

# Getting ready to toilet train

Even before your child is ready to try the potty, you can prepare your little one by teaching about the process. Meenal Arora gives you some important tips



**W**hen is the right time to start your child's toilet training? This is a question that most parents ask. The thing to do here is watch the child for signs of readiness. It can be anything from stopping an activity for a few seconds to clutching his or her diaper. A child usually exhibits these signs between 18 and 24 months but it can vary.

Toilet training is an important aspect of grooming young children and is crucial for instilling confidence and independent behaviour in them. However, it is important to realise that toilet training doesn't happen overnight; it's a gradual process, so watch your child for signs that he is ready to move from one step to the next.

Sometimes, training a child during the day may take as long as six to eight months. Training the child for the night might take longer since his or her bladder control is reduced at night time. Be patient and supportive. If your child resists or has difficulties with toilet training even after a few months, it is best to consult a doctor. Toilet training is a big process. In fact, this is the first and biggest developmental step and it generally takes a few weeks to several

months to complete. But have patience. Don't be discouraged if a few good days are followed by a few bad.

Here, we list a few things that will make your task of toilet training your child easier.

- Ask your child regularly to go to the bathroom and encourage him to tell you when he needs to go.
- When your child visits the toilet, be sure to reward and praise him for every step in the right direction and keep your attitude positive. Also, in case your child makes mistakes, do not embarrass him or make him feel like a failure; as this will only add an unnecessary element of stress, which is bound to hinder his progress. This act of generosity would help him to like the process and willingly take the initiative.
- Teach your child to wash his hands with soap and water after using the toilet. Set a good example by washing your own hands in front of him.
- It is generally a good idea to supervise clean-up and flushing for sometime during the toilet training process.

In the end, always remember that when you start the toilet training process, make sure that you devote enough time, attention and patience to help your child every day. Hence, the secret to success is patience and timing. Physical and emotional readiness is also important, which happens between the age of two and four years. Don't be alarmed if a child doesn't follow this pattern closely, as learning to use the toilet takes time and each child matures physically and emotionally at different rates. So relax, as this is completely normal.



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## Signs to watch out for

- The potty chair or toilet interests the child.
- There is a willingness on the part of the child to visit the toilet.
- Your child is old enough to understand and follow basic instructions.
- Wet or soiled diaper makes the child uncomfortable.
- Your child stays dry for up to 2 hours or more during the day.
- The child has a dry diaper when he or she wakes up from a nap.

## What not to do

- Avoid toilet training when your child is under stress.
- Don't clothe your child in regular underwear as soon as you begin potty training.
- Don't continue with the toilet training when your child is not interested
- Don't punish your child for having accidents while you are potty training
- Don't expect the training to be a quick process.
- Don't expect your child to complete all aspects of training at the same time, like toilet training in public or using the potty each and every time he has to go
- Don't rely on the same training method for each of your kids.