

Other things to try: 1c

Taking turns

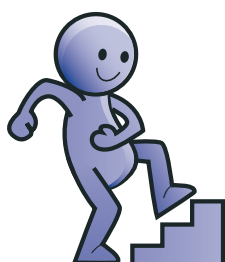


Why is this important?

Social interaction begins with learning to take turns. Communication is a two-way process – sometimes we speak, sometimes we listen. Turn-taking begins very early on: when a baby smiles, the adult smiles back.

What to do

- Take turns to make gestures, sounds or words. When the child makes a sound or a gesture, copy it straightaway.
- Give the child enough time to respond: it's important to wait.
- Don't worry if the child doesn't immediately make a noise in return; his/her response may be a look or a gesture which can also count for a 'conversation turn'.
- Turn-taking is most successful when you are watching and waiting.



Step up

- Introduce new and different sounds or actions and see if the child tries to copy as his/her turn in the conversation.
- Start to play turn-taking games (e.g. taking turns to roll a ball, knock a tower down).

Step down

- Leave lots of time for the child to respond.
- Make familiar, simple and obvious sounds for the child to try and copy (e.g. 'baba').
- Make sure you're face-to-face so that your facial expressions are easy to see.
- Vary your intonation and volume so that the sounds you make are interesting.
- Use the daily routine to find opportunities to develop turn-taking, e.g.
 - ★ If the child bangs the table with his/her hand, bang it with your hand and wait for him/her to respond.
- ★ If the child rolls a ball to you, roll it back.
- ★ If the child makes a noise (e.g. 'dadadada'), make a noise back and see what happens next.
- Wait for the child to do something (e.g. wriggle a toe during a bouncing game before you give another bounce).

