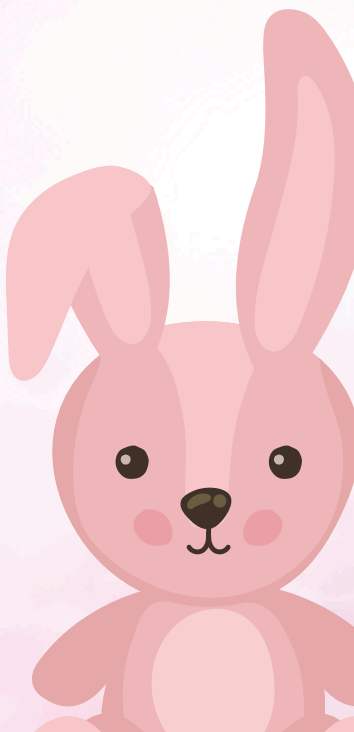
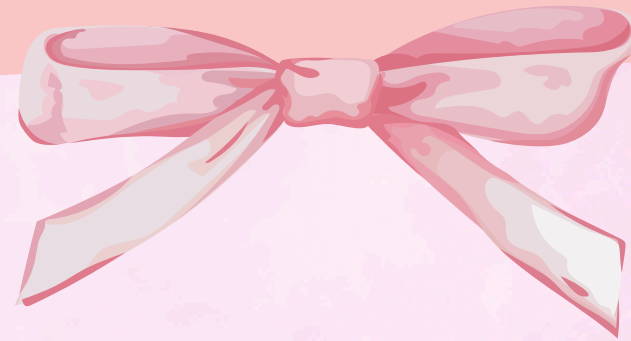




Cognitive Milestones

The Three-Year-Old Mind: A Mother's Guide to Cognitive Milestones





INTRODUCTION

- I will never forget what I saw when my son played with a bowl of biscuits. For months, he just crushed them. Then one afternoon, he began separating the round ones from the square ones.
- Next, he lined them up by size. Finally, he picked two small ones and announced, "This is a baby biscuit. This is Mama Biscuit."
- Nothing is more fascinating than watching a three-year-old's brain begin its own sorting revolution.
- This is the age of the executive function explosion. Think of your child's brain as a busy household on a festival morning. At age three, they are learning to be the little manager—deciding what goes where, what comes first, and how to handle everything at once.





Milestone 1

Part One

Following the Three Steps in Order

If You Notice This	Try This At Home	Remember This
"Pick up your shoe, put it in the rack, and wash your hands."	Give small, three-step instructions during play	Count to five silently after speaking
They remember all three steps without reminders	"Take your plate to the kitchen, come back, and sit down."	Do not repeat immediately. Give the brain time.
They feel proud when they complete the sequence	"Get your shoes, bring them to me, and wait by the door."	Celebrate effort, not just the right answer

Personal note

When my son struggled, it was not defiance. It was his brain asking for extra seconds. Waiting changed everything.



Milestone 2



Pretend Play (The Gateway to Logic)

If You Notice This	Try This At Home	Pro Tip
A roti becomes a phone	Hand them a spoon and say, "Call Grandma!"	Do not correct their "silly" ideas. Add to them.
A cardboard box becomes a car	Ask, "Where are you driving today?"	Follow their imagination. You do not need to lead.
A pillow becomes a sleeping baby	Join their play without taking over	This is the foundation for reading and math later

Why this matters

Pretend play teaches that one thing can stand for another. That is exactly what letters and numbers are – symbols with meaning.



Milestone 3



Following the Three Steps in Order

If You Notice This	Try This At Home	Remember This
They find "the big red circle" among many shapes	"Give me the small blue button."	Start with one thing (color). Then add size.
They sort laundry by color and owner	"Which one is the big yellow spoon?"	Use everyday moments – sorting snacks, pairing socks
They notice "this is small and round."	Ask, "Can you find something round and soft?"	Celebrate when they try, even if wrong

Why this matters

This is the birth of complex problem-solving. The brain is learning to filter multiple pieces of information at once.

Milestone 4

Understanding Different Thoughts (The Birth of Empathy)

If You Notice This	Try This At Home	Remember This
"Mama, you are sad?"	Hide a toy while they watch. Ask, "Will Papa know where it is?"	Name different perspectives out loud
They hide a snack and say, "Sister doesn't know."	Read stories and ask, "How is this character feeling?"	"I know you want the red cup, but I thought you liked blue."
They offer you their toy when you pretend to cry	Acknowledge when they show concern	This is the root of real empathy

Personal note

This is my favorite milestone. When your child realizes your thoughts are different from theirs, that is not just sweet. That is science.

Milestone 5

Understanding Simple Sequence (First... Then..)

What It Looks Like	Try This At Home	Pro Tip
"Before park, finish lunch."	Use "first... then..." every day	Do not use clocks. Use simple sequences.
They wait patiently because they know what comes next	"First socks, then shoes"	"After bath, then story."
They remind you of the routine	"First dinner, then TV time."	Predictability lowers frustration beautifully

Why this matters

The world starts to feel predictable and kind when children understand sequence. Every day struggles naturally reduce.



Milestone's Part Two



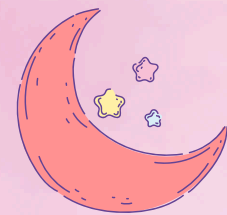
- These beautiful brain shifts happen naturally at home. But they are put to the test in a new classroom.
- A new teacher. New rules. New faces. Your child's little brain suddenly has twice as many things to manage at once.
- That is why the first week of school feels so heavy — for both of you. If your child is struggling with the new session routine, their cognitive load may simply be full.
- They are not being difficult. They are being busy—building their thinking skills while also learning to navigate a new world.



Conclusion

- The three-year-old mind is not a race. It is not about what other children are doing or what relatives compare.
- It is about curiosity, about noticing the small shifts, and about celebrating the day your child sorts their first bowl of snacks or hands you a roti-phone to call Grandma.
- Your only job is to offer small opportunities, wait patiently, notice quietly, and celebrate gently. The brain builds itself one small milestone at a time, and you get to watch it happen.





Thank You!

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