

Top 10 toilet training tips

Top 10 toilet training tips for successful toileting:

1. **Drink plenty:** Make sure your child is having 6-8 drinks of water-based fluid a day to help keep their bowel and bladder healthy. Avoid fizzy drinks, drinks with caffeine in them and sugary drinks. Don't limit their drinks to help them stay dry as it doesn't work. The bladder needs to be filled and emptied properly to keep it working well.
2. **Check for constipation:** Your child should poo at least four times a week and the poo should be soft and easy to pass. If they're passing hard poos or going less often than this, they may be constipated. Leaking, runny poo can also be a sign of constipation. [Look at our bowel problems section](#) or [download *ERIC's Guide to Children's Bowel Problems*](#) for more information.
3. **Use easy clothing:** Clothes that are easy to pull up and down are the best; avoid fiddly zips and buttons. Choose clothes that are easy to wash and dry. It can help to practise getting dressed and undressed. Let your child choose their own pants and practise wearing them to get used to the feeling.
4. **Sitting is safe:** Sit on the toilet to show your child it is safe then let them practise sitting on it. Let your child use a foot stool to help support them when they're on the loo.
5. **Get into a routine:** Don't ask your child if they need a wee or a poo as they might not know what this is to begin with. Call it 'toilet time' and go every couple of hours.
6. **Keep it short:** Don't let them sit for too long on the toilet, two or three minutes is fine. Keep some toys handy to occupy them while they sit.
7. **Encourage boys to sit down to wee:** They might also need a poo and sitting down will help them to go. They may empty their bladder better sitting down too.
8. **Be consistent:** If your child is looked after by a relative or goes to nursery or a childminder make sure you let them know that you're starting toilet training and the way you're planning to do it. It really helps if everyone who cares for your child is doing the same thing.
9. **Give lots of praise:** For each little step like sitting on the toilet, washing hands and getting dressed. Rewards are a good incentive – make them small and instant, like a sticker.
10. **Be patient:** Toilet training is a skill which may take some time to learn, so don't be surprised if there are lots of accidents to start with. You might decide your child isn't ready after all, in which case stop toilet training and have another go in a few weeks.