

MY POTTY TRAINING PLAN

By Rebecca Mottram of
Little Bunny Bear





Hello!

Welcome to the Little Bunny Bear *'My Potty Training Plan'*. This workbook is designed to help you create and personalise your plan with all the essential information you need to potty train gently in line with the best possible research evidence. Use this alongside the presentations.

As a qualified Children's Nurse and Research Practitioner, I understand the importance of having an evidence base for the care I give. That's why Little Bunny Bear e-learning is underpinned by good peer-reviewed research. But it's also important for you to make your own, because every child and family are different.

Potty training is a time of great leaps and bounds for your child and my aim is to help you make it a positive experience.

I wish you all the best with your journey!



Rebecca

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Disclaimer: I have made every effort to make the information here up to date and correct at the time of writing (June 2022). I cannot assume and hereby disclaim any liability to any party for any loss, damage or disruption caused by errors and omissions of any kind. Any action you take upon this information is strictly at your own risk. This guide is also not a substitute for medical advice of doctors or other health care professionals. You should always consult with your doctor about anything you are worried about concerning matters related to your child's health. Thank you.



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Support and contact information

Consultations

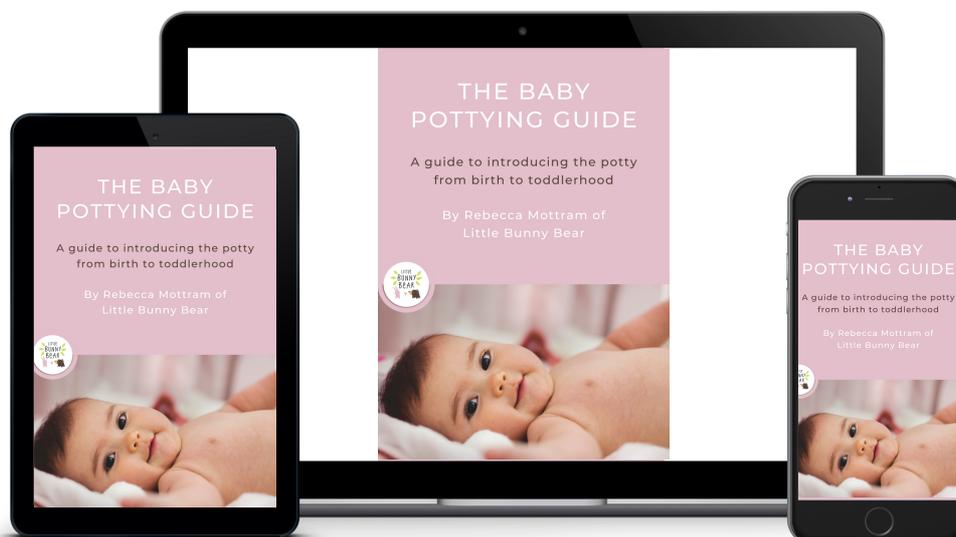
Rebecca offers one to one supervision for potty training, including troubleshooting and overcoming complex problems such as constipation and refusal. You can book a consultation with Rebecca by contacting her directly via email to rebecca@littlebunnybear.com. You can find out more about consultations and what to expect via the website www.littlebunnybear.com

Online support

Rebecca has an online group which is inclusive for everyone. You can find this here: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/pottylearningsupport/>

E-Guide for baby pottying (0-18m)

You can find my e-guide to Baby Pottying via Etsy. This guide is suitable for those with a younger child aged 0-18m. Scan the QR code here to take you to the listing or click on this link: https://www.etsy.com/uk/listing/699504404/elimination-communication-guides-baby_





MY CHILD'S AGE AND STAGE

Understanding where your child is at according to the skills needed to be independent from nappies can help you set appropriate expectations. All children develop skills at a difference pace, so it is important to understand where your child may be along the way, so that you can tailor your support to their understanding and capability.

You can see a summary of all the skills related to potty use and independence on the next page. They are grouped by age and categorised into four main areas:

- Body awareness
- Communication
- Understanding
- Physical ability

Skills are grouped into the earliest age at which a child may show them but they are given as a guide only. Do not worry if your child is not yet showing the average skills at the age highlighted. Your child will get there!



Potty skills grid

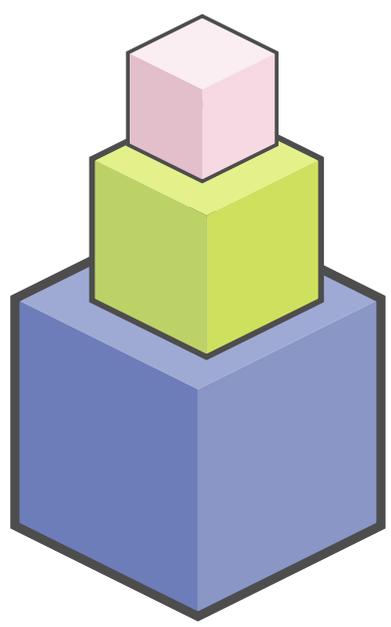
Showing when most developmentally typical children are capable of learning skills if given the opportunity. Skills are listed as the earliest time at which most children can start to learn and develop the skill. Each unique child may master this skill at a different pace but can learn and develop at these ages.

Age/Skill Category	0-6 months	6-12 months (crawling)	12-18 months (after walking)	18-24 months	24+ months
Body awareness	Shows awareness of full bladder/bowel. Aware of weeing and pooing. Shows dislike of soiled/wet nappy. Wakes from sleep to poo	Aware of wee and poo but unable to consistently distinguish one from the other	Able to distinguish wee and poo during or after voiding	Knows difference between wee and poo before voiding	
Communication	Communicates eliminations through non-verbal communications	Communicates toileting needs non-verbally. e.g. pointing, expressions, moves towards potty/toilet, pulls at nappy	Communicates toileting needs with words or gestures/sign language. Can tell caregiver they are voiding as they do it or straight afterwards	Can verbalise toileting needs	Verbalises need before going to the appropriate place potty/toilet
Understanding	Can learn to associate a sound or cue with the act of voiding	With caregiver can sit long enough to complete void, understands basic language	Independently can sit long enough to complete void, knows what the potty /toilet is for	Follows instructions to go to the toilet, understands sequence of undressing before sitting	Understands the whole toileting sequence (body awareness, initiating potty/toilet visit, undressing, sitting, wiping, dressing, washing and drying hands)
Physical ability	Can void on potty or toilet when held in position by caregiver	Can void on cue when sitting on a potty or toilet, can sit up on potty/toilet and maintain the position independently	Can mount potty unaided, can pull loose trousers with elasticated waist down, can dry hands with towel, can rub hands under water to make bubbles with soap. Can initiate some tasks independently as requested by caregivers	Conscious control of sphincter muscles, self-initiates going to the potty/toilet, can push down and pull up trousers and may unbutton clothing, independently undertake part of the toileting sequence, can turn on taps, can shake penis, can climb on toilet using footstool and seat reducer with assistance, can stay dry for up to 2 hours during the day	Independently recognises own body needs and initiates toileting sequence (as above) Can wait 1-2 minutes to get to the toilet/potty, can lock bathroom door, can independently mount toilet, can tears off toilet paper and wipe self if given the opportunity to practise, can flush toilet, can operate soap dispensers and paper towel dispensers,



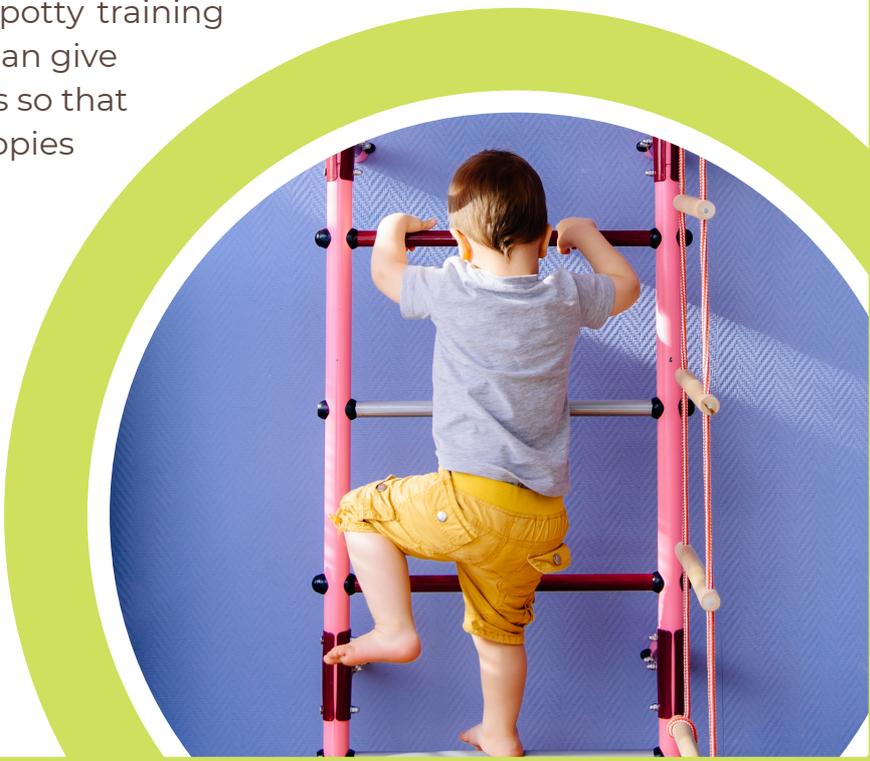


3 stages of learning



- Independence
- Practice
- Body awareness

All children must have good body awareness and plenty of practice in order to become independent in all processes. This is why helping your child prepare for potty training before you stop using nappies can give them a good foundation of skills so that they are ready to stop using nappies when the time comes.





Preparation Summary



Make sure you have the basic equipment you will need. This is a potty, toilet seat reducer and a step stool.



Get to know your child's habits, e.g. how often they wee and poo and whether they show any signs or signals around their toileting needs. Teach your child words like potty and toilet, wee and poo and names for parts of their body.



Help your child develop awareness of their body by putting a washable cloth inside their nappy which will feel wet when they wee. Make sure to change the cloth when it is wet, to avoid nappy rash. Involve your child in nappy/pull-up changes and flush all poo down the toilet.



Do some nappy free time (up to 30 minutes) on a regular basis, so they can get used to being nappy free. The best time to do this is after they have had a wee or poo, to prevent accidents.



Check for any problems such as constipation, withholding anxiety etc and seek help if you need it.



Potty Practice Summary



Help your child start using a potty. There is no lower age limit for this, but starting once they can sit up works well for many parents.



Use what you have learned about your child's signals and timing to offer them the potty at times they are likely to go. Good times usually include after waking, after a meal and before bedtime. Use nappies the rest of the time.



Help toddlers develop independence skills. This can include teaching words and things like tipping poo into the toilet and flushing, and hand washing.



Be positive and avoid any pressure. Just do what you can.

Learning skills gradually as you go along is a gentle way to prepare your child to stop using nappies when the time comes .



Stop Using Nappies Summary

Research shows the best age to stop using nappies is sometime between 18-30 months.



Review the checklist to make sure it is a good time to stop using nappies. When you go ahead, tell your child it's time to stop using nappies and put the nappies away together.



Stay at home for a few days if you can. Make it as easy as possible for your child by keeping the potty nearby and if you can, dress them without trousers or pants so they don't have the barrier of clothing.



Use what you have learned about your child's signals and timing to offer them the potty at times they are likely to go. Good times usually include after waking, after a meal and before bedtime. Only prompt your child when necessary.



Expect lots of accidents as your child learns. Give your child as much control and independence as possible to engage them, and avoid rewards like sweets or stickers. Use play to help your child enjoy it, e.g. who can get to the potty first or use toys to help teach and practice the skills.



Expect progress in a week or two. Progress includes your child knowing an accident was a mistake, developing awareness of their body's needs and signals and using the potty successfully at least once.



Is it a good time to stop using nappies? Quick start checks

- Your child is well (not recovering from illness)
- Your child is not constipated (if you're not sure, see below)
- You have no big transitions planned (starting nursery, moving house etc)
- You have planned time to support and teach your child
- You have your supplies (potty, toilet set reducer, step stool, mattress protection/nap pad)
- You are committed and feel ready to go for it
- Your child is at least 12 months old

Constipation

A healthy child should poo at least every 1-2 days, preferably every day. Poo should be soft and easy to pass without pain or strain. Poos should be narrower than the width of your child's wrist. If you are in any doubt, resolve the constipation by ensuring good diet and laxatives prescribed by your doctor. Note that at the beginning of potty training, mild constipation is normal as your child adjusts to using the potty. However, if your child is regularly constipated, seek medical advice to resolve it before attempting the potty training plan. You may also want to look at the resources on the ERIC website.



Equipment list

- Potty
- Toilet seat reducer
- Step stool
- Nappy cloths
- Mattress protection/nap pad
- Print at home Potty Training Plan

Where to buy nappy cloths and mattress protection/nap pads:

<https://www.etsy.com/uk/shop/LittleBunnyBear>



Reusable nappy cloths



Eco-Wool Puddle pad



Get 10% off with code MYFIRSTPURCHASE



Advanced potty training

Little Bunny Bear e-learning is available to support you further with potty training. Our Advanced course includes:

- How to tailor potty training to your unique child's temperament
- Building Independence skills
- Motivating your child
- Working with your child's nursery/childcare provider
- Outings
- Naps and night time

The Advanced course also includes how to tackle common problems such as:

- Managing accidents
- Potty training a child who will only wee or poo in a nappy
- Resistance and refusal





Top tips to drink more

Drinking enough is important for good health, especially good bladder and bowel health.



1. Drink at regular times in the day, e.g. meals, snack-time, after exercise. This makes it part of the everyday routine. Drink more at the start of the day and taper down towards the end of the day to help promote night time dryness.
2. Have a drink after you have done a wee, to keep the system going.
3. Ensure your child can get a drink themselves
4. Put lines or markers on the glass or bottle to help your child meet drinking goals during the day.
5. Make the drink interesting with fruit slices, cucumber, mint leaves, lemon curls, silly straws, ice cubes, coloured ice cubes etc.
6. Count whilst your child drinks and to help motivate the to beat their own goal for how many sips / how long they can keep going (one cup at a time!). Or, have a race with tiny cups to see who can drink all the cups first.
7. If you have a group, make it into a game like "simon says", duck-duck-goose or "take a sip if you...".
8. Listen to a song with a repeating word. Each time you hear the word, take a sip.
9. Decorate a drinks bottle with stickers. Or a special cup/glass.
10. Have a drink while reading a book and only turn the page after a sip of water.
11. Have a little tea (water) party where your child gets to serve all the drinks.
12. Start with small drinks, e.g. a small cup, and encourage them to finish it. Gradually increase the size of the cup.
13. Make ice lollies with dilute squash and fruit. Let them make their own recipes.
14. Make jelly in a cup which will equal 1 drinks worth of water.
15. Offer fruits like watermelon which contain mainly water.
16. Help them understand their bladder is like a balloon which needs to be filled and stretched in the day, so it stays strong.
17. Avoid reward-charts and stickers as these don't usually have lasting effect.

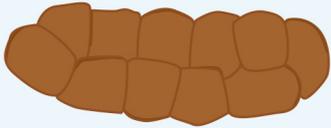
POO CHECKER

What's your poo telling you?



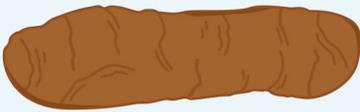
TYPE 1

Small hard lumps like rabbit droppings.
This suggests severe constipation.



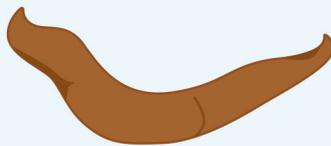
TYPE 2

Sausage shaped, but hard and lumpy.
This suggests constipation.



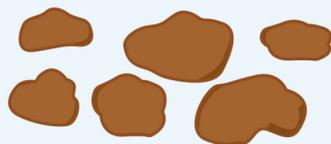
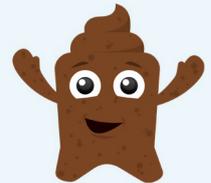
TYPE 3

Sausage shaped, but hard, with cracks on the surface.
This suggests constipation.



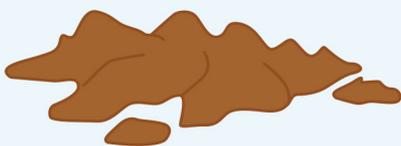
TYPE 4

A soft, smooth sausage - **THE IDEAL POO!**



TYPE 5

Separate soft blobs
May be fine if the child is well and softer poos can be accounted for e.g. increased intake of fibre or taking laxative.



TYPE 6

A mushy stool
May be fine if the child is well and softer poos can be accounted for e.g. increased intake of fibre or taking laxative.



TYPE 7

A liquid stool
This could be diarrhoea or overflow.

**Based on the Bristol Stool Form Scale produced by Dr KW Heaton, Reader in Medicine at the University of Bristol.*

WEE CHECKER

Hydration chart

1		GOOD Keep up the good work! You're drinking really well. You've got a happy, healthy bladder!
2		GOOD Keep up the good work! You're drinking really well. You've got a happy, healthy bladder!
3		FAIR Watch out! You could do with drinking a bit more please.
4		DEHYDRATED You really need to have a drink soon!
5		DEHYDRATED You really need to have a drink soon!
6		VERY DEHYDRATED Ouch! Your bladder and kidneys are getting worried! Have a big drink as soon as you can!
7		SEVERELY DEHYDRATED Thirsty? You should be – you're way overdue several big drinks. Get drinking as soon as you can – your bladder and kidneys are <i>NOT HAPPY!!</i>

SO HOW MUCH SHOULD YOU DRINK?

6 - 8 cups every day, more when it's hot, or if you're exercising.

Remember to spread the drinks out!

Bladder muscles like to keep fit by stretching and squeezing throughout the day.



HOW BIG SHOULD THE CUP BE?

A sensible size for your age would be:

- >> 2 year old – 120 / 150mls
- >> 5 year old – 175mls
- >> 7 year old – 200mls
- >> 11 year old – 250mls



Other resources

Below are resources that can help support you on your potty training journey.

Little Bunny Bear Website: www.littlebunnybear.com

An array of resources including blogs and videos about all aspects of potty training and baby potting (elimination communication). Also links to the Etsy shop where you can purchase the relevant supplies.

The UK How To Talk So Kids Will Listen Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/howtotalkuk/>

You can also access information via the international website: <http://howtotalksolittlekidswilllisten.com>

ERIC: <https://www.eric.org.uk>

Information on all aspects of childhood continence including constipation and potty training

NICE guidelines on constipation

<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg99/ifp/chapter/About-this-information>