

# Parent Guide



@twinklparents

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## What is this resource and how do I use it?

Potty training can be challenging, so it can really help if you're prepared with some tips and tricks up your sleeve. This resource is written alongside the new Twinkl Originals book, 'Asha's Potty', to get you and your little one started on the journey to being nappy free.

## What is the focus of this resource?

Potty Training

Promoting Self-Confidence

Promoting Self-Care

## Further Ideas and Suggestions

When you and your child feel ready to start potty training, you'll find lots of resources in our **Potty and Toilet Training** area to help.

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# Potty Training Tips and Tricks

## Is my child ready?

One of the most important parts of potty training your child is to make sure you start at the **right time**. Don't be pressured by other parents or information that says your child should be toilet trained by a certain age. If you start before your child is ready, it could make the experience **traumatic** and may even mean that your child takes longer to get out of nappies.

Your child is probably ready to toilet train if:

- it is a **calm** time in your child's life - don't try to potty train if there are any big changes going on. These include things like the birth of a new sibling, a family holiday or starting preschool;
- your child is old enough to follow simple **instructions** so they can understand the order they need to do things in;
- your child can tell you when they have dirtied their nappy - this means they are beginning to understand the concept of going to the toilet;
- your child can pull their **pants** down on their own;
- your child sits on the **potty** on their own;
- your child has a **dry nappy** for two hours or more at a time.



## Where do I start?

It is important to use **clear language** when introducing the idea of going to the toilet - wee, poo, bottom. Otherwise, your child may **get confused** about what is happening and not have a clear idea in their head of what they are supposed to do when they need to go.

Ways to **introduce** the topic:

- Talk about the **feelings** you get in your body when you need to go to the toilet - do you feel fidgety, have tummy pains or feel full?
- Let your child have a look at the **toilet** - flush it, put toilet paper down it, move the lid up and down and sit on it. This ensures they become familiar with how the toilet works even if they aren't ready to use it yet.
- Encourage them to **sit on the potty** wearing clothes or even a nappy.
- Read some good toilet-training **picture books**, like 'Asha's Potty'.
- Show your child how to pull their **trousers** up and down and let them practise.
- Discuss the **potty** with your child a lot - make sure they are happy sitting on it. You could even play games with it like throw the ball in the potty so they see it in a really positive way.
- Tip your child's poo from their dirty nappy **down the toilet** - let them watch to see where poo should go.
- Let your child **watch** as you go to the toilet (if you feel comfortable). Children learn from watching their parents and this will help them understand the concept of using the toilet.
- Take your child to the shops and let them **choose what pants** they want to wear. This will give them ownership and a feeling of control over toilet training.

### Twinkl Tip:

If the weather is warm enough, take your child into your garden the first few times they try wearing pants - that way any accidents are easy to clean up.



## The First Steps

Start on a day when you don't have much to do - but remember to **start small**. Don't expect your child to make it through the whole of day one in pants. It's also wise not to take them anywhere where it will be difficult to **clean up messes** or **embarrassing** if they have an accident. Staying at **home** for the day works best.

Ways to **start** the process:

- Talk about how it is **now time** to try wearing pants for a little while.
- Let your child **choose the pair of pants** they want to wear.
- Encourage them to pull the pants **up on their own** and play for a while wearing them - this way they will get a feel for not having a nappy on.
- Don't worry if you need to put the nappy back on after an hour or two for the first few days, especially if your child gets tired - a **gradual build-up** is the best way to avoid accidents.
- Watch them **closely** for the first few days to see when they need to go, then say, 'it's time to try the potty.'
- Make a **potty chart** and give your child a star when they wee or poo in the potty - a reward after 10 stars may encourage this even more.
- Make a fist and squeeze **playdough** through the hole made between your thumb and forefinger - let your child copy you and explain that this is what happens when poo comes out (admittedly this is a little gross but it can help children who find it difficult to relax on the potty).

### Twinkl Tip:

Don't ask if they need to go on the potty - if they are playing, they will probably say 'no' which may lead to an accident. Instead, try things like 'It's time to go on the potty now.' or 'Show me how you can use the potty.'



## What next?

When your child is **lasting through the morning** without any accidents, gradually build up the time they wear pants. It may still be best to keep nappies on if you are going out, especially if you are going to places where it won't be easy to clean up accidents - this is not only messy but may also embarrass your child and scare them back into nappies full time.

Ways to **build up** your child's potty confidence:

- Practise using the **big toilet** instead of the potty - just make sure you either use a child seat on it or hold them so they don't fall in!
- Try an **outing** wearing pants - somewhere like a friend's house or to the local park are good places to start.
- Keep reading **lots of books** about toilets and potties - most kids love stories about poo!
- Discuss your toilet training with any **care providers** who may look after your child - consistency is key and nurseries may have their own rules and methods when it comes to potty training.
- Keep at it!

## Twinkl Tip:

Try sitting your child on the toilet backwards, so they are facing the seat. Then, give them an erasable marker to draw on the lid with as they sit there - it will stop them from getting bored and may help them stay on the toilet for the time it takes to poo - just make sure the marker is definitely erasable first!

## Getting through the Night

When your child has **built up their confidence** wearing pants and can last longer periods of time without needing the toilet, it may be time to start practising getting through the night, but remember that this takes **much longer** than potty training.

Ways to try **getting through** the night:

- Don't expect your child to make it through the night **dry** right away - accidents will happen.
- Make sure your child goes to the toilet **last thing** before bedtime.
- Don't let your child drink large amounts of **liquid** up to an hour before bedtime.
- Put a **waterproof mattress protector** on the bed - try not to use plastic sheets as they are noisy and uncomfortable.
- **Pull up pants** are a great way to begin night time potty training because they feel similar to normal pants but keep any accidents at bay. Use these for as long as you need to - it's not a race and no one wants to have to change sheets at 3am!



### Girls and boys – what are the differences?

It is often said that it is easier to potty train girls than boys. This is a very **general statement** and is, of course, not always true. However, there are some reasons it can be easier or faster to potty train girls. These include:

- Girls often **mature faster** physically and mentally than boys.
- Girls only have to learn to **sit** on the toilet - boys need to learn to **sit and stand**.
- Boys need to develop good **aim**.
- Boys can be **distracted** more easily and not be as willing to sit on the toilet for the time it takes to go.
- Boys often have higher energy levels making them more **fidgety**.
- Children learn by watching, and if a woman is the main carer, boys may not **see** how a man uses the toilet as much.

### A Few Things to Consider

- Both girls and boys will usually enjoy **discussing** their potty time, but boys may be more graphic than girls.
- It can be best to train boys **sitting down first**, then move to standing up.
- Put something eco-friendly in the toilet for boys to use to **practise their aim** - just make sure it won't block your toilet - a few pieces of hoop cereal is perfect.
- Coach your daughter to wipe from **front to back** - this will help prevent urinary tract infections.

