

Adapt clothing to help your child cope at school, for example shoes with velcro, velcro on top buttons of shirts, elastic on shirt cuffs, elastic laces, toggles on coats or elastic waistbands.



Reduce **distractions** - ideally a quiet room with the TV off.



Give lots of **praise**, even just for trying.



Let your child complete as many of the steps involved in dressing as they can - **don't rush in to help!**

Try not to watch all the time! Children will often do more when **not being watched**.

Lay the clothing on the bed front-side down so they can put it on easily without putting it backwards. T-shirts, sweatshirts, with **a picture on the front** will help your child learn the back from the front.



Ensure the child has a **stable base** of support before commencing the activity, i.e preferably on a firm surface with feet, hips and knees at 90

Start with undressing, as this is easier than dressing, and focus initially on one item of clothing e.g trousers.



Begin with easy clothing for your child to practise with, like pyjamas. Big buttons, wider button holes, and labels or pictures on clothing may help them learn back to front.

Try to follow the same **sequence** and place clothes in an ordered pile, for example head to toes. Follow this sequence every time.

Some children may benefit from following a **visual schedule** - using pictures of clothing as a visual prompt to help remember the correct order.

Don't rush! For example, don't practice when trying to get out to school in the morning, start with getting ready for bed in the evening or at the weekends.



Getting Dressed	
1	Pants
2	Socks
3	T-Shirt
4	Trousers
5	Jumper



'Backward chaining' is a useful method that gives some children a sense of achievement when dressing. The idea is that your child **completes the last part** of the dressing task, so that they get the reward of completing the task. As their skills develop they can carry out more and more of the task until they can do it all. For example - socks:

- Place the sock on your child's foot and encourage them to pull the sock up their leg.
- Next they pull the sock over their heel and up their leg.
- Then they pull the sock over their foot and heel and up their leg.

Shoes - if your child has difficulty tying shoe laces, refer to our handout on Tying Shoelaces.



Tips for Learning to Dress

Encourage your child to use **a mirror** to check how they look, for example to see if their sweatshirt is pulled down at the back. Dressing in front of a mirror helps some children organise themselves while they are getting dressed.



*Socks - consider practicing with **trainer socks** as there will be less material to manipulate. Socks with coloured heels and toes also make it easier to work out the correct way round.*

Online Resources:

<https://www.pinterest.co.uk/funspot123/self-care/>