

Order of dressing

By one year your child should be able to help you as you dress them by pushing their arms and legs through items of clothing. By 2 years they should be able to remove an unfastened jacket.

By 2 ½ years they can put on easy clothing such as a t-shirt or coat (not the zip though)

By the age of 3 they should be able to assist with zipping and unzipping and separating the zip at the bottom of a jacket. Between the ages of 3-4 your child should be able to put their hands through both armholes and down the sleeves in front opening clothing (e.g. jacket). They should also be able to take the same item off completely.

By 4 years old children should be able to get their clothes on and off independently but will not be able to manage fastenings (e.g. zips and buttons) for another year or two.



Involve your child in learning the order of the dressing as early as possible. Sing songs about dressing, talk to your child about dressing, play dressing up games and practice dressing dolls or teddies.



Talk about the order of dressing when you or your child are dressing. Ask questions e.g. "What goes on next?"

Lay clothes out in the order they should be put on. This is usually easier if you lay them out in a line rather than putting them on top of each other.

Use a picture sequence chart

Think about the environment, if laying clothes out put them on something which acts as a contrasting plain background. Don't put clothes onto a patterned duvet cover. Don't put red clothes on a red carpet.

Practice, practice, practice! Give your child opportunities for practice every day. Sometimes it can be a rush when getting ready for nursery or school so make the most of weekend and holiday opportunities. Don't just do it for them!

If your child makes a mistake help them to work out what went wrong and how to fix it rather than telling them and sorting it out for them.

Sometimes you need them to complete the whole process so that they can work out what went wrong. If they put their trousers on without their pants let them dress completely and find the pants at the end.

- You can ask questions to help them figure out what went wrong.
- You can compare what you do with what they have done.
- You can have them look in the mirror to work out what is wrong.
- Direct them back to their visual sequence if they are using one.

