

Getting Ready for Kindergarten: A Guide for Parents and Teachers

(Developed by First Chance for Children)

It is never too early to start building the skills your child needs to succeed. This list of examples will help. Put a check next to the skills you already see in your child. Then work on the ones you did not check. Don't expect to be able to check them all. Every child develops at his or her own pace. Your child may reach these milestones slightly before or after other children the same age. That's why this checklist should not be used to decide whether to enroll your child in kindergarten. The list should be used to work on skills that will make the transition to school easier. You greeted your baby's first day of life with a smile. Now the two of you can greet the first day of school the same way.

Social and Emotional Development

Does your child . . .

- use words to solve problems
- use polite talk (please, etc.)
- know that it is okay to make mistakes
- take turns, share
- get along with others
- ask for help when needed
- follow rules

Physical Development

Does your child . . .

- hold a crayon, marker, pencil
- run, jump, climb
- cut with scissors
- try to tie shoes
- bounce a ball

Self Help

Does your child . . .

- Fasten clothing and dress self
- Put shoes on and off
- Use the bathroom independently; use tissue and wash hands

Language/Early Literacy Development

Does your child . . .

- talk in sentences
- follow two or three step directions
- talk about everyday experiences
- ask questions
- express ideas so others can understand
- tell or retell stories
- know own name in print
- attempt to write his or her name
- know how to hold and turn pages in a book
- know that books are read left to right and top to bottom
- know familiar signs and logos
- point to most letters of the alphabet ("show me the letter A")
- name many letters of the alphabet on sight
- know that letters have sounds (e.g. "the letter S makes the "ssss" sound")
- know when words rhyme (like bat, sat, rat)
- recognize words that start with the same sound (like sat and sun)
- count or clap syllables

Thinking and General Knowledge

Does your child . . .

- know the names of basic colors
- count up to 10 objects
- count to 20 aloud
- know the days of the week
- know shapes (such as circle, square)
- use words like bigger, smaller
- sort objects in groups by size, shape or color
- know what it means to be "under," "on," "in," and "out"
- know body parts

Approaches to Learning

Does your child . . .

- enjoy trying new activities
- have a sense of curiosity
- use basic problem-solving skills ("I need to get another block to keep the castle from falling")
- keep attention on an age-appropriate task (such as building with blocks)

Health

Does your child . . .

- Get enough sleep
- eat a balanced diet
- brush teeth

In Missouri, you will need the following to enroll your child in school:

- Birth or hospital certificate
- Immunization record
- Contact your school district for other requirements

It is also helpful if you . . .

- Attend the school district kindergarten open house
- Attend kindergarten round-up and screening

For more information, contact:

- Your local public schools
- Your local Parents as Teachers program
- Parents as Teachers National Center: (866) 728-4968 or info@parentsasteachers.org
- Child Care Aware of Missouri: 866 892-3228 or <http://mo.childcareaware.org/parents-families/>
- ParentLink: 800 552-8522 or En Español: 888 460-0008



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