

Developmental Profile of a Four-Year-Old

Here's a ready reference on the range of abilities of a typical four-year-old child.

Social-Emotional

- Has extended attention span; easily distracted
- Prefers playing with peers rather than alone
- Spontaneously takes turns/shares
- Chooses/identifies special friends
- Accepts responsibility
- Shows awareness of/concern for another's feelings
- Talks about own feelings, emotions, attitudes
- Uses appropriate social responses (says thank you, raises hand)
- Controls/expresses emotions in acceptable ways
- Responds appropriately to small-group instruction
- Shows interest in own body/exploring gender differences

Cognitive

- Knows own street and city
- Groups by two characteristics (shape, color)
- Classifies objects into categories (food, toys)
- Knows and names up to six colors
- Understands one-to-one correspondence
- Counts/creates sets up to ten
- Imitates simple parquetry patterns
- Completes up to 20-piece puzzles
- Matches/identifies simple shapes
- Sequences three pictures to tell story
- Has expanded knowledge of time concepts (today, tomorrow, yesterday)
- Understands directional concepts (top/bottom)
- Repeats 4-digit and 4-word sequences
- Completes sentences about simple analogies (Fire is hot, but ice is cold.)
- Understands comparatives (big/bigger)
- Predicts outcome of story/event

Communication/Language

- Plays with words (rhymes, repetitions, nonsense words)
- Asks/gives meanings of new words
- Sings songs/rhymes of 30 or more words
- Uses up to 8-word sentences
- Retells stories with essential elements in logical sequence
- Answers content questions about story (facts may be confused)
- Follows three unrelated commands in order
- Asks variety of questions
- Responds appropriately to many question forms (answers may be incorrect)
- Describes past events
- Describes objects by shape, size, color
- Describes own activities
- Uses quantity terms (all, some, most)

Speech Milestones

- Has vocabulary of over 1,500 words
- Has 100% speech intelligibility (not error-free)
- Uses the following grammar forms:
 - Possessive pronouns (his, her, their)
 - Regular past tense with *-ed* (walked)
 - Irregular past (came instead of comed)
 - No* and *not* appropriately
 - Contractions (it's, there's)
 - Prepositions (beside, around, between)
 - Future-tense verb forms (will)
 - Connector words (and, but, because)
- Consistently produces sounds *for n, ng, f, k, g, t, d, y* (as in you)
- Produces consonant blends with 90% correctness

Fine Motor

- Uses mature grasp on pencil
- Copies simple shapes (square, triangle, diamond)
- Draws stick figure
- Draws person with up the six recognizable parts
- Uses irregular/uneven strokes to copy letters/numbers
- Creases paper
- Puts paper clip on paper
- Cuts out circle and other simple shapes
- Performs simple sewing on lacing card
- Uses key to open small padlock
- Puts small pegs in pegboard

Self-Help

- Dresses/undresses with little help
- Knows front and back of clothes
- Buttons small buttons
- Engages separating zipper
- Laces shoes (may not tie laces)
- Hangs up coat
- Blows/wipes nose without help
- Washes face
- Toilets self independently
- Uses fork/spoon skillfully
- Uses blunt knife to cut easy foods
- Gets drink from water fountain
- Puts away personal belongings; cleans up

Gross Motor

- Walks up/down stairs alternation feet (without holding rail)
- Walks on tiptoe for up to ten feet
- Walks balance beam without falling
- Hops on one foot
- Jumps forward up to ten times without falling
- Skips, alternating feet
- Gallops
- Catches a thrown ball
- Kicks rolling ball toward target
- Pumps legs while swinging

Play

- Plays cooperatively with peers for extended periods
- Involves others in pretend play
- Represents more realistic situations in pretend play
- Enjoys playing dress-up
- Builds large block/chair structures to center play around
- Begins playing group games with simple rules

