

## 7-Year-old Milestones

Most 7-year-olds display an unending thirst for knowledge and will have an innate curiosity and excitement about things in the world. They are natural explorers, scientists, and analysts, and often ask questions about everything from why the sky is blue to how do washing machines work?

At this age, they also take great pride in sharing their knowledge about things and often enjoy showing younger children skills that they themselves have mastered. For a 7-year-old, there will be a sense of confidence at school that comes from being familiar with the ins and outs of being a pupil in a classroom. They will often feel a sense of pride in having achieved basic maths and reading skills and may want to discuss what they learned in school with parents, friends, and caregivers.

### Physical Development

For 7-year-old children, physical development will be more about refinement than major changes. At this age, children will also develop better coordination and balance and can learn to do more combinations with their motor skills, such as moving around while they are dancing. The more physically active they are, the faster these skills develop.

### Key Milestones

- Rides a two-wheeled bicycle
- Performs movements that are done while standing in place such as twisting, turning, and spinning
- Shows improved skill at performing simple chores, such as making their bed or sweeping the floors

### Things to do over the summer:

Do fun physical activities as a family. Play sports, go to community events and play outdoors. Children who stay physically active will develop better physical skills than those who are inactive.

### Emotional Development

Most 7-year-olds are better able to handle transitions and last-minute changes. While they may not yet be able to exercise some self-control, they can usually tolerate going with the flow or unexpected situations. Nevertheless, 7-year-olds still need and derive comfort from routines. As a child's world increasingly opens up and their attention focuses more on things and people outside of their home and family, they will rely more on things they can expect and count on, such as family time, a bedtime routine, and regular family meals.

However, many 7-year-olds will also feel insecure about themselves and may be their own worst critics. For a 7-year-old, not getting something to look exactly the way they want it to or losing a game can be crushing to their self-esteem. Parents, teachers, and other adults can help by offering frequent encouragement and helping a child focus on what they might learn from an activity rather than what didn't go right.

### Key Milestones

- Describes the causes and consequences of emotions, such as saying, "I got mad because I really wanted to go to the park."
- Manages emotions better, especially in public situations.
- Starts to use self-calming strategies, such as repeating phrases or taking deep breaths, when feeling distressed

### Things to do over the summer:

Use rewards and consequences to guide your child and keep them safe. Watch the film 'Inside Out' and discuss the child's emotions and memories. When reading books with your child, ask them how the character is feeling based on pictures or their actions.

### Social Development

Many 7-year-olds will still love playing with friends but may begin to enjoy spending more time alone, playing by themselves or reading. Alone time and downtime, can, in fact, be an important part of a child's development of a sense of self and their relations to others. They will begin to care more about the opinions and thoughts of other people. They will also continue to develop empathy and a strong sense of morals and fairness.

As 7-year-olds grow up and expand their social horizons, they often become naturally attached to other adults besides their parents, such as a teacher, an uncle, or even a friend's parent. Most 7-year-olds are more able to put themselves in someone else's shoes and work through conflict, although disagreements and hurt feelings can still break out at this age.

### Key Milestones

- Shares knowledge with others
- Exhibits capacity to understand others' actions and feelings
- Treats peers with respect when playing games together

### Things to do over the summer:

This can be an excellent age to teach your child about what it means to be a good citizen of the world. You can talk about how to be charitable or ways you can help the environment. Try playing simple board or card games together (your child doesn't always have to win!) or try working together to build a jigsaw puzzle. Encourage your child to talk about their friends and arrange opportunities to invite friends round for tea or meet up in the park for the children to play together.

### Cognitive Development

Most 7-year-old children are curious about the world around them. They will ask questions and seek answers about the things they encounter and the people they meet and will take pride in sharing what they know. Children at this age will display a formidable sense of adventure and thirst for information and will love being mentors to younger siblings and other children as they show off their newfound knowledge and skills. Their maths and reading skills are steadily expanding too, as is their ability to recognise words and do simple word problems.

By this age, your child has likely mastered simple addition and subtraction, and will now be able to apply these skills to solve more complicated math problems, like word problems. They will learn place value, work with three-digit numbers, and begin mentally adding and subtracting. They may also work on fractions and learn about shapes in structures in their environment, like buildings and houses.

### Key Milestones

- Can count forward and backwards up to 1000, starting at a range of numbers
- Solves word problems in maths
- Uses increasingly complex and creative strategies to solve problems

### Things to do over the summer:

Incorporate a 7-year old's newfound math skills into everyday life and make it fun by playing around with math games in the kitchen, on road trips, and even in the grocery store. In addition, since children love playing on the computer, some online maths games can be a terrific way to get them to sharpen their math skills while having fun.

### Speech & Language

Your 7-year-old will also continue their rapid language development. As their vocabulary and reading skills develop and grow and the number of sight words they know expands—to as much as thousands of words—they will enter a world of more complex chapter books. Most 7-year-olds will be able to read with more fluency (speed, accuracy, and expressiveness) and will be able to have more in-depth discussions about books. They will also be able to write more complex, coherent, and interesting narratives and some non-fiction pieces of writing such as a newspaper report.

At home, encourage a love of books by reading together and making it a point to discuss characters, plot, and other aspects of the book. While most 7-year-olds can read early-reader books and even chapter books, they may still want to snuggle next to a parent in the evenings and be read to, just like when they were younger.

### Key Milestones

- Provide very detailed answers to questions about things they have done
- Retell a story without the need for someone to prompt them along the way
- Follow a series of complex instructions independently over a period of time

### Things to do over the summer:

Initiate conversations with your child, ask questions and demonstrate how to be a good listener. Model correct sentence structure and words -instead of over correcting your child, repeat words or sentences e.g. if your child says "buyed an apple" say "Yes, you bought an apple." Talk about your children's interests and encourage them to learn and use new vocabulary.

### Play

Expect your 7-year-old to continue to engage in pretend play. Their improved learning and memory skills help them become more creative. It is a great time to encourage your child to engage in art projects. Puppets, dolls, costumes, and free-form Legos are great toys for kids during this stage. They can get more creative when their toys don't have specific instructions or boundaries. Most 7-year-olds will join in playground games with their peers. They tend to become better sports at this age.

### Key Milestones

- Names the characters, setting, problem and solution in books or shows
- Make up complex games and communicate with peers to play the game
- Enjoy conversation with adults and children and be able to maintain a conversation with someone about a topic that is not chosen by them

### Things to do over the summer:

Try using some toys or make some puppets and create your own story. Try setting up a pretend shop, restaurant, hairdresser's salon, workshop or classroom; role-play as customers

etc. Create stories and scenes together, they could be made up or based on a story you've read together.

### Other Milestones

While reminders about washing hands and brushing teeth will still be needed, parents of 7-year-olds can let children take the reins more often when it comes to personal hygiene. Many 7-year-olds will have lost baby teeth and have permanent teeth, which can give them a cute but awkward look since their mouth and face are not yet fully grown.

Many 7-year-olds may also want to take showers on their own rather than an evening bath.

This can often be a terrific timesaver since many 7-year-olds have increasingly busy schedules filled with extracurricular activities in addition to school. Parents may still need to occasionally supervise to make sure all the shampoo has been rinsed out, for instance, but many 7-year-olds will be able to shower and bathe on their own and feel proud of themselves for being 'big kids'.

### Things to do over the summer:

- Ensure your child can wash their hands and use the toilet independently and respectfully
- Teach your child to tie their shoe laces
- Ensure your child can use a knife and fork correctly and displays good table manners
- Ensure your child can dress themselves as well as dry themselves after a bath or swimming