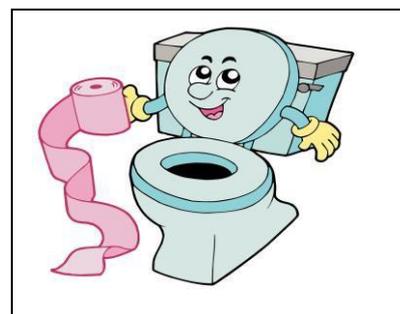


Parent Information Sheet

Toilet Training

Toilet training is one of those child developmental stages all parents can find frustrating and complex. Making the transition from nappy to toilet can certainly be a challenge, particularly if you feel pressurised to start the process before your child is ready. By choosing the right time and approaching toilet training in a calm and patient manner, you can help your child get to grips with this new skill as quickly and smoothly as possible.



It is important to remember that every child is different, so try not to compare your child to others. But rushing toilet training is counter-productive. By the age of three, 9 out of 10 children are dry most days; by the age of four most children are reliably dry all the time.

Toilet Tips Before You Start

- **Model** – Model how to use the toilet by sitting down or letting your child come to the toilet with you.
- **Routine** – Develop a routine by sitting on the toilet at regular intervals
- **Seat** – Use a toilet training seat as children can sometimes feel uncomfortable or feel they are going to fall down the toilet.
- **Familiarity** – The flush can be daunting for younger children if they've never experienced it before. Talk to them about how the toilet works and what happens when you flush. You might even want to show the inside of the cistern if you have one. If your child is scared of the flush, consider saying 'Ready, steady, go' before flushing.
- **Clothes** – Have plenty of spare clothes on hand before starting as accidents will happen at the beginning.
- **Disinfectant** – Keep disinfectant cleaning sprays and cloths close to hand.
- **Drinks** – Keep drinking. You might want to restrict drinks to help them, but this will have the opposite effect and may result in medical issues.
- **Try** – Try a variety of strategies to help if you need to – put toilet paper into the toilet before your child sits to stop cold water splashing them.

Start Toilet Training

- **Getting the Feeling** - From about the age of 18 months your toddler will start to feel that they have a wet or soiled nappy. They may tell you that they need to do or have done a 'wee'.
- **Look for Signs** - Look out for signs such as fidgeting, walking in a funny fashion or going somewhere quiet or hidden – these are all indications that your child is aware that they are about to go to the toilet and are cues that your child might be ready to start toilet training.
- **Correct Timing** - When you are ready to start toilet training, choose a time when you can be at home and things can be calm and relaxed. If you have a busy few weeks ahead of you, wait until

you can give toilet training your full attention. It needs consistency and time. The summer months are good. It can help to minimise stresses and frustrations as there are fewer clothes for your child to take off and it's easier to dry clothes when your child has the inevitable accidents.

- **Prepare** – Prepare yourself and your child. Talk about what will happen.
- **Reassure** - Talk about toilet training with your child and what will happen. This provides reassurances as they embark on this new way of doing things.
- **Books** - Visit your local library or ask your health visitor to recommend a picture book about toilet training that you can share with your child.
- **Trainer Pants** – Consider swapping nappies for trainer pants. These are easy to pull up and down before and while you're starting out on toilet training. These 'grown up' pants can also be a good way of building confidence if your child is a little reluctant to move on from the security of a nappy.
- **Potty or Toilet Seat** - Introduce your child to a potty or toilet seat. Explain what it's for, encourage your child to play with the potty or seat before it has been used and try sitting on it so they can get used to this new object before you start training.
- **The First Day** - Start the day off by sitting your child on the potty or toilet before breakfast. You could put the potty in the bathroom and sit on the toilet yourself to show your child how it's done.
- **Praise** - Give your child lots of praise as you go through toilet training together. Lots of gentle encouragement and praise is needed.
- **Calm** – Keep your child and yourself calm.
- **Regular** – Regularly put your child on the potty or toilet, as well as regular reminders to use the potty throughout the day.
- **Consistency** - Consistency is vital. Have a few quiet days at home to start with until your child is mainly dry. If you do have to go out, take the potty or toilet seat with you as it's important to keep the momentum going. Your child will become confused if you put them back in a nappy for convenience. This will send a mixed message that it's okay to 'wee' or 'poo' in their nappy sometimes.
- **Books** – Give your child a book to look at or share while using the potty or toilet. This will encourage your child to spend some time on the potty or toilet.
- **Meals** – Put your child on the potty / toilet after each meal. Even if they don't do anything it's a good way to encourage bowel movement, as digestion is followed by a natural reflex to go to the toilet. Sitting quietly on the potty or toilet, perhaps with a book to look at, is a good way to get children used to going on the potty to do a poo. Many children get into the routine of doing a poo after a meal.
- **Night Time** - It's important to wait until your child is dry during the day before attempting night-time toilet training. Remember that night-time bladder control may take quite a bit longer to achieve, so be patient and wait until your child is truly ready for this next step – usually when they have had a number of dry nights in a row.
- **Don't Worry** - If toilet training isn't going well and you and your child are getting frustrated, try not to worry. Leave it for another month and try again, taking it more slowly and perhaps use an incentive such as a reward chart. Your health visitor can help with common problems.
- **Praise** – Don't forget to praise your child along the way for their efforts along the way – however small.

Experiencing Problems

- **Don't Panic** - If your child is having lots of toilet accidents every day – don't panic!
- **Restart** - Revert back to the beginning of the process and take it more slowly.
- **Troubleshoot** – Consider why your child is having accidents. Has your child may be experiencing stresses about the process? Has there been a new baby in the family? Are they tired or been ill? Has there been a change in circumstances?
- **Distance** - Keep the potty close at hand to where your child is playing so they don't have far to go.
- **Reward** - Use a sticker chart for rewards every time your child uses the potty or toilet. Sometimes children use this as a form of control or a way of seeking attention. Focus on the positive praise and don't get cross about the accidents.