

Before and After

This activity helps your child to understand instructions that involve sequences using 'before' and 'after'. These words are tricky to understand because their meaning changes depending on where they come in the sentence.

For example: 'Before you clap your hands, touch your nose' means touch your nose first then clap your hands. However if you move the word 'before' it changes the meaning, 'Clap your hands before you touch your nose' means clap your hands first and then touch your nose.

Your child needs to learn that sometimes you don't complete the actions in the order that you say them in.

Teach your child rules for following before and after instructions:

Do A **before** B means do A first then B

Before A do B means do B first then A

Do A **after** B means do B first then A

After A do B means do A first then B

Give your child instructions asking them to complete two different actions such as clapping hands, touching things or walking to places, using before and after in different positions. You may need to work on each position one at a time until your child is able to understand them well enough to move on to the next one. Encourage your child to give you some instructions to follow using 'before' and 'after' in different positions.



Variations:

To make this game easier, model following the instruction for your child to copy explaining which action you did first and why, e.g. "I clapped my hands first because I needed to do this **before** I touched the floor".

To make this game harder, use both before and after in one instruction, e.g. "Draw a square **before** you turn the paper over, but **after** you write your name at the top".