

Child Compliance – Time Out

Five Basic Steps

1. **Clear, Concise Instructions, No Questions, and Wait.** Do not repeat instructions.
2. **Praise Compliance.** If your child begins to obey the instruction within 5 seconds, immediately praise or attend to your child. Compliance is desirable behavior. You encourage behavior by using your attention when it occurs.
3. **Warning.** If your child does not begin to comply with your instruction after 5 – 10 seconds, give the child a warning. Do not simply repeat your instruction. Warnings are “if-then” statements. (Example: If you don’t pick up your shoes, you will have to sit in timeout”). Warnings should be given in a stern, firm voice so your child knows you are serious.
4. **Praise Compliance.** If your child obeys following a warning, immediately praise or attend to the child.
5. **Time-Out**
 - a. If your child does not begin to obey a warning within 5 – 10 seconds, you must use timeout. Timeout means time away from positive events like your attention toys, or TV. The form of timeout which is usually best involves putting your child in a chair facing a corner or a wall. Always begin timeout by telling your child why he or she must go to timeout. Say: “Since you ..., you must sit in timeout.” Then take the child by the arm and walk the child to the corner. Place him or her on the chair with no further discussion. Then say, “Stay there and be quiet”.
 - b. Do not talk to the child at all during the timeout period. Remove any toys the child might have brought with him or her to timeout. Keep within visual range of the child so you can correct the child if they leave timeout without permission.
 - c. Children should remain in timeout for 2 – 10 minutes. For pre-school children, we recommend 2 minutes. For children over the age of 6, we recommend 5 to 10 minutes. Timeout is not recommended for adolescents.
 - d. If a preschooler is noisy when the timeout period is over, extend timeout until 5 – 15 seconds of quiet. If a grade schooler is noisy, extend timeout until at least 1 minute of quiet. Once the child has remained in timeout long enough and is quiet, say: “Since you are quiet, you can get up now.” Wait for the child to get up on their own. Do not order them out of timeout. If the child pouts on the timeout chair after you have indicated that timeout is over, ignore the child and leave the room. When you are out of sight, most children will get up and leave the TO chair.
 - e. Some children will refuse to stay in timeout. There are two basic methods to manage this:

Room Timeout Back-up and Return to Timeout Chair

Grab the child, hold the child by the shoulders and say: “Since you left the chair, you will have to stay in your room by yourself.” March the child quickly to their room, say nothing more, place them in the room, shut the door, stand by the door, holding it shut if necessary. Count to 60 (1 minute). Open the door and then march the child back to the timeout chair. Again, do not say a word during this process. Place the child back on the chair and say: “Now stay there and be quiet!” Note that you do not need to wait for the child to be quiet before returning them to the TO chair.

Variations

Depeding on the child's age, history, and current circumstances, we may recommend alternatives to (1). Also, we will monitor the child's reaction to chair timeouts and tailor-make adjustments as needed.

6. Once timeout is over and the child has gotten up from the chair, repeat the original instruction the child disobeyed.
7. Repeat steps 1 – 5 as needed.