they gesture or use their voice.
- Lots of expression in your face and intonation in your voice when you speak to them. This grabs their attention and helps them learn the words you're teaching them.
- Words related to their routines. For example, use words like *wash*, *water*, *soap*, *rinse*, and *pour* whenever you bathe them.

## 16 to 18 months

### Your child may:

- Understand 2 new words a day from about 16 to 24 months.
- Recognize and name common objects when asked, like *ball*, *dog*, or *shoe*.
- Imitate new words after hearing them.
- Begin to use words along with gestures to express wants and needs, like *bye-bye* or *mine*.
- Use the word *no*.
- Consistently say anywhere between 10 and 50 words—including action words and the names of familiar people and objects.
- Use gestures with words. For example, they may point when saying “up” or nod as they say “yes.”
- Begin participating in simple back-and-forth exchanges. For example, if you say something, your child may respond with a sound, word, or gesture. You reply, and your child responds again.
- Follow simple commands even without gestures or visual cues.

## 16 to 18 months

### Give your child:

- Your full attention when they gesture or use their voice.
- Clear, simple directions. Children at this age are starting to understand commands and directions, even without gestures or visual cues. This is a great time to give them instructions like, “Put the ball in the tube” or “Give me the boat.”
- Opportunities to see functional words in action during play. For example, make the boat move quickly through the water and say, “The boat is moving fast!” Then, move it slowly and say, “Now, the boat is moving slowly.” You can also show your child how to fill up the cup with water and then pour it out. Narrate as you do this by saying, “Fill the cup. Pour it out. Splash!”

## 19 to 24 months

### Your child may:

- Use 10 words at 18 months and up to 300 words by 24 months.
- Start using two-to three-word phrases more frequently, like “want water” or “big truck.”
- Say their own name.
- Ask, “What’s that?”
- Imitate words more frequently and clearly.
- Follow two-step directions, like “Get your shoes and then come here.”
- Begin to sing songs with words.
- Raise their intonation to signal a question, like “Where ball?” or “What that?”
- Name familiar people, body parts, and everyday objects with greater accuracy.
- Match animals to pictures or sounds.
- Respond to yes or no questions.
- Use adjectives and adverbs like *big* or *fast*.
- Enjoy labeling things in their environment and pointing out objects by name.
- Follow commands with spatial concepts, like “Put it in the box.”
- Point to named objects.
- Imitate the behavior and gestures of others.

## 19 to 24 months

### Give your child:

- Your full attention when they gesture or use their voice.
- Two-step directions. Ask, “Can you put the duck in the cup and give it to me?”
- Questions like, “What’s that?” or “Where’s the duck?” Pause to give your child a chance to respond.
- Opportunities to put two words together or say short phrases. Model two-word or three-word combinations, like “big splash” or “little red ball.”

# The Playthings

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**Yay, whoa, wow, and whee!**

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# Yay, whoa, wow, and whee!

## Scoop & Spin Bath Cup

### Why do this

When people think of a child's first words, they usually list everyday nouns like *ball*, *mama*, and *dada*. But exclamations, like *yay*, *uh-oh*, *wow*, *boom*, *pop*, *whoa*, *boo*, and *whee*, count as first words, too. Because adults naturally exaggerate exclamatory words with higher pitch and animated facial expressions, young children tune into these words early and often.

### How to do it

- At bathtime, offer your child the Scoop & Spin Bath Cup and let them experiment with pouring, scooping, and spilling water.
- As they explore, layer in silly exclamations: “Wow, you scooped it up!” or “Whoa, look at it spin!” When water splashes unexpectedly, you can say, “Uh-oh!”
- Over time, with plenty of repetition as they play, your child may start imitating these words, too.
- Older children may enjoy using the cup in their pretend play. For example, it makes a great shower for the duckling.



**Where's the ball?**

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# Where's the ball?

## Peek-A-Boo Boat

### Why do this

You hide the ball under the cup and your child giggles. Then, you lift the cup to reveal the ball and say, “Peekaboo!” When you repeat a sequence like this together, your child practices the back-and-forth rhythm of conversation: I do something, you respond, then I respond back. This kind of playful dialogue teaches turn-taking, builds anticipation, and keeps your child engaged.

### How to do it

- Offer the boat, ball, and cup without any instructions at first. Give your child time to explore on their own.
- Place the ball on top of the boat. You can say, “Ball on top.” Cover the ball with the cup and ask your child, “Where did the ball go?” Connect the question with a gesture by putting your arms out to the sides with your palms up.
- Pause and wait. Your child may giggle, gesture, or even say something back. Then, lift the cup and exclaim, “Peekaboo! There it is!”
- You can repeat the game by hiding the duck under the cup or alternating it with the ball. Say, “Now, cover your eyes. What am I going to hide under the cup?”
- As your child gets older, you can switch roles—let them cover the ball or duck and surprise you.



**One-step, two-step directions**

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# One-step, two-step directions

## In Then Out Bath Tube

### Why do this

Around 12 to 15 months, your child may be able to follow a one-step direction if it's paired with a gesture or part of a familiar routine. For example, you can put your arms in the air and say, "Can you lift up your arms while I pull off your shirt?" When your child is closer to 24 months, try simple, two-step directions related to the same task: "Pick up the ball and put it in the tube." By 30 to 36 months, most children can follow two-step directions that are unrelated: "Put your clothes in the hamper and get your book." This shows improved working memory.

### How to do it

- Start with the yellow tab open. Hand your child the ball and say "Ball in" as you demonstrate dropping it into the tube. Watch it fall out the bottom and pause to let your child try.
- Use short phrases like "Ball in, ball out" or "Water in."
- As your child gets older, close the yellow tab. Invite them to fill the tube with the ball, duckling, or water.
- Encourage your child to try and open the tab to let everything out. At first, they may need your help. Give them a chance to try, then offer verbal cues. For example, you can ask, "Open?" before you step in to release the tab for your child.



**The duck is stuck!**

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# The duck is stuck!

## Fast & Slow Water Wheel

### Why do this

Speech therapists often create playful challenges to encourage children to communicate. For example, if the ball or toy duckling gets stuck inside the water wheel and your child wants your help getting it out, they have a built-in reason to communicate with you. They may use a combination of gestures, sounds, and words to let you know what they want you to do.

### How to do it

- Place the duckling or ball inside the Fast & Slow Water Wheel and let your child try to get it out.
- Sit back and wait—they may point, grunt, or look to you for help. Treat these moments as powerful communication attempts.
- Next, walk your child through the solution as you narrate: “Uh-oh, the duck is stuck! The duck needs help to get out.” Use short, expressive words to model what they might say, like *stuck*, *help*, *uh-oh*, and *out*.
- Then, hold the bands of the water wheel open and encourage your child to pull out the ball or duckling themselves: “You can get it—pull!” Add fun exclamations like *Wow!* *Whee!* or *Yay!* when the duckling is finally free.



**The duck says "quack!"**

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# The duck says “quack!”

## Big & Little Ducks

### Why do this

Animal sounds—like *quack*, *moo*, and *woof*—often show up before animal names, like *duck*, *cow*, or *dog*. That’s because sounds are easier for children to imitate than full words. Animal sounds still count as words in early language development, and the bath is the perfect place to practice.

### How to do it

- Introduce the ducks to your child with playful sounds: “Here’s the mama duck—quack, quack, quack—and here’s the baby duck—quack, quack!”
- Next, say “quack” just once, and look at your child to see what their response is. If they say anything at all, it means they understand you’re inviting them to respond.
- Describe the ducks in simple, active terms:
  - Big duck, little duck
  - Duck in, duck out
  - Can you wave to the duck?
  - Give Papa the yellow duck.
- You can make the ducks talk to each other: “Let’s swim next to each other, Baby Duck.” Or, hide one duck under the water and encourage your child to find it. Keep your words simple, clear, and active, and repeat them often.



**Gestures lead to words**

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# Gestures lead to words

## I See You Bath Mirror

### Why do this

Gestures are a stepping stone to words. A child will wave before they learn to say “bye-bye” and reach their arms high above their head before they learn to say “Up!” In fact, children often communicate their wants and needs in gestures months before they can express themselves in words. Research shows the more gestures your child uses early on, the more words they’re likely to have later in development. One of the best and easiest ways for your child to learn gestures is to see you modeling them.

### How to do it

- Stick the I See You Mirror to the side of the tub or let it float on the water. Looking in the mirror helps your child connect an action they can see in their reflection with something they can feel their body doing—like waving or pointing.
- Use playful gestures as you say the matching word:
  - Wave and say, “Hi!” or “Bye-bye!”
  - Shake your head and say, “No, no, no.”
  - Clap your hands and say, “Yay!”
  - Put your arms out to the sides with your palms up and ask, “Where’s your belly?” Then, point to your baby’s tummy and say, “There it is!”
  - Blow a kiss and say, “Mwah!”
- After each gesture, pause to give your child a chance to imitate you.



## Using functional language

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# Using functional language

## Talk & Play Bath Book

### Why do this

It's easy to point out objects in the bath—like *duck*, *ball*, and *cup*—but some of the most important words your child will learn aren't nouns. They're functional words like *up*, *down*, *open*, *close*, *more*, *again*, *on*, and *off*. These words help your child get their needs met, join in routines, and communicate what they want. Research shows that children who use more functional language early on are better able to engage in back-and-forth conversations later on.

### How to do it

- The bath book is designed as a visual guide. The photos of real children in the bath show your child what they can do in the tub, while the words give you ideas for what to say—and repeat—as they play.
- See if your child can find the hidden duck on each page.
- As you look at the book together, use it to model short action words and phrases that match what your child is doing.
- Here's a list of the 10 most common functional words:

<b>Up</b>	<b>More</b>	<b>Again</b>	<b>Close</b>	<b>Off</b>
<b>Down</b>	<b>All done</b>	<b>Open</b>	<b>On</b>	<b>Out</b>

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## Bubbles & Babbles

More *fun and learning* from Lovevery

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Sing their first sounds in the bath  
Find the Lovevery song  
"I'm in the Bathtub"  
on Spotify or Apple Music



Add some  
Drip Drop Cups  
Get The Inspector Play Kit  
at Lovevery.com



Put on cozy PJs and read  
'Bedtime for Zoe'  
Available in The Play Kits  
and Early Reader Club

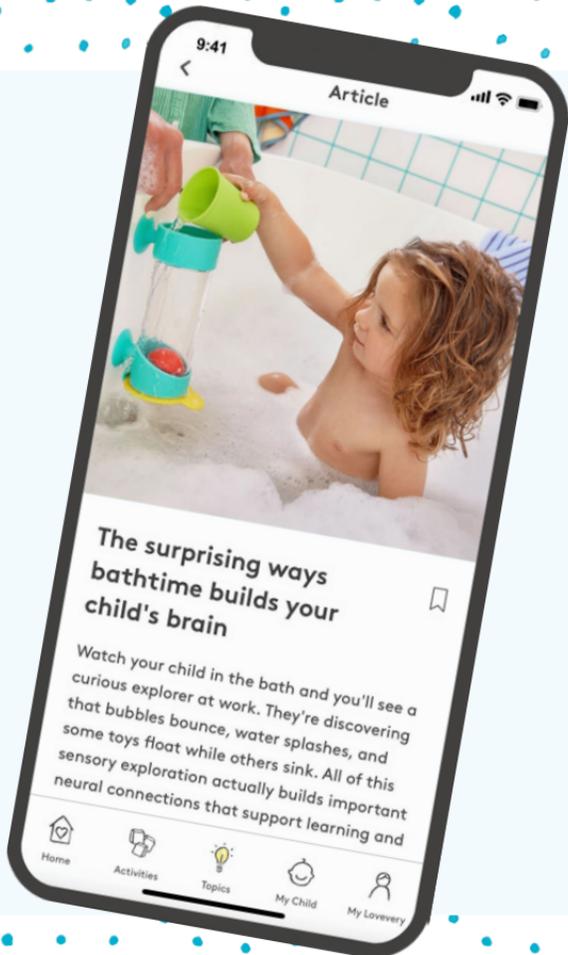


# Could your child be *craving* more?

Explore the Play Kits by Lovevery



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