

# Potty and Toilet Training

## A Guide for Parents



Moving from nappies to pants can be a nervous time for parents and a big change for children. This Guide for Parents is designed to give information, hints and tips to help potty and toilet training be a positive experience for both you and your child.

### Show Your Child Their Poo

Don't be afraid to ask your child if they would like to see the poo in their nappy once you have changed it. All too often, we wipe the dirty nappy away, bag it and bin it. Has your child ever seen their poo? There's no need to get too close and examine it, but a quick look before it's bagged up will help your child to understand what their body is doing.

### Potty Play

Before introducing potty training, have the potty in the room and let your child explore it and feel comfortable with it. Let them discover what it could be used for.

### Is Your Child Ready?

Look for signs your child is ready. Don't worry about other people's children or opinions; your child will be able to show you they are ready. Bladder muscles and coordination are the key to controlling toileting, and children can develop this control any time from 20 months to 3.5 years old. Each child is different. There are also social and behavioural cues such as being able to follow instructions, cooperate, and communicate their needs clearly with you. Use this **Potty and Toilet Training Signs of Readiness Checklist** to help you to decide if your child is ready.

### Timing Is Everything

When deciding if the time is right to potty or toilet train, think about what is going on in your child's life. Is the environment stable or are they in a time of change? If they are starting nursery or there are family changes such as a new baby or a family separation, it may be better to wait until things become more settled.



### Communicate with Childcare

If your child attends a nursery or childminder's, communicate with their key person when you plan to start potty training. Find out how your childcare setting will support your child and what hints and tips they have.

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## Skip the Potty

If your child is over the age of three, it may be worth considering skipping the potty and going straight to the toilet. Some bigger children struggle with getting up and down from the potty because of the small size of potties and stepping up to the toilet is easier for them.

## Bin Them

Don't be afraid to put dirty pants in the bin! Some things just aren't worth saving.

## Travelling

Try not to put your child back into nappies or pull-ups for travelling. Instead, use towels or puppy training pads to cover the seats of the car. When out and about, take the potty and nappies. You can use a nappy to soak up a wee in the potty if you are caught nowhere near a toilet.

## Rewards

Most children respond well to rewards. It may be worth considering using a reward system when the novelty of potty or toilet training starts to wear off. Initially, however, try to use lots of praise and the motivation of being 'grown up' to help your child become self-motivated.

## Try Pyjamas First

Some children find the feeling of pants around the legs is too similar to the feeling of a nappy. Try no pants and loose pyjama bottoms when first potty or toilet training. They are easy to pull up and down in hurry too.



Trust your parenting instincts – nobody knows your child better than you!