

THE SKILLS CHILDREN NEED FOR SCHOOL-BASED LEARNING

In order to be prepared for starting school, there are certain skills that your little one needs to have developed.

Remember, junior's skill level will depend on their age so keep that in mind when you're reading these lists. You can also check out our [School Readiness Checklist](#) on the [PlayBiz website](#) for the general milestones by age group.

Language skills

- Uses verbal language appropriately and clearly to communicate
- Maintains eye contact
- Listens to others
- Reads non-verbal language (e.g. facial expressions, tone)
- Understands emotions/feelings
- Uses interactive skills while playing (e.g. takes turns, roleplays, shares)
- Understands how to resolve conflict
- Recites rhymes and sings songs
- Retells stories
- Follows two or three instructions at the same time

Gross motor skills (bigger body movements)

- Has good strength in their posture and is able to maintain a seated or standing position
- Is interested in running, skipping, jumping, balancing, climbing
- Has ball skills (e.g. catching, throwing)
- Manages different factors within their environment (e.g. stairs, uneven ground, obstacles)
- Understands spatial concepts (e.g. up/down, left/right)
- Understands the need for safety

Fine motor skills (smaller hand and arm movements)

- Uses a 'pincer grip' (touching the tip of the thumb and pointer/2nd finger together)
- Has established a 'dominant' (preferred) hand
- Uses a tripod pencil grip (holds the pencil between the tips of the thumb, pointer/2nd finger and middle/3rd finger)
- Can draw a circle, triangle, square
- Can draw a recognisable picture of a person and a house
- Uses a stabilising ('holding') hand while using the other hand to complete a task (e.g. holding a piece of paper steady while writing with the other hand)
- Cuts around straight and curved designs
- Can unscrew lids and do up buttons
- Puts together puzzles and other small objects such as Lego
- Independently completes self-care tasks such as simple dressing, toileting

Concentration/cognitive skills (mental skills)

- Is interested in learning
- Has confidence participating in learning
- Is able to concentrate and complete a task
- Has language and conceptual skills
- Recognises their own name
- When reading, scans from left to right across the page
- Attempts to solve problems independently
- Describes concepts (e.g. same/different, big/small)
- Counts objects with 10 or more in a group
- Sorts and classifies objects (e.g. based on colour, size, function)

Visual perceptual skills (sight skills)

- Follows an object smoothly with only their eyes while their head remains still
- Recognises shapes, colours and some letters and numbers
- Can find objects in a 'busy' environment (e.g. socks in the sock drawer, name on a page of writing)

Independence in daily activities

- Toilets independently
- Washes and dries hands independently
- Dresses independently
- Blows their nose and wipes it efficiently
- Unpacks their lunch box
- Uses a fork and spoon independently
- Tidies up their own things

Social skills

- Participates in play and interacts with other children
- Shows interest in others and understands the needs and feelings of others
- Expresses needs and wants appropriately
- Shares and takes turns with toys, equipment and so on
- Follows rules and directions when requested
- Participates in a routine and structured environment
- Is able to be separated from their parents and/or carer