

# TOILETING PART 1: SETTING UP FOR SUCCESS

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It is easy to find toileting overwhelming. Even if you are not really ready for it yet, just setting up the space is an important first step—it is like getting the nursery ready for the baby before they arrive.

*"The first aim of the prepared environment is, as far as it is possible to render the growing child independent of the adult. It is a place where the child more and more directs their own life; and, in doing so, becomes conscious of their own powers."*

*Standing, E.M., Maria Montessori: Her Life and Work, (Plume, New York, 1998, pp. 267)*

If we look at the bathrooms in our homes they are not really child friendly. When they start to walk the average child is around 66cm tall. While the toilet is nearly 40 cm off the ground and then there the sink is completely out of reach at an average of 80 cm from the ground. If we want to help our children use the bathroom, then the first step is to make it accessible.

As your child grows we need to grow with them. We cannot expect that our 9 month old, who can now roll and possibly crawl, to be happy to lie down patiently while their nappy is changed. Here are some checklists to use at the different stages of development. It is best to always be looking ahead to see what you need to get ready first.



## **NON-MOBILE CHECKLIST (Birth - approx.3 months)**

- Change station - with everything on hand
- Nappies (see nappy choices)
- Waterproof mat for nappy-free time
- Baby wipes (see notes)
- Nappy rash cream
- Hand sanitiser
- Nappy sacks / bags
- Change table covers
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- Nappy bin or nappy pail
- Nappy squares (to mop up spills)
- Softlight (for night changes)
- Spare clothes
- Disinfecting wipes (to clean table)

## **MOBILE CHECKLIST (Approx. 4-12 months)**

### **Where?**

- On the ground for safety.
- In or near bathroom
- Once they are pulling up to stand - start changing standing up. (Pull-Up Nappies make this easier).

### **What you need:**

- Potty and / or
- Inner toilet seat
- Stool - for stand up nappy changes
- Bin for soiled nappies/underwear
- Easy-dress clothes
- Nappies (pull ups are a good option once your child is standing)
- 5-10 Terry towel underwear
- Basket for supplies that your child can access
  - 2-3 nappies
  - 2-3 pairs of underwear
  - Pre-folded toilet paper
  - Spare clothes

- Basket for soiled clothes that your child can access
- Supplies that only the adult can access
  - Baby wipes
  - Nappy rash cream
  - Hand sanitiser
  - Nappy sacks / bags
- Nappy bin or nappy pail
- Clean-Up Kit
  - Nappy squares (to mop up spills)
  - Spray (optional)

## **WALKING CHECKLIST (12+ months )**

- Potty and / or
- Inner toilet seat
- Stool - for dressing and undressing and for reaching up to the toilet and sink.
- Soap for washing hands
- Accessible towel to dry hands.
- Bin for soiled nappies/underwear
- Easy-dress clothes
- Nappies (pull ups)
- 15-20 cotton underwear
- Basket for supplies that your child can access
  - 2-3 nappies
  - 2-3 pairs of underwear
  - Pre-folded toilet paper
  - Spare clothes
- Basket for soiled clothes that your child can access
- Supplies that only the adult can access
  - Baby wipes
  - Nappy rash cream
  - Hand sanitiser
  - Nappy sacks / bags
- Nappy bin or nappy pail
- Clean-Up Kit
  - Nappy squares (to mop up spills)
  - Spray (optional)



## GOING OUT CHECKLIST

- Nappies/undies
- Travel potty
- Plastic bags
- Car seat protectors (piddle pad)
- Wipes / toilet paper
- Hand sanitiser
- Change of clothes
- National Public Toilet Map

## NIGHTTIME CHECKLIST

- 4-6 waterproof mattress protectors or brolly sheets
- 4-6 regular sheets
- night light

## CHANGE STATION

It is important to use a consistent space to change your child from birth. If we sometimes change our child's nappy in the bedroom, and then other times in the playroom, or the kitchen it can potentially cause confusion for your child later on. In year or two you are going to be annoyed when they wee in the playroom, the kitchen or the bedroom. Therefore it is best to set up a change station where you will consistently change your child's nappy, before they are mobile. It could be on the floor, on a change table or on top of a dresser. Please note that once your child is able to roll then it is important to move all changes to the floor to prevent injury.

Once your child is pulling up to stand, then a stand up nappy change in the bathroom is recommended. This will also help your child associate the bathroom with this process.

## ALL ABOUT NAPPIES

### How many do you need?

The number of nappies needed depends on the age of your child.

AGE	AVERAGE NUMBER OF CHANGES	NUMBER OF REUSABLE NAPPIES NEEDED
Birth - 3 months	10-12	20-24
3-6 months	8-10	16-20
6 months	6-8	12-16

## Disposable vs Reusable Nappies

People tend to think that you either choose to use disposable or reusable, but the truth is that you can use a combination of the two. Some people choose to use reusable nappies while at home and disposable while out and about.

### Disposable Nappies

Somewhere around 800 million disposable nappies are going into landfills every year. Disposable nappies make up 1% of landfill in Australia. To reduce the environmental impact of disposables it is recommended to:

- Flush solids into the toilet before throwing out the nappy.
- Choose eco-friendly nappies which have a biodegradable component.
- Choose compostable nappies.
  - Eenee Compostable Nappies Australia sell a nappy that can be composted with some local councils accepting them in their compost bins.

### Reusable Nappies

Reusable nappies allow a child to feel wet and therefore help build the connection between the sensation and the product. Using just one reusable nappy a day can save you \$150 a year. The biggest environmental impact of cloth nappies happens during their use. You can reduce the environmental impact of cloth nappies by:

- not flushing nappy liners, even if they're advertised as flushable
- using biodegradable, phosphate-free detergents
- buying plenty of nappies so that you can wait for a full load of washing without running out of clean nappies
- hanging nappies to dry, instead of using a clothes dryer
- not using fabric softener
- using them on a second child.

If you are put off by the thought of cleaning reusable nappies, then there are nappy services that pick up soiled nappies and drop off clean ones to your door.





### **Nappy-Free Time**

Modern nappies are so good these days that a child can be quite disconnected from the sensation that they have in their body and the product of bladder and bowel movements. Sometimes if we do not do this early enough a child can become distressed the first time that they see wee or poo coming out of their body. It is important from a very young age to allow time for your child to experience this without a nappy on. This will normalise this process and help build the connection between the sensation and the product. It also allows you to notice any cues that your child might have when they need to empty their bladder or bowel.

### **Wet Wipes**

Wet wipes also have a large environmental impact. Wet wipes don't disintegrate like toilet paper when flushed. They typically contain plastic so, once they reach the sea, they last for a long time, causing havoc with marine life. Aside from the risk to our oceans, waterways and wildlife, it is estimated that Australian water utilities spend \$15 million each year removing wet wipes from sewage treatment plants and pumping stations.

Reduce the environmental impact by using:

- Toilet paper
- Bidet shower
- Homemade wipes
- Reusable wipes
  - Cheeky Wipes are a complete reusable replacement for your standard wet wipe.



## Chemicals

There are lots of chemicals used in children's products that are best avoided. Ones to look out for include:

- Talc - choose talc-free baby powder instead
- Synthetic Fragrances - Stick to fragrance-free products that are especially formulated for sensitive baby skin.
- Phthalates - choose baby toys that are made from medical-grade silicone or natural substances like wood and using fragrance-free baby care products with clear ingredient lists.
- Bisphenol A (BPA) - avoid BPA by not using polycarbonate plastics (which may be marked with 'PC'). Instead, choose polypropylene products (e.g. PP, plastic #5), or glass baby bottles, and bottles that are labeled "BPA-free." Some plastics marked with recycle codes #7 and #3 may contain BPA. Since BPA resins often coat the inside of food cans, it's best to either select food in glass containers or create your own baby food at home. Most importantly, avoid heating plastics in the microwave.
- Parabens
- Tributyltin (TBT) - Occasionally found in the top sheet and adhesive areas of disposable nappies. Choose organic, non-toxic, and/or biodegradable and compostable nappies is the best way to avoid this compound as well as of course cloth nappies
- Sulfates - Choose product labels printed with "sulfate-free"



## Clothing Choices

Going to the toilet involves a lot of dressing and undressing. Make a note of the clothes that your child has and notice if any of it is difficult for your child to take off and put on without your help. Now is a good time to use clothing that is easy to put on and take off.

Even if you are not ready to completely commit to starting toileting, setting up and getting your space ready is an important step to take.