



Toilet
Training
Hints
and Tips

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Introduction

Toilet training cannot possibly come with a one size fits all manual. Two of my children are toilet trained and the third is starting to tell me when she does a wee and a poo BUT none of them have been the same. My first was easy, she was ready to use the potty and she did. She rarely had an accident and was also night trained quickly and easily. She however would only poo in a nappy for the first three months. My second child had accidents galore; we stocked up on undies and threw out countless pairs of soiled ones. But she got there, although even at 4 she still has the odd accident. And our third child, well who knows what will happen there. My point is, expect the unexpected and look for as many different suggestions and ideas as possible. Hopefully one will help you and fit your child.

This booklet is a compilation of tips sent into our website and facebook page by real parents who have enjoyed the highs and lows of toilet training. We hope some of the suggestions help you and your child. Remember, each child is different. Try not to compare your child to the child next door – they all do it in their own time. And good luck!

Tanya

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Getting Started

Every child is ready to start toilet training at different times, and each one responds well to different methods. The hard part for us as parents is to work out when they are ready (and often, when we need to go back to nappies and wait for another day to try again), and, how to approach this very important life lesson. The best way to approach it is to find out what worked for other parents and try one at a time until you find what works.

Signs they are ready to start

“How did you know your son or daughter was ready for toilet training?”

My son was toilet trained just before he turned 2 and I knew he was ready because he started freaking out when he did a poo in his nappy. So I then started to toilet train him and he took to it straight away and we first taught him to sit to wee (just used a kids toilet seat for the toilet) within a few months he was standing to wee on his own. Good luck and hope he takes to it fast when you start. *Bianca*

Nappies were frequently dry. *Jayme-Lee*

Some of the signs are – verbally telling you that they need to wee/poo before they do it, telling you that they've done it in their nappy, taking their nappy off when wet, taking their nappy off to wee (on the floor etc), showing keen

interest in you going to the toilet, an interest in knickers/jocks, copying you on the toilet, grabbing onto their nappy as they pee, doing a 'I need to pee' dance. There are more signs, and a child doesn't have to show every one of those signs but I'd recommend to mums that their little one show at least a minimum of 4 signs before starting. They recommend starting in summer, probably because its best to train your little one in little to no clothing at the start. I think its best to strike while the irons hot, not wait for the season.

Tamara

I started toilet training just before 2 and she was completely out of nappies at night about a month later - I will say that I gave her lots of nappy free time from the time she could walk (9months) and I think that taught her about the feeling of weeing and pooing. *Natalie*

They are ready when they can indicate to you that they need to poo or wee before it happens. Depending on age/development this could be verbal or non verbal cues. You need to pay real close attention. Please remember. 'Toilet training' is a misnomer. Like all things, it is developmental. It is a physical and cognitive skill. The bladder must have matured enough to hold an amount of urine (dry for 2-3 hours). And cognitive in that the child can recognise the signals the body is giving them to 'go' and act on it. *Melissa*

I started putting my now 14 month old on the potty before a shower at around 11 months old, she has used it every night since and sometimes through the day we pop her on and she always does a wee. She has just started telling me when she needs to do a poo and we have managed to catch a few so far. I am not really treating it as toilet training, just going with the flow for now. I'm planning on gradually increasing the amount of times we put her on the potty during the day. *Annika*

When I went to buy a box of nappies and my son (who had just turned 3) put them back on the shelf and went and got a pack of underwear instead! *Jodie*

Best age to start

“Is there a particular age when you are more likely to have success with toilet training?”

My son is 14 months old and I have started toilet training. By this I mean before and after bath he sits on the potty and any time I go he follows me in, pulls out his potty seat and sits down. We're kind of just associating ATM and he seems to love being a "big boy". *Lisa-Marie*

I was advised by my health nurse to start 'toilet training awareness' between 18 months and two years if age. This involves taking them to toilet with you and talking to them about what you're doing etc and also for example having a potty in bathroom and when you are running their evening bath sit them in potty - if they go then great if they get off it that's fine don't sit them down again. *Katie*

Close to 3, he learnt in 3 days. *Melissa*

When he told us he wanted to go to the toilet, we talked about the toilet a lot but let him decide. He was 2 years 4 months and trained within two days 4 I have a potty in the car just in case, if I'm at the shops I leave whatever I have at the service desk and take him then go back and resume the shopping. *Kym*

My girl was just after 2 when I started...*Kirraleigh*

My daughter is now 16mths but began telling me poo and wees at 14mths and will say it and then moments after do the deed including breaking wind but just because she is telling me I don't think she is any where near ready for another couple of months. I will try all the above advice and see how we go. *Kira*

How to start

I want to start toilet training, but I have no idea where to start! Any suggestions?

I allowed her watch me go to the toilet (didn't encourage her to come in but if she did I didn't send her away) and I explained I was doing a wee "like a big girl" which she was fascinated with. *Joanne*

I followed 'Oh crap potty training technique', worked SO well, one accident on the first day and never again!! *Lisa*

Just go undies or nothing at all on her bottom in the day and keep with the nappy at night for a bit - and stay calm! Lots of accidents will happen. *Renee*

Jumping into it worked best for us. Chucked nappies out, straight to undies. Day trained in five days, night trained 2 days later. The first few days were messy, but it's important to persevere and not put nappies back on them. That will just set you back. *Naomi*

I found no undies worked best with my eldest girl. I tried pull ups and undies but found she still didn't quite know she was wet. I started 2 weeks before she turned 2. Now in the midst of toilet training my 2nd girl who turns 2 at the end of March. She's good with undies. I just take her to the toilet regularly (I don't like potties). If I catch her starting to wee/poo I rush her to toilet to finish it there. Also take her about 20 mins after she's had a drink, plus before and after each meal/sleep to get into a routine. We have a few books in the toilet to read when she's there. Its very time consuming! And requires A LOT of patience! *Jodie*

My daughter started showing signs of readiness at 17mnths. There were about 5 clear signs she was ready. I started her on the potty, taking her at regular intervals throughout the day. To encourage her to relax and sit on the potty, I would sit on the floor and sing songs, read stories etc. if she went, we

threw a potty party! We cheered, danced, called nanna & daddy...made a huge deal of it and gave her a stamp. If she didn't go or did it on the floor, I wouldn't make a big deal of it, id just say 'whoops, wee wee goes in the potty' and move on. Because it was such a positive, encouraging experience, by the end of the week she was grabbing the potty and doing wees and poos by herself. I bought a step up stool for her to use the toilet and she transitioned no worries. By 18 months she was dry both day and night. *Tamara*

Wait till they are ready and don't rush it, let your child set the pace. *Elise*

Before we started we made a big deal about going shopping for a toilet seat, big boy undies and stickers that he can get when he uses the toilet. We talked about it a lot and I bought him a book to read with a flush sound button. Then we started by wearing big boy undies. I started when I knew we had a few days we could be at home. I put a nappy on overnight and for day sleep but we use the pull ups and call them 'sleep pants' not nappy. Initially I took him to the toilet every hour and gave him praise and sticker for using. Now he holds better, I ask him if he needs to go and if he says no I don't push it. If he has an accident we say uh-oh, maybe next time we will get to the toilet and then I change him straight away and make him help clean up. He has just started initiating going by himself now and we've hit the third week. He hardly has an accident now. Good luck, patience is the key!!! *Tristen*

Let her go rudey nudey so she's got nothing in the way of getting to the loo on time. I did a reward chart for the first week or two, (Google toilet training reward chart, heaps of free printables) with a sticker for every time he went to the loo/potty and a big reward when he filled each chart. (I.e., chocolate!) Make sure you let her know how proud you are when she makes it, and don't make a big deal over her accidents, they will happen a lot. But we just say "oh dear. Next time, where do you need to go? Don't forget!" And they will need reminding/prompting every half hour or so. *Kara*

I started by putting my kids on the toilet at every nappy change for a few weeks, then went bare butt at home for a few weeks but still having a nappy at sleep times, then using undies and shorts. I found if I put undies on mine they didn't grasp the concept of going to the toilet as they must have thought they still had a nappy on, and I kept using nappies at sleep times till they were staying dry a majority of the time. Hope this helps. Good luck. *Kirsty*

Best to start with the first wee in the morning (i.e. as soon as she wakes) as that is when everyone needs to go. She will learn to understand what you mean much quicker if you use cue words when she is actually doing a wee. Also, rewards for doing a wee to begin with encourages them as they also get something out of it. I had a "treat" bag with little presents wrapped up (bangles, books, crayons etc...) and if she went on the potty she got to choose a present. When she was going regularly we dropped back to a present every second or third time and eventually then we moved on to a present for a poo (which for some reason takes longer to learn than a wee). Good luck! *Joanne*

I used the 3 day to potty training program, best \$25 I ever spent, dry day and night from day 4. As it says in this program, spend one on one time with them, don't leave each others side and you will pick up in the twitches, wriggles, dances etc. And praise any/all progress. No grouching... LOL *Elizabeth*

Lots of nappy free time. Your floor will be weed on but you need to draw their attention to the fact they are weeing so they know that's what you want them to do on the toilet. Catching them at it in the bath or shower is good. *Chloe*

I just committed to staying home and dealing with accidents for a week or so but was pleasantly surprised when it only took about 3 days. That's was for wees anyway. Poo's took a bit longer. I used the towelling training pants as they held more accidents. *Sarah*

Potty or toilet?

“What do other parents recommend for toilet training: potty/seat for toilet or step seat?”

I used a step up ladder that has a small kiddies seat attached to it, that way I didn't have to train my son to get used to the toilet after going on the potty.

Ashleigh

Let your child pick their own potty if possible or just use toilet. *Amy*

We started with a basic potty but now have the seats that go on the big toilet and a step. My son was scared he would 'fall in' so the seat made a big difference. *Bec*

I used a cheap plain potty for my two toddlers at the beginning. It's mobile and less daunting than a big toilet. Once they became more confident, I transitioned them to the toilet with a step up stool. The transition was easy, as they knew, that where wees and poos go, because we would go and flush it down together. *Mia*

I always just used a step and a toilet seat. I could see no point in teaching them to use a potty then the toilet. It's hard enough without the confusion of one then the other. *Megan*

We used the musical potty at home that plays a tune once the urine hits a sensor. *Darrell*

I recommend taking bub with you and making sure their bottom fits! Some of them are really narrow and if you've got a little guy it can be a struggle to fit all their bits in. *Kara*

We picked a plain potty and bought stickers and decorated it together. *Madeline*

Rewards

“What rewards did you use and how do you go about it? Struggling to get my son to do poos on the toilet.”

My daughter would not for the life of her do poo in the toilet and would either wait for a nappy or just do it in her knickers. So I went out and bought a whole lot of little things for \$1-\$2 that she could play with, wrapped them in her favourite toy story wrapping and made a lucky dip (she called them her "poo presents"). When she went she would get one. *Cat*

We put stickers on a homemade chart. One sticker for a number 1 and two stickers for a number 2. Every time my daughter reached ten stickers she got a reward — we brought a heap of cheap kids books from Booktopia and used these. Once she was going regularly we decided with her that if she could go a couple of weeks without too many accidents we would get a bigger present that she wanted and we would then stop the stickers. *Katrina*

We saw a paediatrician for my daughter. Basically we rewarded her with stickers on a chart with mini jellybeans. First we rewarded her for what she was already doing. So she got 1 sticker and jellybean for asking for a nappy, 1 sticker and jellybean for going into the toilet and another for asking to be changed. Did this for 2 days, then went to 2 stickers, then 1. Then went back to 3 rewards but this time asking for nappy, sitting on potty in nappy then asking to get changed. Then went to sitting on potty with no nappy for a few days. Then I actually took her to the shop and got her to pick out one toy that she really wanted and used that as a bribe for sitting on the toilet and worked like a charm. *Jessica*

I got a reward chart for my boy when toilet training. It's a magnetic one that sticks to the fridge. It worked really well, lots of encouragement and a sticker on reward chart got us over the line. *Elise*

“My DD is 3 1/2, and had 6 nights without an accident. I promised a reward on day 7 but she had an accident today. What should I do?”

Buy it for her and say, "I know I said 7 nights and you had an accident last night which meant I shouldn't get it, but I brought it for you because I know you really did try. And I'm proud of you," change it around. But express you're proud of her as she is trying her hardest. *Kerrie-Ann*

Yes definitely get it for her and give her more encouragement that she can do it for the 7 nights, as we know accidents happen, she may want to try harder next time. She is probably feeling a bit sad right now and not encouraging her will maybe lead to more wet nights. *Fiona*

I would get it for her! She's done so well. At our house we have a sticker chart and once we get 7 stickers my daughter gets a surprise whether it be new pencils or a book (something small) and if we think she's doing a particularly great job she'll get a big surprise like a trip to the movies. We go for a 90% strike rate and we don't sweat it if there is an accident. *Stacey*

If she went 6 nights without an accident then maybe get her a smaller gift and tell her we will try again for the movie this week. That way she isn't discouraged and is eager to try again. *Kirsty*

She has done an excellent job. An accident a week is pretty good. She deserves her reward. *Sally*

I think I would still get it and praise her on her six nights being accident free, like u said to her no big deal it happens. *Kirsty*

I think it is important to stick to what you said (consistency and reliability is pretty important), but praise her for the great work she has done and give her a smaller reward because she got so close, then encourage her to try again next week. *Sarah*

Should we use pull ups?

“Straight into undies or should we start with pull-ups when starting toilet training?”

I got rid of nappies and did undies day and night all at the same time. *Bianca*

I just did undies. The pull-up concept I think is more confusing for them. *Nicky*

Go straight to undies. They need to feel being wet. *Analisa*

Start with nudie bums. I found with both my sons that they thought knickers were nappies, until they got the concept of toilet training. Pull ups never worked here. *Camilla*

Definitely use undies so they are able to feel when they are wet. Just buy spray bottle of disinfectant and disposable cloths for accidents. *Bianca*

Straight into knickers - they often don't like the feel of wet pants if the wee in them a few times. *Tran*

We used pull-ups when we were out and about. We put them over undies so he still felt wet but we didn't have a big mess. *Sam*

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Which underpants are best?

“I'm starting toilet training, which undies should I use?”

Potty training undies where they hold the wee without it running down the leg, yet the child is able to tell you they are wet. *Kate*

Easy to pull up and down ones. No tight elastic around the top. *Rachael*

Let your child to pick them. He/she will be more likely to want to wear them then. *Johanna*

Buy really cheap ones – that way you won't feel bad about throwing the really messy ones away. *Sarah*

“I have a 2 year old boy who's started toilet training but HATES undies. He is scared of them. Anyone else had this?”

Have you tried boxer shorts? That way he can still wear them under clothes? *Carmel*

Tried boxers? Or have daddy to wear some around the house too to show him they're okay. *Laura*

Wiping their own bottom

“My son is fully toilet trained but we are having trouble getting him to wipe his own bottom after number 2s. Any suggestions?”

We have had the same trouble I have been asking my daughter to wipe twice just to check. I think her arms haven't quite yet coordinated it properly. Especially wiping front to back. One thing we have found is as the kinder toilets are children size she manages so much better. *Jessie*

I don't see a problem with that. I've known of 5 year olds who still don't do it. With my son I've just explained what to do, and am often told he wants to do it himself. Sometimes I get him to wipe first then I will wipe next. Keep wipes in toilet for any disasters or for a quick clean up. Try getting her to have a turn too, but I do think it will come over time. *Elizabeth*

My DD is 8 and still needs help! She can't seem to put her hand around the back so she can wipe front to back. Encouraging her to start now is fine, but I would keep an eye on the way she wipes and maybe give her a hand when she does a poo. *Olivia*

My son is 4 1/2 and up until recently he still wanted help wiping his bottom. I bought some of those kids flushable wipes in the little container. I told him they were very special wipes just for him so that he can wipe himself from now on. He hasn't asked for help since. *Helena*

My son just got up one morning went all by himself and told us he just done poos we freaked out took him back checked and he had wiped all by himself so he self-taught he hates when we do it. *Skye*

The second I started toilet training I started teaching my son, I would do it, then ask him to do it as well. *Jessikah*

Early toilet training (younger than 18 months)

“We have been thinking of starting to toilet train our 18 month old. How did others go about it?”

My dd started showing signs early, she under 2. I tried her for 2 days. She was going on the potty and doing wees and I was praising her so much. Then she just started crying one day and I didn't push it. She's 3 next month and she's very ready, I'm glad I waited. *Natalie*

Having toilet trained 100s of children over 8 years all I'll say is wait until your child is actually ready. Your child isn't any better if they train at 18 months than if they train at 3. *Melanie*

We started our little boy when he was 1 and a half, just started with putting him on the potty before a bath and as soon as he's woken up because that's when they tend to do wees. He was using the big boy toilet by 2 and a half because we he was understanding the concept of needing to go, but I did have to ask him a lot until he finally started telling us and fully toilet trained and night trained by 3. I think the earlier the better but all toddlers are different. Some don't like it and some grasp it really quick. We did end up putting him in underwear and when he did wet himself he absolutely HATED it and I think that's what hit the nail on the head. *Jacinta*

I started our daughter at 18 months – she'll pee in the loo no worries and poop in her pants ever single time. 7 months is a long time being supportive and having no anger when all I want to do is put her back in nappies. My other daughter will be telling me flatly whether she's 3 or 1. *Michelle*

18 months is not too young. I trained my son at 18months. I took two weeks off work – 2 day in he did poos on the toilet and potty. You just need to be committed to it. *Tracy*

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Issues

You are far more likely to experience speed bumps when you start toilet training than have instant success– while this is often a sign that you need to stop and try again another time, there are some things you can do to make the process more likely to be successful.

Won't poo on the toilet

“My 3 yr old has mastered the wees in the toilet but just can't get the poos in there as well, 9 times out of 10 he will do it in his undies, any tips on how to encourage or help him go in the toilet? I don't want to put him back in nappies.”

Weird story, but I was told a great way is to sit teddy on the toilet. Then magically secretly drop play-do or something into the potty or toilet and then cuddle teddy and be like 'yay, what a good boy!' and give teddy lots of attention and affection. My MIL did this when my hubby was a baby, his next poo was in the toilet. *Kerrie-Ann*

My little man did the same but I got him some cars undies and told him he didn't want to poo on lightning. He pooped in them so bad that I couldn't be bothered to clean them and threw them away and made him watch. Funnily enough he didn't do it again. *Katherine*

We had the same problem. We put a potty in our daughters room and explained if she needed to go what to do/how to use it. On that day she used it for #2s and we haven't looked back since. *Simone*

My 3yo was exactly the same. She decided when it was ok to poo in the toilet. I tried charts, rewards among other things. Don't be discouraged. *Pam*

I agree, putting him back in nappies is probably a bad idea. From my personal experience, sticking them back in nappies just delays it further and makes it worse. There are always a multitude of reasons why they do it but just try and be as patient as you can and try to be way over the top when he does get it so he will be really excited. Also rewards like sticker charts and things like that can help. My children have been up and down too and I know how frustrating it is but I promise they will get it, it just takes times and sooo much perseverance! *Chantelle*

Buy lots of cheap undies and throw them out each time. You will get through it soon, you are not alone. *Fleur*

My son was three and a half before he would do a poo on the toilet. I found out he didn't like toilet paper, he said it hurt, so we buy the kids Kleenex toilet wipes. Worked a charm. *Melinda*

I have found if I sit with them (when they need to go or show signs) and say 'Shhh, I can hear it coming' then be silent for a bit then again I hear it, etc., it worked for my son and a friend's daughter. I managed my sons first by leaving him a minute while I got something in the room next door. *Elizabeth*

My boy was a shy pooper! I stopped bugging him about poos and one day he went by himself and did one! Turns out he hated thinking people were listening or watching him do one even on the toilet. Even almost a year later he still doesn't like people watching or being near him pooping on toilet but he does it! *Bianca*

“ I have a 3 year old who has been wearing Jocks since November last year. He is fully trained in wees but we can't seem to get him to do poos on the toilet. he still has to use a nappy / pull-up. Any tips? ”

Take the nappies away and put him in underwear only, you could take him shopping to buy new undies for boys who don't wear nappies anymore. Make the disposal of nappies dramatic so he understands they're not coming back.

Gina-Marie

Completely normal! Give in for a couple of months with no fuss, don't even mention it just take away the pressure of it all and try again in 2 or 3 months with stickers etc hopefully it will be more successful next try but keep heaps of praise up with the wees on toilet. *Shannon*

Potty. They can't fall off or in. *Rebecca*

Two suggestions: 1) Put a piece of toilet paper in the bottom of the toilet first to stop splashes, and 2) Buy one of those little toilet seats that sit over the normal seat. He may be afraid he's going to fall in when he sits. *Alicia*

Take nappies away. Completely away. *Bianca*

Be careful taking nappies away totally. I tried this and my child ended up constipated and then you have a new problem on your hands. *Jess*

Potty/toilet time for 5mins after every meal doesn't matter if they don't do anything. Say to them 'thank you for trying.' I started a rewards chart where he got a sticker every time he tried/sat on the toilet then 2 stickers when he did a poo. It takes time and persistence. *Megan*

If you know when they need to poo put them on the loo in a nappy on to do it so they are still on the toilet but they have the security of the nappy. *Karen*

My daughter is quite petite and didn't feel confident on toilet due to its height. Plus her legs were hanging which isn't the best position to poo in. So we mastered potty first, and are now working on transitioning to toilet. *Rebecca*

Maybe its time to stop putting nappies on him and give him no choice. Going in his undies has got to feel yucky and might stop him? *Sally*

My daughter was like that up until about 8 weeks ago when I took her night time nappy away. She just started doing it on the toilet. We have only had one accident! *Helen*

Might sound gross but let him watch you poo on the toilet to assure him it's not scary. *Alison*

Can be fear based i.e. did a poo on toilet while a little constipated - it hurt, therefore won't do poo in toilet. If so see an expert psychologist in anxiety and toilet training. *Nicole*

Let them use a nappy. My daughter did this for a few months and when she was ready she used the toilet. *Tanya*

My daughter needed to go to the toilet in privacy. Give your child some space and you may find they will be fine. *Terrie*



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Holding poos in

“Just wondering if anyone else out there has had a toddler who doesn't like to poo? My daughter will hold on for days (we are currently at day 4!) but will have little screaming outbursts during this time while she tries to stop it from coming. She eats copious amounts of high fibre fruit, prune juice, we even tried the suppository option, but the thing is she is like this whether it comes out soft or hard. It's driving the household insane as she can be grumpy for days.”

My daughter who is now 27 months had exactly the same issues for a good year. I had her at the doctors numerous times who told me to use parachoc when things were pretty bad. She also had a high fibre diet. She would hold on for days and days and then only do enough of a poo to take the pressure off. She would be walking around the house clenching her butt cheeks so that she wouldn't go. All we could do was use lots of positive reinforcement, lots of praise and a few bribes to do her poos. She was basically afraid of pooing, a fear which developed from it hurting to poo a few times. She just associated pooing with pain. Things are now looking up since toilet training. She goes regularly on the pot which once again came with lots of praise and positive reinforcement. Good luck! *Sarah*

My 2.5 year old is exactly the same. Puts all her effort into holding it in. The gastroenterologist she sees at WCH put her on osmolax (over the counter at chemist) 1 scoop per 100ml of fluid (we put it in her milk) he said do one scoop a day for a few days, then 1.5 for a few days and increase by half a scoop until a max of four scoops. It draws water to the bowel, making the poo softer and less painful to pass. It is not absorbed by the body so they don't

become reliant on it. It also doesn't make them need to go just makes it softer. Doctor said to up the scoops until it's almost like diarrhoea and can't hurt at all, and then once she is comfortable pooing again start reducing until she no longer needs it. I really recommend it as we have seen countless specialists and tried heaps of things. *Amber*

I would say that she is holding it in because she thinks it is going to hurt. You will need to use a softener for a few weeks or months to break this habit before it gets really bad. Parachoc is good (but it does take a few days to get working - so keep going even if you don't think it is working) – it softens everything but doesn't make them "go" so they don't become reliant on it. Better still it tastes vanilla/chocolate so they like it! Once they realise that it doesn't hurt anymore you will break the behaviour that has happened. *Kelly*

My DD is 2 yrs 3 months and exactly the same. She is a lot better now toilet trained but still involves a few screaming laps of the house before she gives in and goes. *Lisa*

My son was like this after he first saw the result of a poo without his nappy on. Coloxyl drops fixed it. After a couple of days she couldn't hold on anymore and then has been happy to poo ever since. *Kailah*

My DD has been like this since January she only goes on weekends. We started using the potty which seems to help her and the doctor suggested parachoc and she loves it. *Deanne*

Does she drink heaps of water? High fibre diet is great but only if there's plenty of water too, otherwise it can make poos really solid which hurt more. *Natalie*

When toilet training isn't working.

“I've been trying to toilet train our daughter for a few weeks now, and she really isn't getting it. Sometimes she will sit on the potty or toilet but doesn't do anything. How much longer should I keep persevering?”

I wouldn't push longer than a month it shows he isn't ready wait 3 months and try again. *Melissa*

There is a physical mind bowel connection that some kids don't make until 4. Give yourself a break and go by your son's cues. When it happens it works within a few days and is minor stress for major success. *Megan*

Just keep trying, keep asking if they want to use the toilet/potty, maybe even a toy they can only have while sitting on the loo might help. *Eve*

Buy an egg timer! Set it for 20 mins, alarm goes off, TOILET, reward. Set it again, and gradually set it by 5 mins longer when you notice improvement. *Rhiannon*

Be patient and just wait they all get there eventually it cannot be forced or rushed. *Natalie*

My little one was the same then he turned 3 and bam he was toilet trained. Some children take longer to be ready than others, good luck. *Emily*

I'm in the same boat with my daughter and am going to wait until she is ready and try and follow her lead because nothing has worked! *Christina*

My oldest boy is 3 next week. We started toilet training him about a month or so ago. He was doing really well still had a couple accidents when he was busy playing. Then one day i was out and he had 2 poo accidents at home

with dad and has done a back flip and isn't interested in the slightest. I'm just giving him some time still encouraging him to let us know if he needs to use the toilet and have decided that we will start again after winter if he doesn't pick it up again before then. *Melissa*

Honestly if it's not clicking then he simply isn't ready! The more you push/stress the longer it will take. Wait till winter has been and gone then try again. Those 3-4 months is huge and he could be quite receptive. *Jayme-Lee*

His obviously just not ready. My two year old sit on the toilet sometimes wees every night before a shower and that's it. He has been doing it now for about 6 months and hasn't moved forward from that step. *Lisa*

I would say he might not be ready yet. We started toilet training when ds was 2 started well but then went downhill quick so we stopped for a couple months and started again and now he is toilet trained and it was so much easier this time he finally made the connection and we hardly have any accidents and he is a little over 2.5yo now. Good luck. *Claire*

My son is almost 3 and is pretty well trained now but we started last September. We had a week of no pants which really helped but it wasn't until he said "no nappy, my big boy" that he really clicked and for him it was all or nothing. The washing at first is painful but as soon as our boy had a nappy put on (the MIL...) he went backwards. Although he has come a long way we still have days when he is too distracted to remember. It can be a long process even when they are ready... Good luck, hopefully he decides he's ready soon. *Bec*

They are ready when they are ready. If it isn't working let it be. Revisit later in a few weeks.or months. Continue to encourage and sit on potty or toilet before bed or bath but be ok if it takes a while. It will click. *Brooke*

Still not toilet trained, what can I do?

“My daughter is 4.5 and still isn't toilet trained. We've tried going nappy free, reward charts, putting her on every hour, persevered - everything we can think of and she just isn't getting it. Has anyone been through this before? What eventually worked for you? She's going to school next year so we need to get it sorted.”

My friends daughter was the same age, she would ask for a nappy to wee but could hold on all day till they put one on. Problem was she was giving her self infections so they always had to put a nappy on. Then one night she cut a hole in the nappy told her daughter that she at least had to sit on the toilet with nappy on. As soon as she heard the wee in the toilet her face lit up everyone clapped and cheered, mum told her that she "broke the nappy" as she was too big for them now. Never had a problem since. Anna

Have you taken her to the doctor for possible medical issues? Also could you hounding too much when we tried to train our daughter she wouldn't do anything but when we stopped asking her to go and just didn't bother with it she did it on her own! Penny

Maybe get her checked at a chiropractor specifically for kids. Jess

Will she go on the potty? Is she sensitive to noise? One of my colleagues daughter wouldn't go because she was afraid of the noise when wee and poos hit the water. Erin

It might be time to visit a paediatrician, in case there is something else going on. Sarah

Regression

“My 3 year old has been toilet trained and accident free for a few months and all of a sudden has started having accidents! Has this happened to anyone else? What did you do?”

Yes, my son (now 3.7 yo) did this and still does occasionally. We didn't change anything, just continued to normalise and encourage/praise toilet use. He wet his pants whilst we were out one day and we left him in them until we found a toilet to change him in (literally only 15 mins!) and needless to say, he found it quite uncomfortable! But since then, he hasn't had an accident (touch wood!) Whatever you do, don't reintroduce nappies, and keep telling him he's a big boy, and big boys use the toilet! Good luck! *Elly*

My daughter did this and turns out she had a urinary infection. Might be worth a trip to the doctor just to check. *Simone*

My daughter was toilet trained in the day, then started pre-kindy and pretty much the same thing happened. She wouldn't wear undies anymore, only wanted nappies and would sit on the toilet for hours not getting off. It took a few months to get her back to being toilet trained, I think it was the stress of a totally new situation/experience so I just slowly restarted toilet training and didn't force her as that made things worse. *Rheannon*

Both of mine went really well for a few months then regressed for a few weeks then picked back up and have been day trained since. Seemed to just be the pattern. *Rachael*

Has anything changed in his life? You being pregnant? Him in school or daycare? Bullying at school? Have you gone back to work or school? Has he been sick? All of these things can cause a small child to go backwards in their development. *Toyah*

“We started toilet training my son at 2 years and he did really well for a month but then my husband would yell at him every time he had an accident. Then he went back to needing nappies and would cry and hide every time he pooped for fear of being in trouble. A year later, I've only just started being able to get him to sit on the toilet again without crying, but he won't tell me when he needs to go. I tried using undies and letting him have accidents but he would scream and sob thinking he was 'naughty'. Any suggestions to successfully start over and train him without upsetting him all over again?”

Maybe get your husband to talk and apologise and explain it's not naughty. Maybe if his dad shows him it's ok he might start trying again. *Ebony*

Oh no, poor bubba it isn't surprising he regressed. Learning to go to the big toilet is hard enough without having someone yell at you. Accidents happen, you just clean them up, and move on. If it happens here, I don't make a big fuss of it, we just clean it up, and try for next time. Maybe you could begin a reward chart...stickers, treats (special park etc) and, if your husband isn't going to be helpful, you should tell him to stay out of it. *Chantel*

Wait until he is 3 and a half. I found once my kids got to that age they just woke up one day and said they wanted to wear jocks/undies and never once had an accident. I think parents these days can be too pushy when it comes to toilet training, they will do it when they are ready. *Margaret*

Have you talked to your husband first? I wouldn't even begin to try again unless your partner changes his way of handling the situation. He needs to be

encouraging and sympathetic otherwise you could end up with bed wetting problems down the track. Fix that then get him on board to help try to encourage your boy back onto the potty. Rewards and praise from him would help I think. And lots of cuddles and hugs. *Kelly*

How about using a reward chart, using stickers each time he goes to make it fun? Maybe you could even increase his water in the day to make him go more often? I'm sure he'll get there with words of encouragement! Good luck, I know it must be hard. *Susan*

Keep it positive, lots of rewards e.g. star chart or some people do 5 wees then they get a toy. Dr Phil says that everyone in the house needs to clap and cheer for them when they do it. *Genevieve*

Make a big deal of everything positive with the toilet. If he sits even for a minute on the loo make a big deal. *Bianca*

Maybe see if your husband will "take over" the fun bit. Get him to take your son shopping and pick big boy undies and a new potty and get them to have a chat and get hubby to explain that he was wrong and it was him who was "naughty" and not your son. And maybe try (depending on how much he's home) getting hubby to give a lot of the praise, or as much as he can. *Debbie*

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3

Urinary Tract Infections

Urinary Tract Infections (UTIs) are something that your child is likely to experience at one time or another. Not only can they make the child uncomfortable or cause pain but, left untreated, they can be very serious. Thankfully, there are a number of things you can do to prevent them. Mel, a Paediatric Urology Nurse, shares her tips, as well as what to look out for in case they do develop one.

Signs of a UTI

UTIs are more common in girls than boys, as girls have a shorter urethra so it is a shorter distance for the bacteria (bugs) to get up into the urinary tract.

Older children are able to vocalize their discomfort more clearly than younger children. They will usually complain of it hurting when they wee, needing to wee more often, they may have more accidents or start wetting their bed at night, complain of having a tummy ache or feeling unwell and will quite often go off their food.

Babies and young children are unable to tell us that they are feeling unwell, so some symptoms you may notice are fevers, pain on weeing, be extremely unsettled and irritable and may have trouble feeding.

When to see a Doctor

If your baby or child has a persistent high fever for over 24 hours, it is always best to get them checked out by your GP. It is easy for babies and young children to become dehydrated quickly with having a high fever so if you are

worried about them and are unable to get to a GP, then take them to your local emergency department. They may require hydration and monitoring.

Your Doctor will probably want to obtain a urine sample to test for infection. This can be quite tricky with little ones and on occasions a small tube (catheter) may be able to be inserted into the urethra to collect a sample of urine. This can cause some discomfort and distress to little ones but it is done very quickly and is soon forgotten about. Older children are usually able to wee into the specimen cup to obtain a sample, though this may be messy and may require some assistance from mum or dad.

If a UTI is confirmed through a urine sample, then treatment is usually with antibiotics. Your doctor may be happy for you to give these at home, but there are times if your baby or child has a severe infection that they may require hospitalization to be given Intravenous (IV) antibiotics. If being treated at home offer your child lots of fluids and rest.

Tips for preventing UTI's

- Teach little girls to wipe from the front to the back to prevent any bacteria from their poo to get into their urethra.
- Always encourage your child to drink plenty of water to prevent dehydration as more concentrated urine has the potential to grow bugs quicker. Drinking lots of water also helps to flush the bugs out of the urinary system quicker.
- Encourage regular toileting. Children can be quite clever at holding on to their wee but this can provide a good bacteria breeding environment and make them more susceptible to infection.
- Prevent your child from getting constipated. Your child's bladder and bowel sit side by side within the body. If your child becomes constipated and

there is a large amount of poo stuck in the bowel, then this make it hard for the bladder to fill and completely empty which can then leave some residual urine in the bladder. This provides bacteria a great little environment to breed in and can cause an infection. If the urine has no where to get out of the body, then it has the potential to go back up into the kidneys and cause a nasty kidney infection which can cause a more severe illness.

- If your child is getting recurrent UTI's, then it is best to see a Doctor about it to rule out other medical illnesses.

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Going out

Life doesn't stop when your child is toilet training, and unfortunately accidents won't stop just because you are out. If you are prepared, and have a plan of action, though, they can be much easier to deal with.

What to pack

“What should I take in the nappy bag when we head out? We've just started toilet training and I want to make sure we're prepared.”

It depends how long you're going out for, best to have at least 1-2 full changes of clothing, I take a packet of flushable wipes and a few plastic bags.

Robin

Look for a porta potty. I have one that folds like a potty or folds flat for big toilet seat use. It comes with plastic bags that sit inside the potty to catch the wees and poos. Then just tie the bag and place in an outside bin. I take it most places as I hate public toilet seats. Usually I let my daughter use it in the cubicle or take her outside around a discreet corner of the shops if toilets are locked or non existing. Great for parks and long travels too. *Kelly*

It depends how long you will be out and where. I tried to pack 1 spare outfit per hour I'd be out, just in case, and a spare nappy. I also made sure to still have wipes. And maybe a packet of treats for when your little one tells you they need to go. *Jessikah*

Depending on duration of outing I would pack a minimum of 3 outfits (mainly bottoms) including socks and an extra pair of shoes. Plastic bag for putting soiled clothes in. Wipes or wash cloth to clean up bottom/legs. *Tran*

Make you don't forget to pack extra socks, everyone forgets socks and pee runs straight down their leg, especially in winter. *Melissa*

2 of everything (Undies, Singlets, T-shirts, Pants) a towel on their car seat will help. *Skye*

Dealing with mishaps

“What do you do when they have an accident in the shops or at a friend's house?”

I take spare clothes and wipes etc with me and plastic bags I just clean it up with paper towel and wipe over with wipes then throw that in bag in bin and change their clothes. *Amy*

I carried two cloth nappies in my bag. One to help clean up little messes otherwise I would notify the shop. The other to help clean/dry my son. They were also good to pop in the bottom of the car seat. *Rachael*

I just say 'that's ok, next time try and do it on the toilet' I always have spare pants and undies with me so I can change her. I don't make a big deal about it, because she would get embarrassed and that wouldn't be nice for her. *Simone*

What to do when they need to go NOW

“What do you do when your children need to go to the toilet NOW! Whether your out at the shops, on a long drive or just at the park”

If there isn't a toilet available we find a tree! Always take a potty with us on long trips! *Stacey*

When my boys were toilet trained I used to take the potty along with me to the park and on long drives. When in the shops tell them to hold it and run like hell to the nearest toilet But while they were still being toilet trained I used to pop a nappy on them when we went out and took it off as soon as we got home. It worked for us. *Stephanie*

You run very fast to the nearest toilet while saying 'hold it,hold it,nearly there!!' lol! As for the long drive, just pull over somewhere safe and go on the side of the road. *Simone*

Stop what I'm doing and deal with it. Kids just can't hold on like we can. *Jayne-Lee*

Run! *Danielle*

Been there. Just go to the customer service desk and ask for them to hold your trolley there whilst you run your child to the toilet! These things happen and they understand. *Skye*

My youngest has started asking to go to the toilet 5 minutes after we start shopping even if she's just gone 10 minutes before. If she's just been I make her wait. She only wants to check out the toilets or play in the baby room. *Melanie*

Long car drives

“Our son is at long last going to the toilet when we tell him to go but he won't tell us when he needs to go. We are going away for Easter – should I put a nappy on him just for the drive?”

No, don't put a nappy on him. You'll destroy his confidence - it's basically saying you don't trust him. No drinks, lots of stops if you can? *Camilla*

Is it possible to take a potty with you if he prefers sitting down. I would try not to put a nappy on him for the drive just lots of stops and limit liquid, I'm sure you could put a waterproof/ absorbent mat of some sort under him in his car seat if you're really worried. Reinforce that the mat is there just in case but that he needs to let you know so you have time to stop the car. Good luck.

Kirsty

I would just stop for a toilet break as often as you would have toilet breaks at home. If you have a potty in the car you won't even need to find a toilet. A thin waterproof mat for him to sit on is a good idea too – car seats are hard to clean. *Sarah*

While my daughter was still using a potty I would take it with me in the car for long drives and also to the park. I would always make sure before we left the house that she sat on the potty. *Analisa*

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5

Night training

You've got daytime toileting sorted, now what about nighttime? How do you know they are ready to start and prevent mountains of washing every morning?

When to start

“ I have a 4 year old who is toilet trained daytime but I'm struggling with the night time toilet training. She is in pull ups at night. She also refuses to get up by herself at night to go. Can anyone give me some tips on how to get her trained through the night please ”

Just take the nappy off, she will get it eventually. Buy a second set of linens or substitute with blankets for ease of washing. We used the 3 day toilet training program, we did both day and night in that time. It suggests to wake them after an hour of sleeping for a wee and then again an hour before they wake. It also suggests reducing liquids hours before bed. Offer sips rather than large amounts. *Elizabeth*

Nothing to drink for an hour before going to bed. Make going to the toilet part of the bedtime ritual. After a week of dry pull ups switch her to undies. Use a rewards chart for each morning she wakes up dry. *Angela*

I'm in the same position, my daughter's 5 in September. Reward charts don't work with her. Did it once and told me there's no point doing another as she's done that already! I got broly sheets as she was wakes up dry for a few

nights in a row. But wet the bed the next couple of nights. Has a torch next to her bed, night light and can get to the toilet easily but just won't do it!

Annalisa

After my boy had a bath I would ask him if he wanted to wear nappy pants or jocks to bed. He always said nappy pants until one night he declared he wanted to wear jocks And we haven't looked back three months on. Yes, we still have the occasional accident at night but he has his waterproof protector so it saves his mattress. *Nic*

I ran out of pull-ups and she had to go to bed without. I took her to the loo before bed, then did a 'dream wee' (where I put her on the potty without waking her up) when I went to bed. That was over two weeks ago and only 2 wet nights. May have just been the right time for her though. *Kelly*

When my DS was dry 7 nights in a row I put him in knickers, then double or triple made the bed, just have to strip a layer off if need be, so he didn't wake up too much. *Belinda*

Wait until she has a full week of dry nappies at night. If she still wets her nappy at night she is not ready to go without. She will get there. *Kylie*

It actually is a chemical reaction in the brain that tells them not to wet at nights, which is why some still do it up to seven. Just wait until her night nappies are dry for at least a week and then have a go. *Kirsty*

We didn't train our daughter at night. I feel it happens when they're ready. Our daughter had a few dry nappies in a row in the morning, that's how we knew it was time. Good luck. *Chauntelle*

A friend's 5 year old still wets the bed at night. Specialist told her that there is something in the brain that actually triggers the child to wake up. It's unfortunately a waiting game. *Jayme-Lee*

How to protect the bed

“We have started toilet training at night. Our son is fine most nights, but how can we make the nights he wets the bed easier to deal with?”

Make bed twice to make night time bed wetting easy to deal with. Mattress protector sheet, mattress protector sheet. If your child wets the bed - take off one layer and they are ready to go back to bed. Also, think about night time toilet training in warmer weather when the sheets will dry or have several sets for those days when nothing will dry. *Tanya*

You can buy toilet training mats to go over the top of the bottom sheet so if they wet you can just pull that off rather than changing sheets in the middle of the night. *Jodie*

We have a stash of Brolly Sheets (waterproof mattress protectors that go over the sheet) and we just strip wet ones off and put a new one on. It is so much easier than remaking the entire bed or trying to dry the mattress the next day. *Sarah*



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Special circumstances

For some children, toilet training can be made more difficult because they have additional needs, or they may simply need a different approach. Here are some tips

Children with limited vocabulary

“My son has a severe speech delay and is ready to start toilet training. Has anyone been in a similar situation? How did you go about toilet training, what did you put in place so your child could let you know if they needed to go to the toilet?”

My 3 1/2 yr old is autistic and non verbal. He learned the makaton sign for toilet and uses that. I also keep the potty close and dressed him in easy to pull down pants. I also took him to choose his own underwear. *Jodie*

Sign for toilet in Mackaton. *Melanie*

Look up Auslan Australian sign language and teach him the signs to let you know. *Carmen*

My daughter has severe speech delay. She is 3.5 and not yet ready to toilet train (I have tried). She has Autism. However, I have taught her sign language including the sign for toilet. She also had books she looks through. Physically I think she could do it but neurologically she doesn't connect the two. I have struggled myself, sorry I can't be more help! It's hard and I've not been successful yet. So I wish you all the best. *Cindy*

We started toilet training slowly with our little one. She is almost four and has gotten the day time toilet training down pat by the age of 3. She also has had speech delay/ understanding delay hence why we haven't started the nights yet because she isn't ready. We found repetition and being at kindy helped seeing other kids go, kinda made the penny drop. Of course you get a few accidents and using pictures and sign language definitely helps. *Brooke*

Do you sign with him? Maybe a hand signal would help? *Jo*

My son is 3 and has a speech delay also. We have just started toilet training. I think the key is going to be repetition. He doesn't understand if I ask him if he needs to go to the toilet so I have just been taking him regularly throughout the day and after food/drinks hoping that he makes the connection eventually. He responds to a lot of visual stimulation so we got a heap of books to read while he sits on the toilet so he feels relaxed. I can already tell its going to be a long process but remember things usually take a bit longer if your child has trouble communicating. Best advice I can give you is have patience and keep at it. *Kristy*

My boy is 2 and 8 months in and is starting to show signs but I wouldn't be pushing it at all, especially if he does not understand the concept at all, you'll just get you both upset and frustrated! My boy won't be starting TT until at least his birthday and probably next summer as we're due for bub no. 4 in June and rather than setting him up to regress I would rather let him be really ready to do what he needs to do. I would be getting on top of his speech issues first so that he can communicate his needs with you as well. *Jo*

Children with Autism

“Any tips for toilet training a child with Autism?”

Try introducing the idea of a potty or toilet slowly. So they are doing most of the learning on their own.... I started putting my 2yo on his potty whenever I noticed he was doing a poo and have since started calling the potty his toilet. On his own he has worked out that the toilet is also for wees and now takes his nappy off to sit on it. He doesn't always do anything but at least he has the idea of it.... also he hasn't been diagnosed with autism but does suffer anxiety and hates change and I'm glad to have found something that works for him
Caro

We found a toilet training visual on the wall that showed the sequence worked well – he would look at it while he was sitting on the toilet and point out the different pictures. We then progressed to being able to talk him through what he was doing while referring to it. We also found he was much better if we didn't push it – just sit him on the toilet, count to 5 and if he wanted to get off then that was fine. If we pushed him he would regress for a week or so. Poos were a lot harder – but after a couple of weeks of getting the iPad after he had done a poo he finally got it. But there were so many messes!
Sarah

Sue Larkey has some great info (she's an autism expert), just look for her on Google.
Mary

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