

babies ♥ *mobiles* (and why you will too!)

Fun, colorful mobiles with soothing music and movement contribute to babies' brain growth and development, especially their vision. "Mobiles are designed so that baby shifts his gaze from one toy to another," says Barbara Smith, occupational therapist and author of *From Rattles to Writing: A Parent's Guide to Hand Skills*.

5 MONTHS The age by which the American Academy of Pediatrics advises removing mobiles from cribs to keep baby safe.

choose the right one Contrasting colors, such as red, white and black, stimulate vision. Look for moving parts too, says Smith. "Mobiles that rotate further challenge a baby to maintain her gaze on a moving toy," she says. "These early visual skills prepare babies to reach, grasp and manipulate objects."

change it up Babies love novelty, so move the mobile's position to offer a different view.

time it right Mobiles intended for baby's crib or bouncy seat are designed for early development and are best used from birth until 5 months. Remove it when baby can sit, pull or hold himself upright on his hands and knees to prevent entanglement. The one you use for nursery decor can stay — just keep it far from baby's reach.

— ANNE H. ZACHRY PH.D.



Register for a mobile so you'll have one ready when baby comes home.