

Is Your Child Ready?

A Potty Training Readiness Checklist

A research-informed tool for families and professionals

- ✓ AAP-Aligned
- ✓ Evidence-Based
- ✓ Shame-Free

The 12 Readiness Signs



Check the boxes as you observe each sign. Most children show several signs before they're ready.

Body Awareness

- Stays dry for 2+ hours at a time**
Bladder muscles are developing control
- Notices pee/poop cues before going**
Pauses play, squats, or goes to a private spot
- Dislikes wet or dirty diapers**
Tugs at diaper or asks to be changed

Motor Skills

- Walks steadily to the bathroom**
Can navigate there independently
- Sits safely on potty with feet supported**
Feet reach floor or stool for stability
- Helps pull pants up and down**
Can manage clothing with some assistance

Cognitive & Language

- Follows 2-step instructions**
"Get the toy and bring it here"
- Can pause play when prompted**
Able to shift attention from activities
- Communicates needs**
Uses words, gestures, or signs

Emotional & Environmental

- Tolerates gentle routines**
Accepts predictable daily structures
- Shows interest in "big kid" activities**
Wants to do things independently
- Family life is relatively stable**
No major changes (moving, new sibling)

Sources: American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) Toilet Training Guidelines; Schum TR et al. Sequential Acquisition of Toilet-Training Skills. Pediatrics. 2002 (median readiness ages: girls 24-26 months, boys 26-29 months)

Green Light / Yellow Light / Red Flag

A quick decision guide for families and professionals



Green Light

Ready to Start

✓ Most readiness signs present

Child shows multiple skills from checklist

✓ Child shows curiosity

Interested in potty, asks questions

✓ Caregivers aligned

Consistent approach across all caregivers

→ **Ready to Begin!**

Start with the 2-week prep plan



Yellow Light

Prep First

⚠ Some signs present BUT:

• Constipation or painful bowel movements

• Fear of flushing or bathroom sounds

• Major life change (new sibling, moving)

→ **Do 2-Week Prep Plan**

Address concerns before starting



Red Flag

See Clinician First

✗ Contact healthcare provider:

• Pain with urination (burning/stinging)

• Blood in urine

• Fever with urinary symptoms

• Severe constipation or stool withholding

→ **Contact Pediatrician**

Rule out medical issues first



Important Reminder

These guidelines align with AAP and NASPGHAN clinical recommendations. Pain with urination, blood in urine, fever, and severe constipation may indicate urinary tract infections or other medical conditions requiring evaluation before toilet training begins.

2-Week Prep Plan

A gentle, no-pressure approach based on child-oriented principles

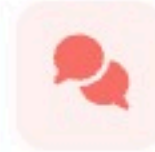
1



Introduce the Potty

Let child explore it freely. Make it their "special chair."

2



Teach Simple Words

Use "pee," "poop," "potty." Keep language neutral and positive.

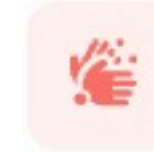
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Read a Potty Book

Make it a calm, fun routine during story time.

4



Practice Handwashing

Turn it into a fun song or game. Build the habit early.

5



Casual Routine Sits

Morning, after meals. No pressure to "perform."



Remember


"Readiness is a pattern, not a pass/fail test."

Every child develops at their own pace. The Brazelton child-oriented approach emphasizes patience, positive reinforcement, and following your child's lead. There's no rush—wait until your child shows genuine interest and cooperation.



Learn More

yourpottypal.com/learn

 Free resources & tips



Keep It Positive

Avoid words like "dirty" or "stinky." Use neutral language about body functions.



Be Consistent

All caregivers should use the same words and approach.



Take Breaks

If child shows distress, pause and try again in a few weeks.