

## Sensory play and The Wonder Weeks

### - Week by week

This resource aims to help you generate **ideas** for sensory play with your baby, using items in [our sensory boxes](#), in line with the developmental leap they may be in/have just been through. The below is by no means an exhaustive list of what your baby may go through during these times. For further information regarding The Wonder Weeks, visit [www.thewonderweeks.com](http://www.thewonderweeks.com).

Leap	What it means for them	What it means for you	Sensory play ideas (items in red are <a href="#">in our boxes!</a> )
<p><b>Leap 1 – Wonder Week 5:</b> <i>The world of changing sensations</i> – baby’s perception of the outside world starts to change as they sense more things around them.</p>	<p>Your baby will begin to have more interest in the world around them. They may fix on certain colours or objects as their vision develops. Red is a favourite colour!</p>	<p>Your baby may cry more, appear clingier, need more skin to skin contact, and may have more trouble sleeping. Babywearing may be useful during this time. Be aware that baby can get <b>overstimulated</b> at this age, so take cues from baby as to when they may have had enough play.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any stripy toys with high contrast</li> <li>Bright colours (e.g. <b>a coloured scarf</b> dangling in front of them)</li> <li>Exaggerated facial movements by Mum and Dad – smiling lots and showing them items.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Leap 2 – Wonder Week 8:</b> <i>The world of patterns</i> – baby will start to recognize patterns using all their senses, in the world around them and in their own body.</p>	<p>Your baby may become transfixed with some of their new discoveries, including their hands and feet! This also means any patterned items around them that take their fancy – curtains are common for babies to stare at!</p>	<p>Your baby may demand more attention, cry more, appear clingier, begin to suck their thumb, sleep poorly, is shy with strangers and have a decreased appetite.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hand or foot rattles</li> <li>Place baby on <b>a foil blanket</b> and watch them wriggle!</li> <li>Toys with lights (e.g. <b>a flashing ball</b> placed in front of them)</li> <li>Dangle toys over them to encourage them to move their arms and legs around (e.g. <b>a rattle</b>)</li> <li>A mobile overhead</li> <li>A colourful <b>ribbon ring</b></li> <li>A <b>tickly feather!</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Leap 3 – Wonder Week 12:</b> <i>The world of smooth transitions</i> – you’ll notice baby becomes less jerky in their movement</p>	<p>Your baby can now recognize continuous changes in sight, sound, smell, taste and touch. Their head also dramatically increases in size!</p>	<p>Your baby may have more trouble than usual sleeping, may be clingier, be shy with strangers, have decreased appetite and appear quieter than usual.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A play mat/floor gym</li> <li>Singing/talking to your baby about what you’re doing</li> <li>Play <b>with a bell rattle</b>, shaking from side to side</li> <li>Place baby in their <b>foil blanket</b> and watch them wriggle!</li> </ul>
<p><b>Leap 4 – Wonder Week 19:</b> <i>The world of events</i> – your baby learns that things can happen in a sequence of ‘events’.</p>	<p>Your baby starts to perceive smooth transitions in sound, movement, light, taste, texture and smell</p>	<p>Your baby may have trouble sleeping, become shy with strangers, demand more attention, need more head support and appear to have ‘mood swings’.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Activity centre/play mat</li> <li>Handheld mirrors</li> <li>Soft toys that have a crackling noise</li> <li>Play with <b>a rattle</b></li> <li><b>Spiky balls</b> with flashing lights laid down in front of baby during tummy time</li> <li>Other toys that will captivate baby include a <b>paper fan, bubbles, and a coloured scarf.</b></li> </ul>

<p><b>Leap 5 – Wonder Week 26:</b> <i>The world of relationships – your baby can now perceive distance between objects and people, understand ‘cause and effect’.</i></p>	<p>Your baby will become easily frustrated as they want to grab things that are out of reach, and they now realise this!</p>	<p>Separation anxiety will now rear its head! Your baby will demand more attention, sleep poorly, become clingier, become quieter than usual and begin to dislike nappy changes. All whilst hitting some major physical milestones like sitting up and crawling!</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cuddly toys may now be a favourite</li> <li>• Hide and seek games with objects, people and using a <b>coloured scarf</b></li> <li>• Looking at picture books</li> <li>• Moving <b>rattles and bell rattles</b> from side to side whilst singing</li> <li>• Popping <b>bubbles</b> around them will become really interesting at this point!</li> </ul>
<p><b>Leap 6 – Wonder Week 37:</b> <i>The world of categories – your baby notices that objects can be put into categories, e.g. toys / food / dogs.</i></p>	<p>Your baby will be carrying out a series of small experiments, concentrating very hard on certain objects to work out their textures, smells etc to begin to categorise items.</p>	<p>For less mobile babies, they may become panicked when you walk around them. Your baby may cling onto you more than before or try being affectionate to get more of your attention.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stacking blocks that they can ‘demolish’</li> <li>• Buttons on everyday items such as remotes</li> <li>• Pressing a door bell</li> <li>• Boxes</li> <li>• <b>Flashing balls</b></li> <li>• Watch bubbles from a <b>bubble tube</b></li> <li>• Tickle <b>feathers</b> so they learn that soft things may tickle!</li> </ul>
<p><b>Leap 7 – Wonder Week 46:</b> <i>The world of sequences – your baby will now realise the importance of ordering things and how to put things together.</i></p>	<p>Rather than create a world of chaos around them, you may find that your little one will start to put things together!</p>	<p>Your baby may become more shy with strangers, have trouble sleeping, demand more entertainment, become jealous when Mum and Dad pay attention to others, and appear quieter than usual at times.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helping out games (e.g. helping do the laundry!)</li> <li>• Naming games – point out body parts with a <b>bright coloured scarf</b></li> <li>• Movement games, shaking <b>rattles and bell rattles</b> in a certain way to a song</li> <li>• Drums!</li> </ul>
<p><b>Leap 8 – Wonder Week 55:</b> <i>The world of programs – your baby can now understand different sequences can result in the same thing.</i></p>	<p>More complex than sequences, your baby will learn that combinations of tasks can result in the same outcome and they will experiment with this idea.</p>	<p>Your baby may become shyer with strangers than before, they may hold on tighter during physical contact, they may want more entertaining, get jealous or become moodier, they may daydream and sleep more poorly. They also may reach for certain cuddly toys, become more mischievous, and experience temper tantrums.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helping out games</li> <li>• Unpacking and putting away items such as shopping</li> <li>• Play hide and seek with their favourite toys</li> <li>• Stackable toys</li> <li>• Hide noise generating toys for them to find (e.g. <b>rattles</b>)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Leap 9 – Wonder week 64:</b> <i>The world of principles – your baby can now begin to think how to accomplish certain goals, making choices and thinking about consequences.</i></p>	<p>By this point, programs such as eating, shopping, going for a walk etc, seem normal to your baby now. Baby’s may struggle with change to their programs mid-way through a program and lack flexibility.</p>	<p>Your baby may cling more to you, become more shy with strangers, want more physical contact with Mum and Dad, want to play with Mum and Dad as much as they can, following them around, they may become more jealous, mischievous, moody sleep poorly and lose their appetite.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More physical games like jumping on beds, climbing furniture etc</li> <li>• Silly games copying funny noises</li> <li>• Singing games with hands and feet like ‘if you’re happy and you know it, clap your hands’ with <b>rattles and bell rattles</b></li> </ul>



			<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Peek-a-boo games with a <b>colourful scarf</b></li><li>• Playing with <b>spiky flashing balls</b>, throwing them etc.</li></ul>
<b>Leap 10 – Wonder Week 75:</b> <i>The world of systems – your toddler can understand the difference between systems.</i>	Your little one understands they can choose how they want to behave and they begin to develop their idea of self and conscience	Signs they have previously shown including crying more, becoming clingier, becoming shy and have more trouble sleeping.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Creating art - drawing, painting</li><li>• Play wrestling</li><li>• Tickling games with <b>scarves and feathers</b></li><li>• Hide and seek with their favourite toys from our sensory boxes!</li></ul>

For more ideas on sensory play, and to purchase our baby sensory boxes, visit

[www.thesensoryboxcompany.com](http://www.thesensoryboxcompany.com)

You can also get in touch with us with any questions you may have by emailing

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