

Potty Skills Grid*

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 void		Can identify 1-2 body parts when named	Able to distinguish between wee and poo during or after voiding Identifies 3-5 body parts when named	Feels the difference between wee and poo before voiding Can pre-empt wee and poo When asked, can ascertain physically whether they need to void or not
Communication	Communicates voiding through body language and/or vocally	Communicates voiding through gestures and expressions	Communicates toileting needs using words, gestures/sign language, by moving towards potty/toilet etc.	Prior to voiding, frequently signals using words or gestures and/or self-initiates potty time Tells caregiver during voiding or straight afterwards	Consistently communicates needs prior to voiding Regularly self-initiates potty time Can talk about wee and poo in the abstract
Understanding	Can learn to associate voiding with a sound, position or sequence (cues)	Understands common toileting words / basic language Can void on request in response to taught cue/s	Follows routine commands /simple directions Understands function of potty	Understands “in” and “on” Can follow simple directions Understands the sequence of undressing before sitting	Understands need to get to the appropriate place before voiding Understands the order of toileting (undress, sit, void, dress, clean)
Physical ability	Can void in potty / toilet (with caregiver assistance)	Can sit on potty and maintain the position independently	Can dry hands with towel (with assistance) Can rub hands under water to make bubbles with soap Can help to clean up accidents/misses Can mount potty independently or climb on toilet using footstool and seat reducer (with assistance)	Can control sphincter muscles long enough to get to the toileting place Can void on request (if needed) Can pull loose trousers down (with assistance) Can be reliably dry (with assistance) Can dab vulva/shake penis after wee	Can pull trousers / pants up and down independently Can tear off toilet paper and wipe bottom (with assistance) Can flush toilet (with assistance) Can get soap from container and dry own hands using a towel Can be reliably dry without assistance

* This grid shows the earliest ages (on average) at which children are capable of demonstrating the described toileting skills. Because every child develops at a different pace, these are given as guidelines only. For all children, skills continue to develop and be refined after 24 months, in particular physical skills such as effective bottom wiping and hand washing and manipulation of zips/buttons on clothing etc. On average, full independence in all toileting processes can usually be attained by 5 years of age.