

Tips For Potty Training

Why This Toilet Training Milestone Is Gender Specific

Sep 12, 2008 [Abby Deliz](#)



Potty Training - Kinder Info

Potty training is sometimes known as the torturous middle ground between diapers and Underoos. It's also time for a dose of patience and a sense of humor.

Many [parents](#) are ready to shelve the diapers and eagerly steer their [toddler](#) toward the toilet. But in order to be truly ready to potty train a toddler, parents need to think about the following: Are they prepared? Have they purchased a potty and training pants?

Is life relatively calm, or are parents going through a stressful time such as a move, or a new baby arriving? If their lives are experiencing upheaval, it would be better to put off the training for a few months. Also, do parents have an extended time when they do not need to leave the home to make the process easier?

There are other ways to be prepared: keep an extra potty seat in the car, and break out the rewards. Prizes or stickers help cheer toddlers on and motivate them to use the potty again and again. Lastly, while parents may be in a rush to put away those diapers, with potty training, it is better late than early. Ignore any pressures from parents or friends to toilet train early. According to [BabyCenter](#), the nerves and muscles that control urination and defecation in toddlers usually do not mature until 18-24 months.

Signs Your Toddler Is Preparing To Potty Train

- He is noticing his bodily functions
- He clutches his diaper after relieving himself
- He hides or squats when defecating
- He lets you know he is uncomfortable and wants to be changed
- He can say "pee pee" or "poo poo"
- The time he uses the bathroom becomes more predictable
- He tries to copy his parents when parents use the toilet

Potty Training Tips Specifically For Girls

Experts agree that potty training girls is generally easier than potty training boys. However, parents will need to teach her how to sit and urinate, which she might rebel against if she's seen daddy use the bathroom. Let her model mommy as she uses the restroom. Teach her how to wipe her vagina properly, from front to back, to avoid [infections](#). Bladder infections are more common in girls, so if she complains of abdominal pain or says it hurts when she urinates, take her to the [pediatrician](#) immediately.

Potty Training Tips Specifically For Boys

Potty training boys generally goes easier if they learn to use the bathroom while sitting down. When they are old enough to stand and urinate, they may find it easier to learn if they have a target, like floating cereal bits or pieces of toilet paper. They may learn faster going to the restroom with dad. Boys also tend to wet the bed for a longer period of time than girls, and should never be made to feel ashamed about this.

Potty Training Tips For All Toddlers

- All toddlers need to have control over their bladder and bowel muscles before potty training. A toddler usually gains control over bowel movement before bladder movement.
- Let toddlers choose their own potty.
- Teach them the proper names for their body parts.
- When they squat or run into a corner, remind them it is time to go potty and deliver them promptly.
- Always remind them to tell mommy or daddy when they have to urge to use the potty.
- Sit them down on the potty at normal times toddlers use the bathroom: after waking up in the morning or from nap, and before bedtime.
- Allow them to run around without a diaper so they can use the potty whenever they feel the instinct. If this isn't possible, make sure their clothes give them easy access to the bathroom.
- Give them their own "big kid" [training pants](#).
- Downplay accidents and don't admonish them for having them.
- Buy and read books that encourage positive toilet training.
- Praise them highly for each accomplishment at the toilet; use rewards like stickers or a Hershey's kiss if you are comfortable doing so.
- Eventually you can teach them to wipe, flush, and wash their hands.

There are many things to remember when potty training a son or a daughter. The most important advice parents can follow is to remain patient. Each child will follow through in his individual time at his individual pace. It is not always easy learning a new skill, and it takes time, effort, and practice. Parents can only be as prepared as they can and come to [potty training](#) with a sense of humor. It's guaranteed they'll need one.

Read on

- [Potty Training Tips for Girls](#)
- [Potty Training Boys](#)

- [Potty Training Tips for Boys](#)

References:

Sears, William M.D. *The Baby Book*. NY: Little, Brown and Company, 2003.

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