



Turn Taking Games and Activities to play with your child

Turn taking games and activities are a great way of helping your child to learn to:

- Develop back and forth interaction with others
- Enjoy interacting and be able to share attention
- Wait for or anticipate something
- Release a toy to someone else

- ✓ Find a time when it is quiet and calm ~ turn off and put away all electronic devices.
- ✓ Use toys that your child will enjoy and will want to play with but not their favourite toys as your child may find it more difficult to take turns with favourite toys.
- ✓ Keep language simple, e.g. '*adult's name's turn*' / '*child's name's turn*'.
- ✓ Start with what your child can already do ~ if your child is managing quick 1 or 2 second turns, then have quick 1 or 2 second turns and practice this frequently.
- ✓ Gradually extend your child's turn taking skills to the next step by increasing the time they wait, e.g. if they can consistently wait 2 seconds, then increase to 3 seconds.
- ✓ Sometimes visuals are a great way to support your child to learn to take turns, e.g. a '**wait**' card to give to whoever is waiting, or you could use two photos, one each of you and your child to indicate who's turn it is.
- ✓ Try to encourage eye contact when you are taking turns ~ this will help you and your child to have fun. You can do this by pausing during the turn taking or saying '*ready, steady...*' and pausing before you say '*go*'.
- ✓ Try and keep it fun and relaxed so that your child learns that turn taking can be enjoyable.
- ✓ Praise your child using specific language, e.g. if they have waited say '*Good waiting*'.





What if my child gets upset when it is my turn and they must wait?

- ✓ Make your turn very quick so your child does not have to wait too long.
- ✓ Gradually increase the amount of time they wait.
- ✓ Show your child a visual '**wait**' card and maybe count to 3 ~ counting can be quite soothing.
- ✓ Praise your child for '*Good waiting*'.

What if my child does not give me the toy back when their turn is finished?

- ✓ Try using toys that only have one part to them, e.g. only one car on the car run.
- ✓ When it is your child's turn, get ready to catch the toy before they can get it ~ take your turn very quickly then give the toy back to your child.
- ✓ Hold out your hand and wait to see if your child gives you the toy.
- ✓ Try saying '*ready steady*' then pause and '*go*' when they give you the toy.
- ✓ Say your name and that it is your turn, e.g. '*Mummy's / Daddy's turn*'.
- ✓ If you know that your child is not going to give the toy, move away and try again at another time ~ don't worry, this is very common when learning a new skill.



Activity / Game	What you need	How to do it
<p>For very quick turns of less than 5 seconds when your child is learning to wait:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold the toy and pass it to your child. Say your child's name and let them know it is their turn, e.g. <i>'Ahmed's turn'</i> • If needed, show your child his / her photograph so they understand it is their turn. • Encourage your child to take their turn. • When your child has taken their turn, say their name and let them know their turn has finished, e.g. <i>'Ahmed's turn finished'</i>. • Retrieve the toy so that you can quickly take your turn. • Say your name and let your child know it is your turn, e.g. <i>'Mummy's / Daddy's turn'</i>. • Take your turn quickly. • If needed, show your child the 'wait' card. • When you have taken your turn, say your name and let your child know your turn has finished, e.g. <i>'Mummy's / Daddy's turn finished'</i>. • Praise your child, e.g. <i>'Good waiting'</i>. • Repeat the above as many times as your child remains engaged and interested. • To help your child learn to wait longer, you could gradually increase the amount of time you take your turn. • You could say <i>'Ready, steady, go'</i> and pause before you say <i>'go'</i> so that your child develops anticipation and also learns to wait a slightly longer amount of time. 		
<p>Posting Some children love posting things. Use a posting toy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Posting pig • Letter box toys • Shape sorters • Homemade posting toys <p>Pick posting toys that you can post into easily and quickly so that your child does not have to wait too long.</p>	 <p>Posting box made from an old box with your child's favourite character.</p>  <p>Posting box made from a plastic container with a tube in the top to create a posting hole.</p>  <p>An old box with small circle cut out at the top to post into (keep the flaps of the box at the bottom and unsealed so you can get the balls out).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep the posting toy / counter to yourself. • Say your child's name e.g. <i>'Freddie's turn'</i> then give them the toy / counter. • Be ready to collect the toy / counter for your turn. • Take your turn quickly. • Repeat as many times as you can – keep it enjoyable and stop when your child seems less interested or if they start to become frustrated or



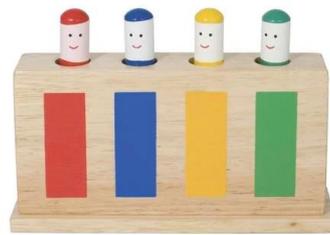
		<p>upset.</p>
<p>Ball run/car run These are great as the ball or car usually runs down quickly If you do not have one of these, you could make your own.</p>	  <p>A posting game made by sticking an old kitchen roll holder to a wall / door with a container underneath to collect the balls.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage your child to put the ball at the top of the ball run and say, 'Ready steady go'. • You retrieve the ball when it gets to the bottom of the run. • Tip ~ keep the exit of the ball run facing you or place your hand underneath ready to catch the ball or car when it is your turn. • Say your child's name, e.g. 'Freddie's turn' and let him take his turn with the ball.
<p>Spinning toys These are a good step toward increasing the amount of time your child can wait.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use one push of the spinning toy as 1 turn. • Encourage your child to push say, 'push'. • When the toy has finished spinning, it will be your turn.



Cause and effect toys

These will be toys which your child can press or push a button and there will be a sound or movement.

Most of these toys have a quick action or sound so are ideal for turn taking.



- Hold the toy out toward your child.
- Let your child have one turn first to press the button.
- Quickly take your turn and say, 'Mummy's / Daddy's turn' before offering the toy back to your child for their turn.
- It is a good idea to try and keep your hands near the toy at all times.

Balls

Use any size of ball which rolls easily along the floor.

It is best to roll the ball rather than throw when your child is first learning to take turns.



A gym ball is great to use because of the size.



- Sit opposite your child (sitting like the children in the picture above lets you easily capture the ball in case your child finds it difficult to roll straight toward you).



<p>Wheeled toys Use any type and size of wheeled toys that roll along the floor easily.</p> <p>Light up toys or noise making toys can be motivating especially if they light up or make a sound when they are pushed.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• This will be the same as for playing with balls.
<p>Incy Wincy Spider</p>	 <p>Cardboard tube – wrapping paper tubes or hand towel tubes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Take turns to let the spider run down the tube, use water if needed. Using the language, 'ready steady go'.• You could build up the pause between 'steady' and 'go' to encourage a longer wait between turns.



For when your child can manage to wait for about 8 seconds ~ you can start to include another child in the turn taking activity:

- Place the toy between the two children.
- Pass the toy to child 1. Say their name and let them know it is their turn, e.g. 'Amy's turn'.
- Let child 1 take their turn.
- Praise child 2 for waiting, e.g. 'Good waiting Ben'.
- When child 1 has taken their turn, say their name and let them know their turn has finished, e.g. 'Amy's turn finished'.
- Encourage child 1 to give the toy to child 2, 'Give to Ben'.
- If child 1 needs help with this, you could prompt them by guiding their hand to give the toy to child 2 or give the toy yourself.
- You could also use photographs and show child 1 the photograph of child 2.
- Let child 2 take their turn.
- If needed show child 1 the 'wait' card whilst they wait ~ praise them for good waiting.
- Repeat for each child's turn as many times as both children are able to maintain interest and enjoyment.

Pop Up Pirates



- Encourage your child to take turns at pulling the swords out of the barrel.
- The swords can be left in front of the children when they take them out.
- Build up the number of people playing to make a longer waiting time between each go.

Skittles

If you do not have skittles at home, you could make your own from empty plastic bottles filled with coloured water or with numbers or letters on stuck on.



- Encourage your child to take turns with rolling the ball to knock down the skittles.
- Again, you can add another child or adult to this game.
- Each person could



		<p>have their own ball.</p>
<p>Ker-Plunk You can make your own version of Ker-Plunk at home.</p> 	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colander / draining cup • Straws or barbecue sticks • Pom poms / marbles or cotton wool balls. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage your child to take turns to remove the sticks. • The aim is to try not to make the marbles / poms, poms fall. • Again, this would be a good game to add another child / adult into the game.
<p>Water play You can take turns using water:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In a bowl of water • At bath times • At the sink • At a water tray 	 <p>Use bath or water toys or empty containers from around your home:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empty plastic containers (rinsed clean) • Colanders • Funnels • Plastic jugs • Ladles • Spray bottles • Squeezy bottles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start with one container or water toy. • Take turns to empty and fill the container or operate the toy. • Give the container or toy to your child when it is their turn. • You could take turns to: Pour Splash Spray Squeeze



For when your child can easily manage to wait for more than 10 seconds:

- Once your child is able to take turns with one child, introduce other children or adults into the turn taking activity or game.
- Use the same system of saying the name of the person whose turn it is.
- Praise when your child waits calmly for their turn
- Encourage your child to become more independent by asking, '*Whose turn?*' or encouraging them to set up the activity.
- You could change the order of turns to make it more challenging, e.g. '*Let me choose whose turn*'.
- You could vary the amount of time that each child / adult has to wait their turn.

Musical instruments

If your child enjoys music or sound making toys, then you could use these to work on turn taking.



- You can take turns by handing the musical toy to your child in a back and forth activity.
- If the musical toy has two parts, e.g. drumsticks, you and your child could have one drumstick each.
- Let your child know whose turn it is by saying their name, e.g. '*Freddie's turn*'.
- To make it more interesting, you could make the sound loud or soft / fast or slow.



<p>Building For children who enjoy building towers, use different toys and objects around your home.</p>	 <p>Build with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wooden blocks • Stacking cups • Duplo • Cushions • Empty cereal boxes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You and your child each take it in turns to place one piece of the tower on top of the other. • The fun will be watching as it topples over. • Or you could knock it over together and then start to build the tower all over again.
<p>Puzzles Inset puzzles can be a good way of encouraging children who like numbers and letters or like to complete puzzles to join in with turn taking.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose a puzzle with between 6 to 12 pieces depending on how interested your child is in completing puzzles. • Take all the pieces of the inset puzzle out and put them to one side or you could put them in a bag. • You and your child could take it in turns to take one piece out of the bag and put it in the inset board.
<p>Cooking When your child is able to wait consistently for their turn, you could extend their turn taking skills to everyday tasks such as cooking.</p>	 <p>Playdough Cake batter Pancake batter Roti dough Biscuit dough</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take turns with stirring / rolling / pouring. • You could sing as you each take your turn to the tune of Mulberry Bush, <i>'This is the way we stir the</i>



	<p>https://www.bbcgoodfood.com/howto/guide/playdough-recipe</p> <p>https://recipes.sainsburys.co.uk/recipes/baking/easy-biscuits</p>	<p><i>batter, stir the batter, stir the batter...'</i></p>
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To find out more / Useful links

- <https://www.bbc.co.uk/tiny-happy-people/my-turn-your-turn/z7jnhbk>