

Following simple instructions

At this stage, children will typically have vocabulary that consists of 'mama; and 'dada' and at least three other words, like, ball, dog and more. This creates an opportunity to start giving your child simple instructions to see if they understand and are able to follow them.

Remember to keep your instructions clear and simple, it is a good idea to minimise the language and use single key words.

What do I need to do?

- The first step is to give your child an instruction, e.g., 'get the ball'.
- You will then need to **help** them complete the task and **repeat** the instruction while doing so.
- Gradually **reduce** the support given with prompts, such as pointing. Then over time, the child should be able to carry out the instruction without any help.
- Once established you can start adding more **routine instructions such as, shoes, bottle, coat etc.**

How?

Keeping short, simple and clear will help your child understand.

Remember to repeat whilst carrying out the instruction with your child.

Putting it into practise

If you feel your child is good at following these routine instructions, try introducing the following the game to further develop this skill.

Game

- Place three, age appropriate objects in front of the child, e.g. doll, cup, spoon.
- Ask the child – “Where is the spoon?” “Show me the cup”, “Give me dolly”.
- Can they follow these instructions? If so, try adding five items and repeating the game.
- Once your little one is confident in carrying out these instructions, make the game harder by using two objects in the same instruction. For example, “Give dolly the cup” or “put the car in the box”.



For further ideas check out the video below.



➔ Moving forward...

When you feel you are confident with this strategy, next, try introducing some **Adult Child Interaction**. Let your child lead the play and make sure to show an interest in what they are doing. It is important to remember **OWL** – **O**bserve, **W**ait and **L**isten.