

Inclusive Developmental and Therapy Center

Toilet Training at Home: A Gentle, Step-by-Step Program

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✓ Can I help my child at home?

Yes, you really can. Toilet training goes best when it is calm, unhurried and led by your child's readiness rather than their age — and this program shows you exactly how to do that at home. This free program breaks it down into simple weekly steps, built from proven therapy techniques — things any parent can do at home, in everyday moments, at no cost. It doesn't replace a professional assessment where one is needed, but for a lot of children it makes a real difference, and it never does any harm.

Go at your own pace — a new, gentle focus each week.

Download the whole program as a printable PDF to keep.

Includes the signs that mean it's worth getting a bit of extra help.

Most children are ready to start toilet training somewhere between 18 months and three years, but readiness is about signs, not birthdays. Wait until your child stays dry for an hour or two at a time, notices or tells you when they have done a wee or a poo, can pull clothes up and down with a little help, and can follow a simple instruction. Starting before those signs are there is the commonest reason toilet training drags on for months.

If the sentence in your head is *bacha potty training nahi kar raha* — my child just will not do it — the change that helps most is to take the pressure off. *Zabardasti nahi, sabr chahiye*: not force, patience. Scolding, sitting a child on the potty until they perform, or comparing them with a cousin who managed it at two all push a child to hold on — and holding on is what turns an ordinary stage into a long, painful problem. Taking the pressure off is the thinking behind all of our **free step-by-step home programs**, and this one is no different.

This free program walks you through six gentle stages: spotting readiness, making the potty ordinary, nappy-off practice, taking the skill out of the house, poo — a separate skill, and very often the sticking point — and finally dry nights. Repeat any stage for as long as it is helping, and skip ahead if your child is already there.

Every child is different and there is no single right age. This guide is here to support you, not to add pressure, and it is not a substitute for advice from your child's doctor. If your child is in pain when they go, is constipated, or has been reliably dry and has suddenly gone back to accidents, please have them seen as well as working through these steps.

Who this program is for

- ✓ Parents of toddlers who are showing the first signs of being ready
- ✓ Families who want a calm, no-shouting, no-bribing approach
- ✓ Children coming out of nappies for the first time
- ✓ Children who happily wee in the potty but refuse to poo in it
- ✓ Children with autism, a developmental delay or sensory difficulties, who usually need longer and more visual support — our [developmental delay home program](#) runs well alongside this one
- ✓ Parents who tried before, it went badly, and they want to start again gently
- ✓ Families worried about night-time wetting in a child who is dry all day

Important — when to get professional help

This is a supportive home program — it isn't a diagnosis, and it doesn't replace a proper assessment. Please speak to a professional soon if:

Pain, crying, straining or blood when your child wees or poos

Hard, pellet-like stools, or several days between bowel movements

Poo accidents or soiling in a child who was reliably clean before

A complete return to wetting after months of being reliably dry

A sudden, marked increase in how much your child drinks and wees

Your child is well past the usual age with no signs of readiness at all
Any sudden change alongside tummy pain, fever or being generally unwell

Getting help where you live

Everything here is free to use **anywhere in the world**. If you'd like a professional to take a closer look, the best next step is someone local to you:

Work with us online, from anywhere. We offer **online sessions and parent coaching** worldwide — book an online consultation and we'll guide you and your child directly.

Talk to your child's **doctor, paediatrician, GP or health visitor** — share what you noticed.

Ask about **free early-childhood or early-intervention services** in your area — many countries offer them for young children (e.g. Early Intervention in the US, NHS referrals in the UK).

Search **“child speech & language therapist near me”**, or ask your doctor for a referral.

Near Multan, Pakistan? You're also warmly welcome in person at our centre — **contact us here**.

Your step-by-step roadmap

Move at your child's pace, not the calendar's — the “weeks” are just a gentle order, not a race. Feel free to repeat any stage for as long as it's helping.

Week 1 – Watch for readiness and get set up

Notice the signs and gather what you need before you begin.

Look for readiness signs together — staying dry for an hour or two, telling you when they have done a wee or a poo, showing interest in the toilet, and following a simple instruction.

Get a potty, or a child seat with a step, and let your child pick the colour if you can — children look after the things they chose themselves.

Set the seat up so your child's feet are firmly supported on a step or stool, knees a little higher than hips. Feet dangling in mid-air makes pushing much harder.

Start naming what is happening in a calm, cheerful way ("You did a wee!") so the words are familiar long before anything is expected.

 **Try** Let your child watch a parent or older sibling use the toilet — children **this:** learn far more by copying than by being told.

Week 2 – Get friendly with the potty

Make the potty a normal, relaxed part of the day.

Let your child sit on the potty with clothes on at first, so it feels safe and ordinary.

Read a short book or sing a song while they sit — a minute or two, and never a screen.

Offer a sit after waking, after meals and before the bath, but never make them stay.

Tip the contents of a dirty nappy into the potty or toilet together, so your child sees where poo is meant to end up.

 **Try** Keep the potty within easy reach in the room where your child plays **this:** most — a long walk to the bathroom loses the race.

Week 3 – Nappy-off time and catching wees

Give more chances to succeed, with less between your child and the potty.

Choose a settled week at home — not during a house move, a new baby, travel or illness.

Let your child play with a bare bottom or in easy-to-pull-down clothes. No tight jeans, no buttons, no dungarees.

Offer the potty every 45 to 60 minutes, and any time you spot the “I need to go” signs — going quiet, crossing legs, wriggling or hiding in a corner.

Celebrate any success warmly, stay completely flat about accidents, and clean up without comment.

 **Try** Keep drinks flowing — more fluid means more chances to practise, and **this:** it keeps stools soft at the same time.

Week 4 – Out and about and building the habit

Carry the new skill into everyday life.

Keep a steady routine of potty visits at key times — on waking, before leaving the house, and before bed.

Carry a spare set of clothes, wipes and a bag when you go out, and stay calm if there is an accident.

Practise the whole sequence at home first — pull down, sit, wipe or wash, pull up, wash hands — so an unfamiliar bathroom is not the first time your child has to manage it. If buttons, waistbands and pulling clothes up are the part that defeats them, our hands and handwriting program builds those exact hand skills.

Tell school, nursery or whoever else cares for your child the exact words and routine you use, so everything matches.

 **Try** A familiar seat, or a small portable potty kept in the car, makes outings **this:** much easier in the first few weeks.

Week 5 – If poo is the sticking point

Poo is a separate skill from wee, and refusing it is very common.

Let your child poo in a nappy for now if they need to, then move it closer to the toilet in small steps — standing in the bathroom, then beside the potty, then sitting on the potty with the nappy still on.

Get the position right: feet flat on a stool, knees above hips, leaning slightly forward. A child cannot push properly with their legs dangling.

Keep stools soft with plenty of water, fruit and fibre. One painful poo is enough to teach a child to hold on for weeks. If fruit and vegetables are refused every time, work through our fussy eating program at the same time.

Never ask your child to sit and try until something happens. That pressure is what starts the holding-on cycle in the first place.

⚡ Try If your child is holding on, going several days between poos, or in pain, **this:** pause the training and see a doctor first — constipation has to be sorted before anything else will work. Once that is settled, this is the order those small steps go in — and some children stay on one rung for weeks, which is fine.

Moving poo closer to the potty

Move on only when your child is comfortable

1 · In the nappy, as usual



2 · In the nappy, in the bathroom



3 · In the nappy, beside the potty



4 · Nappy on, sitting on the potty



5 · Nappy off, on the potty



Week 6 – Steady, confident and (later) dry nights

Let the daytime habit settle properly before you think about nights.

Keep praising the effort, not only the result, so your child stays willing.

Wait until daytime has been well established for several weeks before trying a night without a nappy. A settled, predictable bedtime makes this easier, and our home program for calmer nights is the place to start if bedtime itself is a battle.

Check the nappy each morning — several dry nights in a row is the sign your child's body may be ready.

If the nappy is still soaked every morning, put it back on without any fuss and try again in a few months. Night dryness is not something a child can practise their way into.

 **Try** Night dryness usually arrives months, sometimes years, after daytime **this:** dryness — that is normal, and it depends on how your child's body matures, not on how hard they try.

Little tricks that make it work

- ✓ Never punish or shame an accident — shame teaches children to hide, not to ask.
- ✓ Keep your voice calm and cheerful, even when you feel frustrated.
- ✓ Use the same words for wee and poo everywhere — at home, with grandparents, at school.
- ✓ If accidents outnumber successes for a whole week, stop for a few weeks
- ✓ Dress your child in clothes that are quick and easy to pull down.
- ✓ Support the feet. A stool under the feet does more for most children than any reward chart.
- ✓ A simple picture strip on the bathroom wall (sit, wipe or wash, flush, wash hands) helps children who follow pictures better than words — our printable picture routine chart gives you one to start from.

and start again later. A break is not a failure — and if you would rather talk it through first, you can ask our therapists in Multan.

How you'll know it's working

- Your child tells you before, or as, they need to go
- Longer stretches of staying dry between visits
- Fewer accidents week by week
- Poo goes in the potty or the toilet, not only in a nappy
- Your child asks for the potty or toilet by themselves
- Your child manages more of the sequence alone — clothes down, wipe or wash, clothes up, hands washed



Is this based on real methods? This program follows a readiness-based approach — waiting for your child's own signs of readiness, keeping the routine consistent and the pressure low — in line with widely used parent guidance from the American Academy of Paediatrics and the NHS. The emphasis on sorting out constipation before training, and on supported feet and an unhurried sit, comes from that same standard advice.

 **Educational information, not a diagnosis.** Our guidance follows standard, research-based practice (CDC, NHS, ASHA and WHO), is written by our therapy team and **medically reviewed by a GMC-registered doctor**. Every child is different, so we can't promise specific results — always use your own judgement and speak to a qualified professional about your child. **Read our full disclaimer.**

Gentle Toilet Training: questions parents ask