

First Words: Go

Why? - Go is a useful word to target as it is motivating - you say "go" and something happens. Be aware that your child may not be able to say the "g" sound to begin with, but don't worry about that—the most important thing is that they are trying.

When? - Whenever the opportunity arises. There are specific activities below, but just try to take opportunities as they occur in everyday life and play.



- Roll a ball backwards and forwards with your child. Hold on to the ball and say "ready, steady..." then pause to see if your child will say "go". If they don't, say it yourself, and then roll the ball straightaway and then keep trying.
- Play cars or trains with your child. Say "go" before you push it and see if your child will copy. A click-clack track works really well for this. Take turns to push a car down and say "ready steady..." then see if your child will say "go".
- Use physical activities such as running and jumping. You say "go" and your child runs or jumps, then they have to say "go" to get you to do it.
- Blow up balloons and let them go. Say "ready steady..." and see if your child will say "go" before you release it.

Top Tips

- Make sure you pause each time and give your child a chance to communicate.
- Try to get eye contact with your child. Get down on the floor with them and make sure you're at the same level. Wait for eye contact. You could bring the toy you're playing up to your face to encourage this.
- Accept any attempt at communication to start with. Don't tell them it's wrong, but just say the right word afterwards for them to hear.
- After a while, if they are still not vocalising, you could try saying "g" and see if they can copy or finish the word.
- Stop when your child gets bored and try again another day.