



Toileting Advice

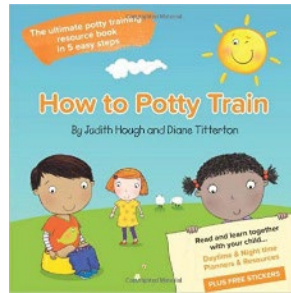
When to Start Toilet Training

- All children are unique and develop at different rates. As a result they will vary as to when they are ready to start toileting. However, this tends to be between 18 months to 3 years of age.
- Think carefully about when would be the best time to start. Consider whether you currently have the time and dedication needed to help them. Avoid times of big change such as moving house, having a baby, or them starting nursery.
- Before your child can toilet train they will need to be able to safely mount and dismount the toilet and maintain balance whilst sat on it.
- Your child should be able to stay dry for at least an hour at a time.
- They should be showing awareness of needing, going, or having been to the toilet. For example, do they let you know or act differently in some way such as going somewhere specific or taking their nappies off.
- Does your child seem interested in using the toilet/ potty without being prompted.
- Make sure your child is weeing and pooing regularly.
- They should be pooing at least four times a week and it should be soft and easy to pass. If they are going less regularly and/or their poo is hard and requiring them to strain, they could be constipated. Contact your GP if you are concerned your child might have constipation.
- Don't limit their drinks to help them stay dry. It is important for healthy bowel and bladder movement that they drink 6-8 glasses a day and avoid caffeine, fizzy and sugary drinks.

How to Begin Toilet Training






- Expose them as much as possible to you going to the toilet. Children learn a lot from watching and copying.
- Begin to talk about wees and poos. For example talk to them about whether their nappy is wet or dry.

- Read them books about toilet training. Such as “*How to Potty Train*” by Judith Hough and Dianne Titterton. Start changing your child’s nappy in the toilet to help them learn to associate weeing and pooing with the toilet.



- Have them play a more active role in nappy changing. Get them to pull up their own nappy if they wear a pull up, as well as help pull up and down clothing.
- Encourage them to wash their hands afterwards. Have them help pick a toilet seat insert and footstool, or a potty that are kept in the bathroom.
- Your child might not know when they need the toilet to start with. Get into a routine of taking your child to the toilet regularly, every couple of hours.
- Choose clothes that are easy for your child to pull up and down. For example looser fitting clothes with elasticated waists and no fastenings.
- Have your child choose pants and encourage them to practice wearing them to get used to how they feel.
- Make sure everyone who will be caring for your child knows you are toilet training and how you plan to do it so they can follow the same plan.
- Give your child lots of praise for every small step they get right such as sitting on the toilet or washing their hands.
- It might help to introduce a reward system such as this reward chart from www.eric.com
- Be patient. Your child is learning a new skill and will have accidents and make mistakes. If they are finding it particularly hard it is ok to decide to wait and try when you feel they are more ready.

ERIC's Potty Training Reward Chart

| | Day 1 | Day 2 | Day 3 | Day 4 | Day 5 | Day 6 |
|---|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
|  | | | | | | |
|  | | | | | | |
|  | | | | | | |
|  | | | | | | |
|  | | | | | | |
|  | | | | | | |

When using the toilet

- Have them practice sitting on the toilet. Try fully clothed to start. Make sure they only sit on the toilet for short amounts of time, about 2-3 minutes at a time.
- It might help to keep suitable washable toys by the toilet that they can play with whilst sitting.
- Encourage boys to sit down to wee initially. This can make it easier to open their bladder as well as help simplify the process for them on the occasions that they also need to poo.
- Make sure your child is stable and comfortable sat on the toilet.
- The best position to pass poos and wees is when your knees are above your hips and your feet are on a flat surface. Your child is likely to need a footstool and seat insert to achieve this.



- When learning to wipe it may help your child to use wet wipes. These will make it easier for them to feel where they have wiped and where they still need to wipe.
- Encourage them to check each time to see if it is clean and put it in the toilet and get a new wipe/ paper if not.
- It may help initially if you still do most of the wiping and encourage them to do the last bit. Hand over hand may help to start.
- As they build up their skills you can encourage them to do more and more until they are wiping on their own.
- Visual supports can help children learn the toileting process. These can be found on the following website www.do2learn.com



**Helpful
Resources**

- You're Health Visitor or Children's Centre will be able to give toilet training advice.
- www.do2learn.com for visual supports
- www.eric.org.uk is the children's bowel and bladder charity.
- information on training children with special needs:
 - www.eric.org.uk
 - www.autism.org.uk is the National Autistic Society website.

Sleep Patterns

Most people wake between 4-5 times per night. This is normal. As a rule we do not remember this. If the environment around us has changed (e.g. the light was on and now is off, parents were in the bed and now aren't or the child fell asleep somewhere else and is now in their own bed) we are more likely to fully wake up.

Good Sleep Routines

These are important as they help cue a child into the fact it is soon bedtime and it helps them to 'wind down'. There should be a definite end point to the routine so your child associates this with falling asleep.

- Develop a consistent calming routine before bedtime with quiet activities at the same time every night.
- Make sure the TV or any electronics are switched off at least an hour before bedtime as the blue light in them blocks the sleep hormone (Melatonin).
- Calcium based drinks and snacks can help sleep e.g. milk, yoghurt, porridge.
- Quiet fine motor activities can help children wind down for sleep.
- In the hour before bed have a bath or a cuddle in a warm towel or blanket. Avoid bath time before bed if it is a stressful experience for your child.
- Ensure you get ready for bed in the same order e.g. pyjamas on, milk, tooth brushing, toilet.
- Reading stories, relaxation music or story tapes are good relaxing things to do in the immediate run up to going to bed.
- End the routine the same way each night e.g. a kiss and cuddle and say "goodnight".
- Wake the child at the same time every morning to help strengthen their body clock.

If you want to introduce a sleep routine, the following things are important to consider:

- Choose a time when life is settled. Holidays are not the best time.
- Your child may resist the routine initially as it is new, so their sleep pattern may worsen.
- Try the routine for at least 2 weeks.
- Be realistic about what can be achieved. Make small, feasible changes.
- Be consistent.

Things to try to avoid

- Drinks/foods containing caffeine, e.g. coffee, tea, coke, chocolate.

- High sugar foods and drinks.
- Some squashes can act as a diuretic, e.g. blackcurrant. If your child is urinating frequently you may want to change the squash they have.
- Stimulating activities, e.g. television, computers, mobile phones, I-pads, for an hour before bedtime.
- Bringing your child back to the living area once their bedtime routine has come to an end or allowing them to fall asleep elsewhere and then transferring them to their bed
- Sending them to their bedroom as a punishment. It needs to be a calm and happy place for your child to feel relaxed in.

If your child is used to falling asleep with you with them the following advice may be helpful:

- Sit beside your child when they are in bed. Do not interact with them. Stay with them until they fall asleep.
- Gradually increase the distance between you and your child each night whilst you wait for them to fall asleep until you are able to leave the room.
- Consider giving them something that smells of you e.g. one of your t-shirts over their pillow, a teddy of theirs you have cuddled or a photo of you.
- If your child cries or throws a tantrum when left, leave them for a set amount of time e.g. 3 minutes. Go in, check they are alright, put them back into bed with minimal interaction, say it is time to go to sleep (or choose a similar phrase) and leave.
- Gradually increase the time you leave them for or have a set time e.g. go in every 20 minutes.

If your child wakes at night the following advice may be helpful:

- They may kick their bedding off and wake because they are cold/hot. Try a sleeping bag or tucking their duvet/sheets in around them.
- If your child gets out of bed, take them back calmly and with minimal interaction. Repeat each time they get up; they need to know they will get the same response each time from every adult who is in the house.
- Try to avoid taking them to the toilet/going downstairs/giving them a drink, as they may learn to expect this each time they wake.
- Some children need help understanding when it is night and when it is OK to get up. Try using something like a day/night clock to help them.
- Move their bedtime to later. Some children do not need as much sleep as others.
- If your child wakes at the same time each night, stir them 30 minutes before, (do not wake them fully) and let them go back to sleep. Continue this every night until they sleep right through and then try a night where you do not wake them.
- Try to avoid too many toys in their bedroom as this can be exciting and stimulating when a child wakes in the night.
- Reward your child in the morning if they stay in bed all night.

If your child doesn't go to sleep until much later than they need to, the following advice may be helpful?

- Put your child to bed at the time they usually fall asleep, so they go to sleep quickly and more easily.

- Gradually move the time of bedtime back e.g. by 5, 10, 15 minutes until you reach the time you want them to be going to sleep.

Useful Resources:

The Children's Sleep Charity

Website: <https://www.thechildrenssleepcharity.org.uk/>

Phone Number: [01302 751 416](tel:01302751416)

Email: info@thechildrenssleepcharity.org.uk