

TOILET TRAINING GUIDANCE

By age one, most babies have stopped doing poos at night. By age two, some children will be dry during the day, but this is still quite early. By age three, 9 out of 10 children are dry most days – even then, all children have the odd accident, especially when they're excited, upset or if they are absorbed in something else. By age four, most children are reliably dry during the day, however it usually takes a little longer for children to learn to stay dry throughout the night.

Often families decide to begin in the warmer months when clothing dries more quickly and fewer clothes need to be worn to help with independence. You can try to work out when your child is ready. There are a few signs that show your child is starting to develop bladder control: they know when they've got a wet or dirty nappy, they get to know when they're passing urine and may tell you they're doing it the gap between wetting is at least an hour (if it's less, potty training may fail, and at the very least will be extremely hard work for you) they show they need to wee by fidgeting or going somewhere quiet or hidden, lastly they know when they need to wee and may say so in advance.

Potty training is usually fastest if your child is at the last stage before you start the training. If you start earlier, be prepared for a lot of accidents as your child learns. They also need to be able to sit on the potty and get up from it when they're done and follow your instructions. If you go out, take the potty with you, so your child understands that you'd like them to wee or poo in the potty every time they need to go.

It's usually easier if boys start by sitting on the potty before they switch to standing up later. Talk about your child's nappy changes as you do them, so they understand wee and poo and what a wet nappy means. If you always change their nappy in the bathroom when you're at home, they will learn that's the place where people go to the toilet.

Helping you flush the toilet and wash their hands is also a good idea. Leave a potty where your child can see it and explain what it is for. Children learn by watching and copying. If you've got an older child, your younger child may see them using it, which will be a great help. It helps to let your child see you using the toilet and explain what you're doing. Using your child's toys to show what the potty is for can also help. You could see if your child is happy to sit on the potty for a moment, just to get used to it, when you're changing their nappy, especially when you're getting them dressed for the day or ready for bed at night.

How to start potty training

Keep the potty in the bathroom. If that's upstairs, keep another potty downstairs so your child can reach the potty easily wherever they are. The idea is to make sitting on the potty part of everyday life for your child.

Encourage your child to sit on the potty after meals, because digesting food often leads to an urge to do a poo. Having a book to look at or toys to play with can help your child sit still on the potty. If your child regularly does a poo at the same time each day, leave their nappy off and suggest that they go in the potty. If your child is even the slightest bit upset by the idea, just put the nappy back on and leave it a few more weeks before trying again. Encouraging them to use the potty to wee will help build their confidence for when they are ready to use it to poo. As soon as you see that your child knows when they're going to wee, encourage them to use their potty. If your child slips up, just mop it up and wait for next time it takes a while to get the hang of it. If you don't make a fuss when they have an accident, they won't feel anxious and worried, and are more likely to be successful the next time.

Put them in clothes that are loose fitting. Elasticated trousers are easy to change and avoid tights and clothes with zips or lots of buttons. Your child will be delighted when they succeed, and they will also feel delighted when they can help to manage their clothing independently too. A little praise from you will help a lot. It can be quite tricky to get the balance right between giving praise and making a big deal out of it. We don't recommend you give sweets as a reward, but you could try using a sticker chart.

Potty training pants and pull-ups, disposable, or washable potty-training pants (also called pull-ups) can be handy when you start potty training and can give children confidence when it's time to swap nappies for "grown-up" pants, but they can also confuse a child if used for a long time as they don't sense when they are wet. Training pants should be a step towards 'grown-up' pants, rather than a replacement for nappies.

When you decide to move to using pants send in lots of spare clothes, underwear, and socks. A spare pair of shoes, and wellies, just in case!

We will take your child to the toilet regularly and offer lots of praise, and stickers if you want us to. If accidents happen, we will not make a fuss. We will simply change their clothes and put wet or soiled clothes into a waterproof bag to be sent home and we will continue to encourage and support them.

Night-time potty training

Focus on getting your child potty trained during the day before you start leaving their nappy off at night. If your child's nappy is dry or only slightly damp when your child wakes for a few mornings in a row, they may be ready for night-time potty training. Ask your child to use the potty last thing before they go to bed and make sure it's close by, so they can use it if they need to wee in the night. There are bound to be a few accidents, so a waterproof sheet to protect your child's mattress is a good idea. Just like daytime potty training, it's important to praise your child for success. If things aren't going well, stick with nappies at night for a while longer and try again in a few weeks' time.

Using the toilet instead of the potty.

Some children start using the toilet instead of the potty earlier than others and we find that once children see others using the toilets and flushing them, they want to try too.

A child's trainer seat that clips onto the toilet can help make your child feel safer and more confident on the toilet at home. A step for your child to rest their feet on gets your child in a good position for doing a poo. If you have a boy, you need to make sure they sit on the toilet every day to poo. Once they have started weeing standing up it's easy to forget about pooing, and this could lead to constipation.

Supporting Resources

Books

There are lots of story books available about learning to use a potty. Reading them with your toddler might help explain potty training in a fun and exciting way. Here are a few book suggestions:



I Want My Potty (Anderson Press) by Tony Ross.

The Potty Book - for Boys (Barron's Educational Series) by Alyssa Satin Capucilli and Dorothy Stott.

The Potty Book - for Girls (Barron's Educational Series) by Alyssa Satin Capucilli and Dorothy Stott.

Uh Oh! Gotta Go! (Barron's Educational Series) by Bob McGrath and Shelley Dieterichs.

The Pop-Up Potty Book (Orion Children's) by Marianne Borgardt and Maxie Chambliss.

Come out Mr Poo! Janelle McGuinness

No More Nappies! Marion Cocklico

The Dinosaur Potty Training Book Kensiya Pavaska

Toilet Training Songs

To the tune of "This is the way we brush our teeth"
Where do we make our poo and wees
Our poops and peeps, our poo and wees
Where do we make our poo and wees
We do them on the potty!



Pee on the Potty

(Tune-Mary had a little lamb)

One day Lewis had to pee
had to pee
had to pee
One day Lewis had to pee
So, he pee peed on the potty.



The Poo on the Loo Song

Poo, Poo, Poo on the loo.
Poo, Poo, Poo on the loo.
Poo, Poo, Poo on the loo

The Wee, Wee Song

(Child's name) did a wee, wee.
 (Child's name) did a wee, wee
 (Child's name) did a wee, wee
 (Child's name) did a wee, wee
 Woopie it's a wee. Wee!

Wash, Wash, Wash Your Hands

Wash, wash, wash your hands.
 Play our handy game.
 Rub and scrub, scrub and rub;
 Germs go down the drain;
 Hey!
 Wash, wash, wash your hands;
 Play our handy game.
 Rub and scrub, scrub and rub;
 Dirt goes down the drain;
 Hey!

Ducklings Potty Training Song

(To the tune of 'Here we go round the mulberry bush')
 Where do we do our wees and poos,
 wees and poos, wees, and poos.
 Where do we do our wees and poos
 We do them on the potty (toilet).

