

The 6 key steps of potty training

No matter how ready you are for your child to be out of diapers, potty training isn't something you can teach. Your role is to support and encourage them through the transition.

1. Follow your child's lead

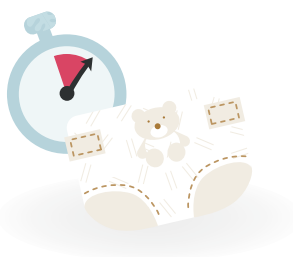
Don't force your child to use the potty before they are physically and psychologically ready. This learning process usually occurs between the ages of 2 and 4, and takes about 3 to 6 months. Nighttime potty training may take longer.



2. Choose the right time

Instead of initiating potty training at a specific age, look for the following signs that your child is ready:

- Their diaper stays dry (clean) for several hours.
- They can partially undress without your help (lower body).
- They tell you when their diaper is dirty, or they seem uncomfortable when it is.
- They start expressing their physical needs, saying, for example: "Want milk!"
- They want to take off their diaper and put on underwear.
- They hide when it's time to pee or poop in their diaper.
- They sit on their potty without prompting, put their stuffy on the potty, or seem curious when you use the toilet.
- They can squat and stand up.



3. Introduce them to the potty

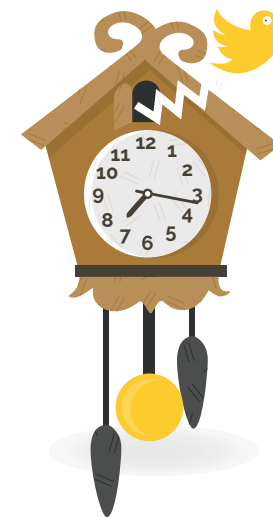
Explain what the potty is for, then encourage your child to sit on it, even with their clothes on, or to sit a stuffed toy on it. Your child will feel more secure sitting on a potty than on a toilet because their feet remain firmly on the ground.



4. Establish a routine

Gradually get your child used to going to the potty at certain times of the day, such as after meals and before bedtime. If they get up as soon as you sit them down, suggest that they stay on the potty for a while longer, but don't insist.

Remind your child to sit on the potty often. Don't scold them if they pee or poop in their underwear—accidents happen. If the accidents become frequent, you can always switch them back to wearing a diaper. This shouldn't be seen as a punishment.



5. Switch to underwear during the day

Once your child starts to use the potty frequently, put them in underwear during the day. This will motivate them to use the potty in order to stay dry. Be sure to dress your child in clothes that are easy to take off—overalls, belts, and clothes with zippers or buttons should be avoided.



6. Stop using a diaper at night

If your child is potty-trained when awake, let them nap in a pair of underwear. Once all goes well for several naps in a row, try switching to underwear at night. Before bedtime, remind your child that they aren't wearing a diaper. Be aware, however, that it's normal for children under age 5 not to wake up when they have to pee.



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