

POTTY TEACHING 101

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READINESS: Haley had never gone in the potty when we started - even though I had been sitting her on it for several weeks before bath, when I went to the Bathroom etc. At age 18 months I start pre-training. I get a potty video that we watch every day. I got potty books that we read every day. We started talking about potty.

Her readiness signs to me were that she could follow a simple command (pick up the ball), she would show a sign when she when potty in diaper (hold herself, do the little dance, hide for BM), and was staying dry an hour or more at a time. She was between 21-24 months. I have found that 21-24 months is the window that I see that almost all kids are ready unless medical, physical or mental disability. I trained all 4 of my kids between this age range, with them being completed by their 2nd birthday. And I have helped dozens of moms train their children in this same age window.

PARENTS: You are right to wait until you are ready. When you know you can commit a couple weeks to it and be there to help with every accident very quickly. Look over your calendar and find a 2 week window when you can give this your full attention.

BOYS: Potty Teach them sitting down. I do not let them stand up while training. We do this for several reasons: bathroom cleanliness and it encourages them to have their bowel movement in the toilet. Some moms who train them standing up have issues getting them to have a BM. My hubby insists that my son learn sitting down. You know I never have pee on the toilet unless a visiting man is in our home!

The Potty Training Readiness Quiz

Potty training is easier and happens faster if your child is truly ready in all three areas: physical, cognitive and social. But the big question is: How do you know when your child is ready? If you have never traveled this road before, you likely don't even know what signs to look for. Take this quiz to find out where your child is on the readiness spectrum.

1. I can tell by watching that my child is wetting or filling his diaper:
 - a. Never.
 - b. Sometimes.
 - c. Usually.

2. My toddler's diaper needs to be changed:
 - a. Frequently, every hour or two.
 - b. It varies.
 - c. Every two to three hours--sometimes less frequently.

3. My child understands the meaning of wet, dry, clean, wash, sit, and go:
 - a. No.
 - b. Some of them.
 - c. Yes.

4. When my child communicates her needs, she:
 - a. Says or signs a few basic words and I guess the rest.
 - b. Gets her essential points across to me.
 - c. Has a good vocabulary and talks to me in sentences.

5. If I give my child a simple direction, such as, "put this in the toy box," she:
 - a. Doesn't understand or doesn't follow directions.
 - b. Will do it if I coach or help her.
 - c. Understands me and does it.

6. My child can take his pants off and put them on:

- a. No.
 - b. With help he can.
 - c. Yes.
7. When I read a book to my child, he:
- a. He ignores me.
 - b. Sometimes listens, sometimes wanders off.
 - c. Sits, listens and enjoys the story.
8. My toddler wants to do things "all by myself":
- a. Never.
 - b. Sometimes.
 - c. All the time!
9. I think that it's the right time to begin potty training:
- a. No.
 - b. I'm undecided.
 - c. Yes.

Total the number of responses for each letter:

a. _____ b. _____ c. _____

QUIZ SCORE:

Most answers are A: Wait. Your little one doesn't seem to be ready just yet. Test again in a month or two.

Most answers are B: Time for pre-potty training--get ready! Your child is not quite ready for active training, but you can take many steps to prepare your toddler for the future. Gradual introduction of terms and ideas will make potty training easier when the time comes.

Most answers are C: Your toddler is ready to use the potty! It's time to start your potty training adventure. Good luck, and have fun!

Are you between two scores? Just like any parenting situation, there are choices to make. If your child is hovering between two categories, it's time to put your intuition to good use. Your knowledge of your own child can direct you toward the right plan of action.

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BEFORE YOU START

At age 18 months I do the following

1. Buy 10-12 pairs of training pants
2. Buy 3 pairs of vinyl covers
3. Read TOILET TRAINING IN LESS THAN A DAY
4. Have my child watch a potty VIDEO each day
5. Read a potty BOOK to my child each day
6. Practice giving them verbal instructions (bring mama the ball)
7. Get a potty seat or potty ring. Let the child see and sit on it.
8. Get a potty doll that wets
9. Buy dollar tree treats for reward system

WHEN TO START:

When mom is ready to focus and can stay home for most of the next 2 weeks

When the readiness quiz shows the child is ready.

When child can follow verbal cues (pick up the ball).

OPTIMAL AGE: 21-24 months in my opinion. (age 24+ months may take twice as long to train for some children because of will issues) I personally find training between 21-24 months easier than potty training between 24-36 months. At age 2 they love to say NO! Before age 2 most kids love to mimic what you are doing.

START and do NOT STOP: Every time you put a pull-up or diaper on them after starting the training you may confuse them and cause the training to take longer.

Now there may be times that you make a decision to stop the training for personal reasons. Everyone has seasons in their life. That is fine. Just know that the next time you start it may take twice as long from the mixed messages.

REMEMBER: Accidents are not to be avoided. Accidents are a teaching tool. You cannot potty teach w/o accidents. The urine leak down the leg feels out of control to them. Most kids will say Uh-oh the first time. Also the leaking accident prompts the parent to act quickly.

TRAINING: Toilet Teaching is just like teaching them to eat with a spoon, stay in their car seat, dress themselves, and obey their parents. You are the parent and treat it like other areas of obedience. Make it fun and encourage them but expect them to comply. Expect and want accidents. This is what teaches them the consequences and the need to potty in the toilet

The biggest challenge for me in the first few days is the child learning to turn ON the urine flow. Some kids get this faster than others. Haley got it the third day. Some kids get it the first day.

THE SYSTEM: Train the DOLL to go Potty. Take the child to potty often. Set a timer. Give immediate positive reinforcement when they go in toilet. Practice walking to the potty, clean up and change clothes for every accident.

MY CHILD: With his system Haley did not go in potty at all first couple days. We quickly changed after every accident. She would grab herself and say uh-oh when she went since the cloth makes the feelings wet and uncomfortable. Third day she said uh-oh and had not gone in panties so I took her to potty and she went. We clapped, shouted, got a treat, called daddy! Over the next 3 days every day was less accidents and more successes. After a week she had it mostly down so I could take her out. I used vinyl pants over cloth to protect when out and about.

DAY ONE: I taught Haley how to have the doll go potty in the big toilet rewarding the child when the dolly goes potty. We played this game off and on all day. This is the teaching day.

DAY TWO: POTTY PARTY: I tell her she is a big girl like dolly. Put her in CLOTH training pants give her lots to drink. Every half hour check panties. If dry take to potty. If goes in potty reward with candy or sticker and lots of praise. Expect lots of accidents the first couple days until they get the uh-oh and are still dry. REWARD EVERY SUCCESS! For every accident help her run to the potty and say Uh-oh we must potty in the toilet then help her change into dry pants. Practice walking back and forth from the place of accident to potty.

CONTINUE for the next 2 weeks. Praise every success. Help change every accident quickly. At the end of 2 weeks you will be having more successes than accidents. I find most kids really get it in this 2 week period.

TIMER: Use your timer. At first I set it for 30 minutes. I take her in every 30 minutes until we have a dry day. Then I go to 45 minutes until we have a dry day. Then I move to 1 hour. I stay at sending them to the potty every hour for several weeks. Then as they start asking to go potty you can move the timer to 1.5-2 hours.

BED TIME: For nap and bed put a sheet protector under the sheet. Put on two pairs of cloth training pants and vinyl pants over. Change them to dry panties immediately upon waking. Use vinyl pants over cloth training pants only when out in public or in bed.

OLDER CHILDREN: If your child is over 24 months expect it to take longer as you are in the MY WILL stage. They may fight you. You have to be the parent and firmly, lovingly, and with joy help them comply. Make it fun and exciting. Diapers are no longer an option. I do not ASK if they have to go potty. I ANNOUNCE that it is POTTY TIME. With my son I use to scoop him up over my shoulder and dance to the potty with him laughing.

I am not the expert at all but do have 4 successes under my belt and have helped many other moms succeed as well with this system

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<http://www.mypreciouskid.com/>

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