

2-3 Part Instructions

What are 2-3 part instructions?

Instructions that require 2 or 3 actions, e.g. 'get your coat then line up next to the door' is a 2-part instruction.

'Put your books in the draw, then put your pencils in the pot and sit down' is a 3-part instruction.



Why are they important?

Children can usually understand all 2-3 part instructions by 4 years old. By 3 years old, they should be able to understand 2-3 part instructions if they are given in context- for example 'get your coat and shoes and line up' would be in context if it is said by the teacher near break time. Children can also use clues to follow instructions. For example, they may copy the other children when they line up, but this does not mean that they have understood the words in the instruction.

If they do not understand instructions, they may find it difficult to complete tasks at school or at home e.g. completing a piece of work, knowing which classroom to go to next, tidying up, getting ready to go out.



How do I know if my child can understand 2-3 part instructions?

They can follow 2-3 part instructions just by listening to the words, with no clues.

- ⇒ They can follow new 2-3 part instructions which are not part of a routine.
- ⇒ They complete all of the actions mentioned in the instructions.
- ⇒ They can do the actions in the right order (if this is part of the instruction)

Try These Activities...

1. Simon says

Take turns with your child giving instructions

For example ask them to: 'touch your nose and spin around'. If they find it difficult, you can break the instruction into smaller parts: 'first, touch your nose' and wait for them to do that, 'now, spin around'.

Then, they can give you an instruction to do. Repeat their instruction back to them whilst you do it.

You can add more and more parts to the instruction as your child learns to understand them.

2. Everyday activities



For example: washing up, getting ready for school, getting ready for bed.

Try this with activities that are not part of a routine for example making a cake or a craft activity.

Give instructions in 2-3 parts, and break them down if necessary. Think about making the instructions simple:

Avoid using 'time words, such as 'before brushing your teeth, put your pyjamas on'. This could be made simpler:

'Put your pyjamas on, then brush your teeth.'

If your child is stuck:

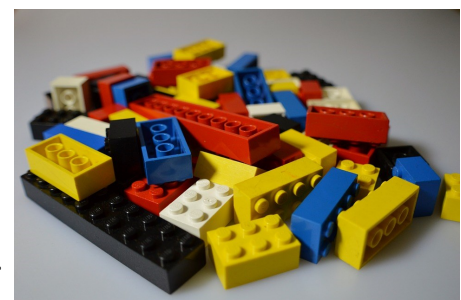
Use visual aids. For example, whilst saying the instruction, hold up pyjamas, then a toothbrush. Work towards your child understanding the instructions without this support.

Ask the child to repeat the instruction back to you. You can help them to break it down into two parts if they need to.

3. Barrier game

Sit back to back with your child. Draw a simple picture (e.g. made up of shapes and lines) Give them a blank piece of paper.

Give your child 2-3 part instructions of how to draw the same picture. For example, 'Draw a circle. Draw a square in the middle of the circle. Colour the square in green'.



This could also be done as a building game, for example with a tower of Lego bricks of different sizes and colours. Build one that you can see and give the child the right amount and type of



bricks to make one the same. Give instructions:

'put two red bricks together, then put a big blue brick on top, then a green brick on top'