

How to Teach a Token Board

Step 1: Choose learning target and reinforcer

Sit down with your child and have a goal to target and a reinforcer (highly preferred object/action they will work for). Place the reinforcer out of reach and state, “We are working for X” and show them the token board.

Step 2: Back Chain

If using a 5-token reinforcement chart, start by pre-filling 4 tokens. Sit down with child and present any demand (ex. put in, touch nose, clap hands, drive car) if they do it immediately give them a token and help them place it onto the 5th spot on the chart. If they don't comply, help them complete the task using gentle hand over hand assistance. Then give them the token and help them place it. At first, give easier demands to teach the reinforcement system.

Step 3: Count Tokens

When the chart has 5 tokens, take the child's hand and count 1-5 aloud while having them touch each token. Use rising intonation when counting. Or model counting on their AAC system. Once you get to 5, immediately reinforce by giving the child desired object/toy/action. Allow them several minutes to enjoy the item. Gently remove item.

Step 4: Continue Back Chaining

Once you have that routine down without any maladaptive behaviors, pre-fill 3 tokens and have them complete 2 tasks/directions to place last 2 of 5 tokens. Count, give reinforcer, and repeat until you can back chain to taking all tokens off. Essentially working from a 1:1 reinforcement system to 5:1.