

# 6 signs your child is ready for preschool



## 1. They can follow simple directions

Being able to follow a simple instructions, one or two step, is a good sign your preschooler can handle classroom expectations. Teachers need children to follow directions so there isn't chaos in the classroom, but they also understand that young children can't follow a huge string of complex instructions. If your little one can follow your basic commands throughout the day, they'll do just fine at preschool.

## 2. They can handle being away from you for short periods of time

The most stressful part of your child's transition to preschool might be fear or separation anxiety. You certainly aren't alone in worrying about how your child will handle being dropped off that first day of school. It's normal for a child to cry for a few minutes after you say goodbye. Over time, these feelings should subside, and an emotionally ready child will likely be eager to learn and make friends in preschool. But if they continue to be upset all morning, they may not be ready.

## 3. They can focus on a task

Children this age aren't known for their long attention spans. Fortunately, preschool is the perfect place for them to hone their focus before entering kindergarten. Having at least some ability to focus before entering preschool will help your child make the most out of classroom activities and continue to develop their concentration skills.

## 4. They want to play with other children

Preschool is a time of significant growth in the area of social-emotional development. Your child should be interested in interacting with other children. Does your child smile, wave or greet other children in the park or at the grocery store? This is a good sign your child is ready to make friends and play with others in the classroom.

## 5. They have basic self-care skills

Teachers will be available to help children when needed, but your child should be able to handle the basics of taking care of themselves while at school. That means having skills like putting on their own coat, taking their shoes on and off, feeding themselves and cleaning up their toys. Even if your child still struggles with a few of those things, they will be fine as long as they know how to ask for help.

## 6. They demonstrate some independence

Children this age aren't expected to do everything alone, but some independence is helpful. Your child should be able to play without constant redirection from adults. They will be expected to feed themselves and, after learning the routines of preschool, be able to navigate the school spaces with minimal teacher help.

### ***Are they ready?***

It's natural for children to fear the unknown. You can help set your child up for success by preparing them for the preschool experience. We recommend reading books about preschool with your child and introducing/reviewing activities like identifying colors & singing songs, interacting with kids their age, following directions, washing their hands, cleaning up toys, etc.