



Potty Like a Pro!

Below, you'll find a few ideas, tips, and tricks to make potty training an easier and more enjoyable experience for the whole family.

Build Routine, Build Confidence

The bathroom is full of new sounds, smells, and expectations. Each step involved in going potty requires a lot of mental work from a small person. Help build confidence and practice the step-by-step, functional parts of using the bathroom through a routine. Start with setting a timer to go off every 60-90 minutes (or what works for your child). Each time the timer goes off, stop whatever you are doing and use the potty. Frequent bathroom trips can make the process less scary and require less mental load. That way, kids are ready to focus that energy on listening to their body or recognizing the sensation of having to go.

The Waiting Game

It's important to let your child spend time sitting on the toilet to try and go, but waiting can be tough for kids. A basket of kids books or magazines that stay in the bathroom can help pass the time. It can also be a great time to sing songs or nursery rhymes.

Positivity and Resilience

Potty training might be a frustrating task for adults and kids alike. You can help make the process smoother (and often faster!) by keeping the bathroom experience positive with your child. Lots of praise for trying, acknowledging good choices, and celebrating success will keep children motivated, even through setbacks or challenges. For example, it's normal and natural for kids to "regress" or slip backward in potty training progress. Instead of focusing on the unwanted behaviors ("We don't go potty in our big kid underwear; You didn't tell me you had to go"), try repeating the behaviors you **do** want to see ("Accidents happen but now we're sitting on the potty. We go pee in the potty.")



Prizes, Treats, “Bribes”?

For some kids, a small reward can help them feel motivated to work on something new, like potty training. When it comes to your child, you are the expert and you will know what kind of small token might motivate them best.

It could be a tiny food treat like one M&M, a goldfish cracker, or a “potty pop” sucker for big wins. If you want to avoid food treats, try putting a sticker on a chart, having a dance party, or earning special privileges for making “big kid” responsible choices.

Keeping track of progress over multiple days (or bathroom visits) to earn something larger can be an effective incentive for children over 3 years old. For younger children, a tiny token “in the moment” can be more impactful, more closely connected to the action that earn it.

Online Resources:

- <https://www.zerotothree.org/resource/potty-training-learning-to-the-use-the-toilet/>
- <https://www.ohcrappottytrainingmetoyou.com/blog-1>

Include online course offerings:

- <https://pottygenius.com/blogs/blog>
- <https://biglittlefeelings.com/blog/>

Tips on toddler-perfect routines for the bathroom and beyond:

- <https://www.sensoryexplorers.com/>

Potty Training Across All Abilities:

- <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/toddler/toilet-training/Pages/toilet-training-children-with-special-needs.aspx>