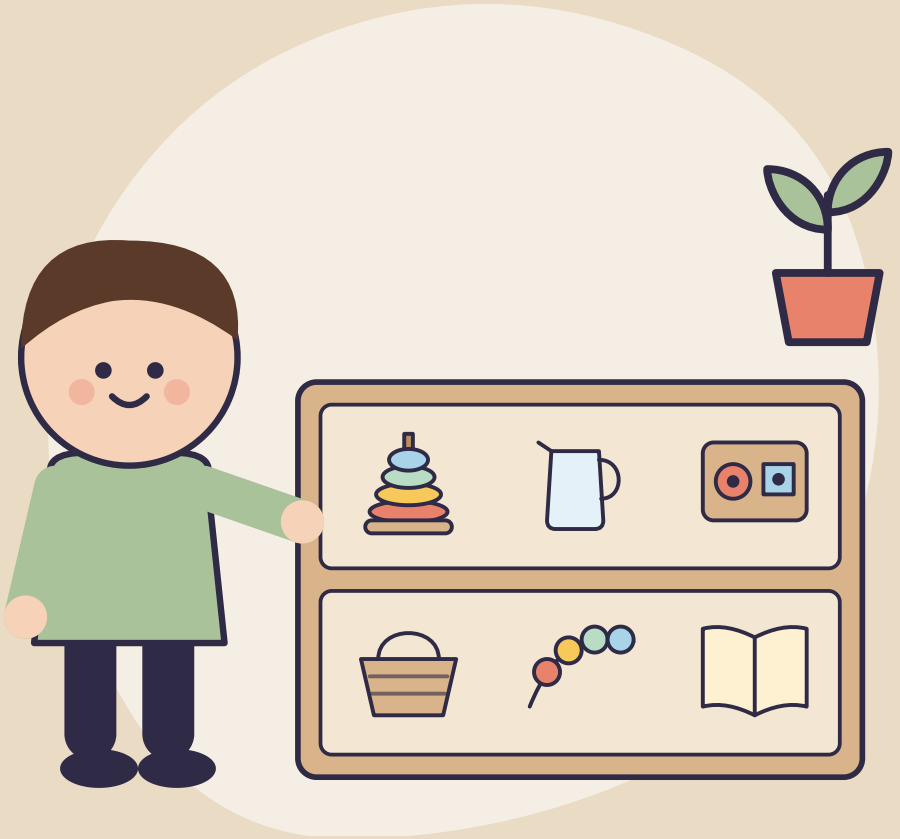


A no-pressure playbook, birth to 6

Montessori at Home

Simple setups, 42 low-cost activities, and age-by-age guidance for calmer play and more independence, using what you already have.

Birth to 6 years

42 activities • room guides • printables

A note before you begin

Welcome. You're about to see how capable your child really is.

You don't need a classroom full of wooden materials to bring Montessori into your home. You need a few low shelves, some real tools in child sizes, and a new way of seeing your child: as a capable person who wants to do things for themselves.

This book is organized by age, so you can open it to exactly where your child is right now. For each stage, you'll find what's developing, how to set up your space, six activities using everyday materials, and practical life skills your child can start building.

A quick, honest note: most of the research on Montessori looks at Montessori schools, not homes. This book takes the core principles behind those results, like independence, a prepared environment, and fewer, better toys, and shows you how to apply them at home.

Start small. One shelf. One activity. One task your child can now do on their own. This is a menu, not a checklist.

Help me to do it myself. That's the whole idea.



What the research says

Montessori is one of the most studied approaches in early childhood education. Here's what the evidence shows.

What the research says

32 studies

in a 2023 meta-analysis found Montessori education outperformed traditional education, with positive effects on academic skills and on executive function, creativity, and social skills.

Randolph and colleagues, Campbell Systematic Reviews, 2023

What the research says

Lottery-based study

Children who won a lottery to attend a public Montessori school were better prepared in reading and math at age 5, and scored higher on executive function, than children who didn't.

Lillard and Else-Quest, Science, 2006

What the research says

Closing the gap

In a three-year study of 141 children, Montessori preschoolers fared better on academic achievement, social understanding, and mastery orientation, and the income achievement gap shrank to a statistical tie.

Lillard and colleagues, Frontiers in Psychology, 2017

What the research says

Twice as long

Toddlers given 4 toys instead of 16 played twice as long with each toy, and in more creative ways.

Dauch and colleagues, Infant Behavior and Development, 2018

An honest note

These studies looked at Montessori schools. At home, you can apply the same core principles, but research hasn't directly tested Montessori-at-home programs.

What's inside

1 **The Montessori way** 6
Six principles, fewer toys, observation, and limits.

2 **Preparing your home** 12
Room-by-room setups and budget swaps.

3 **Montessori by age** 16
Seven stages, 42 activities.

4 **Everyday Montessori** 45
Routines, language, screens, and nature.

\+ **Printables** 50
Rotation planner, observation journal, independence checklist.

Jump to your child's age

17 0 to 6 months
21 6 to 12 months
25 12 to 18 months
29 18 months to 2 years
33 2 to 3 years
37 3 to 4 years
41 4 to 6 years

Part 1 5-min read

Presenting an activity

1. **Invite.**
   'I have something to show you.'

2. **Carry it to the table together.**
   Trays help keep everything together.

3. **Demonstrate slowly, with few words.**
   Let your hands do the teaching.

4. **Offer a turn.**
   'Would you like to try?'

5. **Step back.**
   Let them explore, even if they do it differently.

6. **Put it away together.**
   Back on the shelf, ready for next time.

Mistakes are learning

If water spills, show how to wipe it up. If a puzzle piece won't fit, let them work at it. Errors are information, not failures.

Inviting

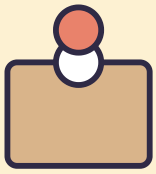
I have something to show you. Would you like to see?

Stepping back

You can try. I'll be right here if you need me.

12 to 18 months

Your toddler is walking, carrying, and wanting to do it themselves. This is the start of practical life.



What's developing

- Walking, then climbing and carrying objects
- Using a few words, and understanding many more
- Putting things in and taking them out
- Imitating everyday household tasks
- Wanting independence, and sometimes frustration

Set up the space

- [ ] Hooks at child height for coats and bags
- [ ] A low stool and step tower, used with supervision, so they can see and help
- [ ] A small broom, cloth, and dustpan
- [ ] Puzzles and posting toys on the shelf
- [ ] Their own cup and plate within reach

Tip for this stage

Slow down your demonstrations. Show, with few words, then let them try. Your hands teach more than your words.