



LEARNING TO TAKE TURNS

Good communication is about taking turns with talking. Sometimes, it's easier for your child to learn about turn-taking in other activities first. These skills should be supported when your child is young. Here are some ideas to help your child learn to take turns.

Do it alone with your child



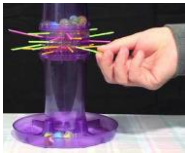
It's much easier for a child to learn to take turns when s/he only has to do it with one adult. Adding in another adult or another child makes it much harder. If you can have some time alone with your child, that's great.

Be in control



If your child has control of any play equipment, who's in charge?! Take control of it yourself in order to help your child take turns.

You get the first turn!



Show your child what s/he needs to do first.

Use simple language



Use simple language and be consistent; e.g., 'Your turn', 'My turn'.

Stay in control



If your child finds it difficult to take turns, give him/her a warning; for example, 'If you don't wait for your turn, we'll stop playing.' If s/he still can't do it, stop the game and come back to it later.

Ideas for turn-taking, from babyhood to early childhood

- Use two different toys; e.g., rattle and squeaking toy. Give one to your child and let him/her play with it. Then offer him/her the other toy, but s/he is only allowed the second toy when s/he gives you the first one;
- Sit opposite your child and roll a ball or throw a beanbag to each other;
- Sit opposite your child at a table and send wind-up toys to each other;
- Post toys or pictures into a box;
- Roll a ball in turn and knock down skittles;
- Have half the pieces of an inset puzzle. Take it in turn to add your pieces until the puzzle is complete;
- Play with toys you build, such as beakers, bricks, etc. Take turns to add to the tower until it's complete or it topples;
- Use a pop-up toy, such as a jack-in-the-box. Take turns to press the button to make the toy 'pop';
- Take turns to put a ring on a ring stick, or a ball on a ball stick;
- Play a washing/drying the doll game and take turns to 'wash' or 'dry' the doll's body parts;
- Take turns to lift the flaps in 'lift-the-flap' books;
- Take turns to draw a picture or to stick a shape onto a piece of paper.



Once your child is able to understand commercial games, take turns during these, e.g., a card game of 'Snap!'.

