



Toilet Training



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Are you and your toddler just about ready to say goodbye to nappies for good? If you are, then it's time to learn more on the subject of toilet training.

At first, toilet training (also known as potty training) can seem a bit overwhelming for both you and your little toddler. But when you are both ready, the process can be both rewarding and fun.

When is the right time to start?

There is no magic age at which to toilet train your child. Every child is unique. The majority of children are ready sometime between 18 months and 3 years, although most do not master readiness skills until after their 2nd birthday.

In order for your child to succeed, they need to be physically, emotionally and mentally ready. There are a number of stages that your child will go through while developing bladder and bowel control.

If many of the Signs of Readiness listed below are clearly present, it's probably time to start thinking about toilet training. Timing is very important when it comes to toilet training, consider delaying toilet training if your child is sick or if there are big changes in your little ones life, like moving house, starting childcare or if a new baby is on the way.



Signs of Readiness

If your toddler shows at least two or three of the physical, emotional and mental signs listed below, it's probably time to start thinking about toilet training. Remember the more ready your child is the more smoothly the training process will go! Check out more information on the [Right Age To Toilet Train](#).

Physical signs of readiness	Mental signs of readiness	Social and emotional signs of readiness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your child has regular, formed poos at fairly predictable times Your toddler can move around independently and can get themselves to the toilet Your child has the dexterity to pull their pants up and down with minimum assistance You may notice that the nappy is dry for longer periods up to 2-3 hours Your toddler can recognise the feeling that they need to go to the toilet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your child knows what wee and poo Your child understands the meaning of 'wet' and 'dry' Your child can communicate when he or she needs 'to go' Your toddler can follow simple instructions, like 'Go and get your teddy' Your child may become uncomfortable and complain if their nappy is dirty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'I can do it' becomes a regular saying – this shows that your toddler wants to become more independent Your child demonstrates independence – often by saying 'no' to requests Your toddler begins to imitate your behaviour or the behaviour of others Your toddler shows a desire to please you – and responds well to praise Your child asks to wear Big Kid training pants or underpants

How do I get started?

Preparation is everything. The toilet training process should start well before you put your toddler in a pair of training pants or place them on a potty. Young children need to be gradually introduced to the whole concept of going to the toilet like a Big Kid. Take the time to make sure your child understands what it's all about before you start.

Here are some other strategies you can try:

- Older siblings and other children can also set a great example.
- Let your child follow you to the toilet and explain to them what's happening.
- Introduce stories about toilet training.
- Include your toddler when shopping for their potty or training toilet seat.
- Introduce Nappy-Pants as training pants to your child and show them why these 'Big Kid' pants are different to nappies. This helps to send a signal to your child that they are becoming a big kid.
- It is important to give your toddler time to get used to the training toilet seat or potty before using it.
- Use a favourite doll or teddy to demonstrate what the potty is really for.
- Help your toddler develop self-help skills by dressing them in clothing that can be quickly and easily pulled on and off.
- Allow your child to flush – while flushing repeatedly can test your patience, some children are frightened of the loud noise and splashing, so anything that makes toileting familiar and fun will help.





Toilet Training FAQs

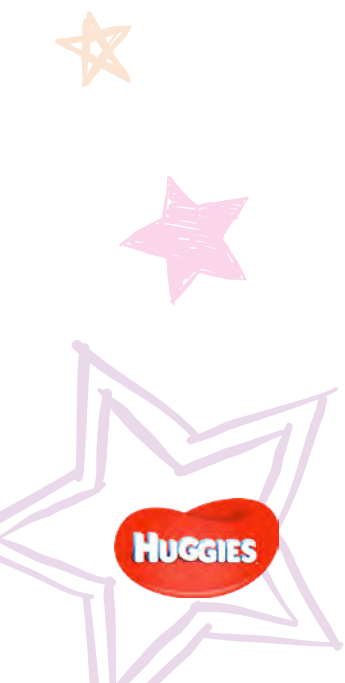
Q. Is 18 months too young to start toilet training? My mother keeps telling me that all her kids were trained by 18 months but it doesn't seem like a lot of kids today are.

A. On average, most children begin learning to use a potty by around their second birthday, but as with all areas of children's development, each child is different. Research shows that bladder capacity increases significantly between the ages of two and three, so by age three most children are able to hold on and be dry for a reasonable amount of time. There are however a number of behaviours that you can look for to help determine whether your toddler is ready. Look for signs of physical, mental and emotional readiness outlined in this guide. I would wait until he shows an interest in using the toilet or potty – forcing a reluctant toddler to toilet train is only going to create a battle for everyone and may turn the toilet into an object worth fearing. Don't feel pressured to start training before he is ready – waiting for these signs will ensure the process is much easier and much less stressful for everyone!

Q. Why do so many toddlers seem to have trouble with getting the number 2's worked out? My son has mastered doing a wee but seems to have a fear of doing a poo except in his nappy.

A. This is incredibly frustrating although surprisingly common particularly when it comes to boys! The challenge with mastering number 2s is that many toddlers often feel possessive of their stools, and are reluctant to give them up! The nappy seems to offer them some sense of security so they feel more comfortable in depositing it there.

You need to think about ways to encourage him to do it in the potty or the toilet. You may need to revisit some of those basic strategies you used when you first started toilet training him. Encourage him to sit on the toilet or potty after meal, you can make this a more pleasant experience by giving him a book to read or offering him a reward when he is successful. Don't make a big deal if he doesn't go, as anxiety will only make the situation worse. Repetition and reinforcement are keys to successful toilet training – keep talking to him about how we do our poos in the potty/toilet, read him books about toileting, let him watch you and your husband using the toilet.





Q. What if my child is in day care?

A. Consistency and repetition are two key components of successful toilet training. Most day care centres or care providers will be more than happy to follow your routine for toilet training. If the centre insists on using its own method, and it's the only centre you can go to, then it's probably best that you learn their method and use it at home. Just remember, punishment does not work, encouragement does. As for preschools that insist your child be trained by a certain age – if your child is trained by that age congratulations. If they're not, it's no great tragedy. Just wait a while longer. Wanting to go to day care or school might be just the motivation your child needs.

Q. What if children get too retentive and become constipated during training?

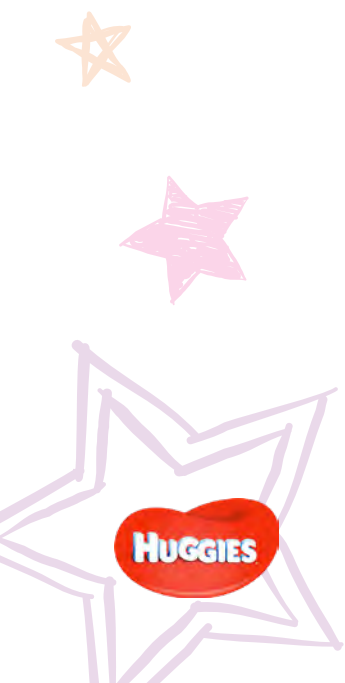
A. You can help keep this from happening if you watch your child's diet. Children suffering from constipation are encouraged to adopt a diet high in fibre. High fibre foods include whole grain breads, bran or barley cereals, fruits and raw vegetables (celery, lettuce, pear, apples, plums, peaches, grapes). Keep to a minimum those foods that cause constipation, such as rice, rice cereal, pasta, white bread, carrots, bananas, cheese or foods high in sugar. If a serious problem with constipation develops, see your doctor or pediatrician.

Q. Can you leave the house with a toddler while toilet training?

A. Certainly - there is no need to feel housebound. It is important to encourage your child to go to the toilet just before leaving the house and be aware where the toilets are when out and about. Typically there is very little time between when a young child indicates the need to go and actually going!!! Of course you should always take extra Huggies® Nappy Pants and an additional set of clothes just in case you don't make it in time. Don't be surprised if your child shows a greater interest in using the toilet when out and about – sometimes it has nothing to do with needing to wee and everything to do with checking out other people's toilets!

Q. Are boys slower to toilet train than girls?

A. No. There are differences though. Boys generally show signs of readiness later than girls and take longer to train. However, boys are only slightly behind with the average age for girls 29 months and 31 months for boys. Boys are sometimes more anxious and resistant than girls during toilet training. Ideally, boys should learn to wee sitting down first, as they may be reluctant to sit when it comes to doing poos.



Q. How long should I expect toilet training to take?

A. In toilet training development there is great variation from child to child. In general, the more ready a child is the quicker the process. The average time it takes for a child to achieve daytime dryness is between 3 and 6 months. Just work at the pace set by your child and don't worry if there are a few setbacks along the way – be patient and continue to encourage your child. Only begin when your child has shown most of the readiness skills, if you start too early it will just take longer.



Final words on toilet training...



Avoid Problems by Making Sure Your Child is Ready

If you think you may be starting too early, or your child may not be ready for toilet training, check the signs of readiness again, decide if it may be better to delay for a while.

Your Child Is Beginning Something New

As with anything, the first time anybody at an early age is introduced to something for the first time, they are going to have a few struggles. We are not all experts the first time we try something, you need to remember that your toddler is in a 'beginner' level of learning something new, and it's even harder for them because their brain hasn't fully developed.

Don't Rush Things

Remember that there is no prize for first place in toilet training so there's no need to hurry things along if your child says no or snubs their potty. You can lead the child to the toilet but you cannot force the child to use it.

Be Positive

Say "You'll do better next time" or "Don't worry about the accident, we'll get it right soon". Keep building confidence. Encourage those Big Kid feelings.

Remind them

Even if it seems as though your child is all trained up and going to the bathroom with ease, some ways to avoid regression is to reinforce your teachings from time to time.

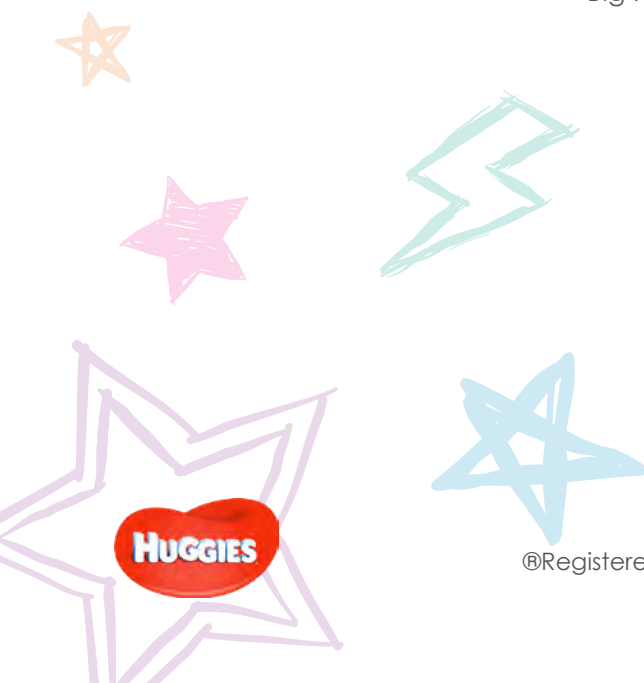
Be Consistent

Avoid mixed signals. Switching back and forth to nappies is confusing to a child. Once you make the switch to using Nappy-Pants as training pants, stick with it. Wearing the pants makes your child feel like a 'big girl' or 'big boy'.

Be Patient

There will be accidents! But mistakes are what we learn from. There may be times when your child seems like they are regressing. Don't get discouraged this is perfectly normal. Be confident that things will be back on track in no time

Remember, [toilet training](#) is a milestone every child goes through. It can be an exciting and rewarding time for your child as they start on their journey to become a Big Kid.



Free Sample: Try Huggies Nappy-Pants

Visit huggies.com.au to request your free sample.



Free Toilet Training Skills Chart and Big Kid Certificate

Available to download [here](#).



Toilet Training Skills Chart



Big Kid Certificate

