



Dressing Myself

Socks and Shoes

Babies love to take their socks off, they can usually manage this by themselves by the time they are 15 months old. Putting on socks is a skill that children can often find challenging, particularly for those children who experience difficulties in using both of their hands together to complete a task.

Children learn to take their shoes off first and can usually pull on wellies, slippers and slip on shoes by the time they are 2 years old.

Socks

- Practice using loose fitting socks that are too big, they could even practice putting on your socks
- Avoid socks which have overly tight elastic at the ankles
- Socks with different coloured toes and/or heels can make it easier for your child to get their socks the right way round
- Encourage your child to sit when placing their socks on their feet, as they will be less likely to lose their balance
- It is often helpful for you to sit next to or behind your child when they are completing this task, as it will give you a more realistic view of what elements they are finding difficult. They may benefit from hand-over-hand support from this position
- You may find it helpful initially to place the sock over your child's toes and allow them to pull the sock up
- Encourage your child to place their thumbs inside the sock to assist in pulling socks onto their feet
- Teach your child to gather up the sock from the top to the heel using two hands, before placing the sock on their toes
- Some children don't like the feeling of wearing socks and can be particularly bothered by seams; you could try turning your child's socks inside out, or buy seamless socks

Shoes

- Practice with slip on shoes, slippers and wellies first. If your child has to change shoes in nursery, try to avoid laces or buckles
- It is often helpful for you to sit next to, or behind your child when they are completing this task as it will give you a more realistic view of what elements they are finding difficult
- Put the shoes in front of your child the right way round and try the sticker trick (cut a sticker in half and stick one half in each shoe) to help them work out which shoe goes on which foot
- Encourage your child to sit when placing their shoes on their feet, as they will be less likely to lose their balance



- Get your child to look at their feet to check the shoes are on the right feet. Initially, you may need to position the correct shoes by the correct feet. If your child has difficulty putting each shoe on the correct foot you can:
 1. Fix something bright onto one shoe and teach your child “bright is right”
 2. Buy shoes with a logo on the outer side
 3. Place shoes in front of your child in their correct position, so that the left shoe is matching the left foot
 4. Help your child recognise their left and right shoe by drawing arrows inside the shoes pointing together
- Once they have mastered slip on shoes, move on to simple fastenings such as velcro or zips