

# Babysitting Badge

**Purpose:** Learn how to babysit safely and prepare to take on babysitting work.

## Step 1. Get to know how kids develop

Kids of different ages have different needs, desires, and behaviors. If you have younger siblings at home, this is the perfect time to observe them. If you don't have younger siblings, you can check out the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services for information about observation of infants and toddlers. With permission from an adult, visit the website for observation tools and videos. Don't forget to take notes!

[childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/infant-toddler-resource-guide/infanttoddler-care-providers](http://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/infant-toddler-resource-guide/infanttoddler-care-providers)

## Step 2. Prepare for challenges

Attend a babysitter training course. Many local hospitals and community centers offer babysitting classes. If you are unable to take a face-to-face class, the American Red Cross and other organizations offer online courses. (Tip: The American Red Cross also offers a first aid class that can be helpful for babysitters. If you take the course, you will complete Step 1 of the Cadette First Aid Badge.) Or you can interview five moms about what they expect from a babysitter. What are the top three behavioral, safety, and emergency situations they expect babysitters to be able to handle?

## Step 3. Focus on play

If you have younger siblings at home, observe how they play. See what they choose when given the opportunity to select a toy or game on their own. If they are old enough, you can ask: Why do you like this toy over others? What is your favorite game? What about it is most fun for you? You also can visit the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services website in step 1 for videos about important learning and development that occurs through interactions and play.

## Step 4: Find potential employers

Think about how many kids and what ages you'd be comfortable babysitting. Also think about questions a potential employer might ask, such as your payment expectations, what days and times you are available to babysit, and your transportation to and from your babysitting job. Write a questionnaire to give to family, friends, and neighbors. On one side, put your name, qualifications, and the type of babysitting job you're seeking. On the other side, write questions for your potential employers, such as number of children and their ages, when they generally need babysitting help, and their basic household rules.

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**Step 5: Practice your babysitting skills**

Plan a fun game, snack, and craft or activity to be prepared for your first job. Be creative, and brainstorm lots of ideas for each so you always have an idea no matter what. Do a test-run of some of your ideas with your family to make sure you feel comfortable playing the game, making the snack, and teaching the activity. You want to feel ready for almost anything when it's time for your first babysitting job!

**Congratulations! You've earned the Babysitting badge!**

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