

Here's How to... Use Backwards Chaining

What is it?	Backward chaining is an effective technique used to teach a sequence of behaviours to children by breaking a task down into individual steps. Then, the whole task is taught starting with the last task and working your way backwards.
Who is it for?	In Early Years Settings it supports all children both verbal and pre-verbal to develop independence skills in a variety of areas including self-care, independence and learning.
How do I use it?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Break the task down into steps. It can help to do the task and write down each action in turn. 2. Now complete all the steps of the task for your child except for the last one. 3. You need to teach your child the last step. You can help your child person by showing them, telling them or doing the action with them. 4. Practice, practice, practice this step until your child can do it without your help. 5. Now complete all the steps except for the last two. 6. Teach them the second last step and let them complete the last step. 7. Once they can do the second last step move on to teaching the third last step. Like before you complete all the steps except the last three. You teach them the third last step and let them do the last two steps themselves. 8. Keep going like this until they can do all of the steps.
Why would I use it?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It is a useful strategy if a child is finding it hard to learn or engage with a new skill as the task is smaller and more manageable. - Starts to reduce dependence on adults as the child is able to work towards independently finishing a task - It gives a feeling of success as the child perseveres with the task to completion - The child starts to associate a task ending with the completion of a task.
Top tips	<p>DO use in a variety of situations e.g. dressing/undressing, toileting, eating, activities.</p> <p>DO ensure the child has mastered the last step before introducing the second to last step</p> <p>DO try to keep prompts non-verbal, visuals are ideal, so the child is not relying on the adult telling them what to do</p> <p>DO use in conjunction with other strategies e.g. Now and Next boards- backwards chaining with the 'now' may make this more achievable.</p>