

Ivan's Goals

6 months

Physical	
Goals	Games
head control	sit up on couch ¹ , play in walker ² , play with capsule ³
balance	play horse ⁴ , sit up while supported by arms ⁵
strength	joint compression ⁶ , super baby
push up off floor	play tummy time, play on wedge ⁷ , lay across lap
roll over from tummy to back	play baby rollover, reach for rattle
roll over from back to tummy	play baby rollover, reach for rattle
improve fine motor skills	play with small toys (like block-a-block)
improve arm strength	play high-five ⁸
Cognitive	
Goals	Games
reach for objects he's felt/remember their presence	little room ⁹ , play mat ¹⁰
reach for objects he hears	play with duck-a-duck & other toys that make sound
shake rattle himself	play with rattle
learn cause & effect	play with water mat ¹¹ , instruments
learn to interact with people	take him out on a walk to the park, take him to grandma's house for Sunday family dinner
body awareness	name body parts in bath, naked baby time, baby massage
spatial awareness	walker, rock in hammock ¹²
learn about environment/be curious about world	go outside, play in the sun or rain, go for walk, touch new things (like grass, sand, water, frozen teethers, etc), eat new foods, play with musical instruments
Visual	
Goals	Games
figure out what vision he may have/get him to use his limited vision	dark mat with light objects ¹³ , play with lighted toys
encourage photo receptors	try to track flashlight

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¹ Ivan likes to sit on the couch by himself. This helps him work on balance and head control.

² Ivan's walker is a fun way to encourage him to sit up.

³ Ivan has a large exercise capsule that he lays on to practice holding his head up while on his tummy. The curvature makes it easier for him and the bouncing is fun. Any large exercise ball will work for this game.

⁴ I place Ivan on my knees and bounce him like he's riding a horse. When the horse slows down to a trot, I lift one knee, then the other. He really has to work on his balance to stay on the horse!

⁵ I hold Ivan in a sitting position and only give him support by holding on to his arms. He needs to control the rest of his body in order to sit up.

⁶ Joint compression is an activity where you press your baby's joints together – his hands into his wrist, his arm into his shoulder, or his legs into his knees, for example. This can be a game by pressing on his feet while he kicks or playing high-five and pressing into his hands. These games strengthen muscles and body awareness.

⁷ Our PT brought us a wedge to play with – it's just a raised surface at an angle. This way Ivan can practice tummy time while raised at a slight angle. This is supposed to make it easier to lift himself off the floor.

⁸ High-five is a part of the joint compression games. Joint compression is an activity where you press your baby's joints together – his hands into his wrist, his arm into his shoulder, or his legs into his knees, for example. This can be a game by pressing on his feet while he kicks or playing high-five and pressing into his hands. These games strengthen muscles and body awareness.

⁹ A little room is a box with hanging objects that remain in the same place so that babies learn about object permanence. See our article on Making Your Own Little Room for more information.

¹⁰ A play mat is similar to a little room, but it's on a mat. Sew a bunch of toys to a mat or thick blanket. These toys always remain in the same place so that your baby learns that things still exist even when he isn't touching them. He will also learn how to anticipate his environment.

¹¹ Ivan's water mat is a common baby toy; it's just a mat filled with water. He likes to sit on the mat and feel the water move. He can learn cause and effect when his foot moves and that makes the entire water mat jiggle.

¹² Babies love it when you place them on a blanket, pick it up by the corners, and swing them like a hammock. It's relaxing and the swing helps them learn about moving through space.

¹³ Place large light-colored objects on a dark blanket – this should be easier for your baby to see and help them use any remaining vision they may have.