

A normal temperature for a child may range from 97 degrees Fahrenheit (F) to 100.4 degrees F. In general, the AAP considers anything over 100.4 degrees F to be a possible fever.

Taking a rectal temperature:

- Clean the end of the thermometer with rubbing alcohol or soap and water; rinse in lukewarm water and dry. Apply a small amount of lubricant, such as petroleum jelly, on the end.
- Place your child tummy down across your lap. Hold the child by placing your palm against his lower back. Or, place the child face up and bend his legs to the chest. Rest your free hand against the back of the thighs.
- With the other hand, turn the thermometer on, and insert it ½ to 1 inch into the anal opening (not too far). Hold the thermometer in place loosely with two fingers, keeping your hand cupped around your child's bottom. In about a minute, when you hear the beep, remove it and check the reading.
- Re-clean. Be sure the thermometer is labeled so it's not accidentally used in the mouth.

Types of digital thermometers for use by age

Age	Technique/type
Newborn to 3 months	Rectal (in the bottom)
3 months-3 years	Rectal, axillary (under arm), tympanic (ear)
4-5 years	Rectal, oral (in mouth), axillary, tympanic
5 years and older	Oral, axillary, tympanic

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