



toilet training

how to know when your child is ready

most children become physically and emotionally ready between the ages of 22 months and 3 years (girls are usually ready earlier than boys). when your child is ready, she'll show you the following signs:

- ability to follow simple instructions
- tendency to stay dry for at least two hours
- tendency to be dry after naps
- regular and predictable bowel movements
- curiosity about bathroom activities, potty, etc.
- discomfort with soiled diapers
- ability to understand bathroom and related body part words

once you begin toilet training:

- stay calm, relaxed, and patient; don't allow toilet training to become a power struggle.
- buy a potty chair and model toilet activities. let her sit on her own potty (with or without clothes) while you sit on (and use) yours.
- teach your child words you want her to use for body parts and for using the toilet.
- help your child learn to recognize when she needs to urinate or have a bowel movement. she needs to learn to be aware of these sensations and to associate them with potty use.
- ask your child to let you know when she needs to use the potty.
- read books with your child on using the potty.
- give your child time to sit on the potty when she wakes up, after she eats, and after she naps. congratulate her for her effort, not the outcome.
- give your child up to five minutes on the potty, before suggesting she try again another time. don't be upset if she goes to the bathroom in her diaper just after getting off the potty.
- make sure that all caregivers are on board with your potty training plan.



potty training plans: each plan has the same result, and all of the above tips work regardless of the plan, so pick one that works best for you and your child.

- **on her own time.** this approach allows your child to warm up to the idea, by playing with the potty and watching you model bathroom activities.
- **organized practice.** this approach is more structured. your child is asked (not forced) to follow a routine for when she sits on the potty. when parents see cues that their child needs to use the bathroom, they help get him there immediately.
- **one shot method.** parents who use this intensive approach set aside 3 days for training that includes constant supervision, role play, doll play, and praise for correct behavior.
- **the reward system.** parents motivate children with small tokens immediately after successful potty use.

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call. 212 966 7273

write. info@seedlingsgroup.com

visit. www.seedlingsgroup.com