

# Joining Words Together

When children first start talking, they say one word at a time.

Children may start using single words from 12 months of age. After 2 years of age they learn to put 2 – 3 words together.

Children need to hear and know many different types of words to help them put words together.

Children usually learn to say name words first. For example, 'dog', 'car', 'book'.

Children need to learn different types of words so they can start to join words together. A sentence is not just made of name words. Here are the different types of words you can use:



To help your child learn all the different types of words, they need to hear many different words. You can say the different types of words when you play or read with them, or when you do things together.

### Here are ways to teach your child each word type:

#### Name words:

- Name and point at pictures in books
- Name toys and body parts while playing
- Name things around the house



#### Question words:

- Play hide and seek. For example "where's Jon?"
- Talk about pictures in books (For example "What's that?")

#### Belonging words:

- Take turns in games. For example "my turn", "your turn"
- Sort toys. For example "that's your toy", "that's his toy"
- Talk about snacks. For example "her apple", "your apple"

#### Action words:

- Pretend to cook. You can use cooking words like "cook", "stir", and "shake"
- Play games. You can ask your child to "jump", "crawl", or "hop"
- Ask them to bring you toys. For example, "I want the car", "I need the doll"
- At bath time, you can use words like "wash", "splash", and "dry"

### Feeling words:

- Look at how your child feels and name the feeling. For example “You are **happy**”, “You look **sad**”
- Pretend that toys have feelings. For example “teddy feels **scared**, give him a hug!”

### Place words:

- Hide toys and talk about where to find them.  
For example “**under** the bed”, “**on** the chair”
- Talk about how they play “**down** the slide”, “**up** the ladder”



### Social words:

- Teach your child to say “**hello**” and “**goodbye**” to friends and family
- Say “**goodbye**” to dolls when you put them away

### Describing words:

- Talk about pictures in books. For example “**big** dog”, “**fluffy** cat”
- Talk about food “**soft** potato”, “**crunchy** carrots”
- Talk about toys “**brown** teddy”, “**fast** car”

If you are worried about your child’s talking or understanding, talk to your doctor about a speech pathology referral.