

Following Two and Three Step Directions: Ages 4-5

Practice in following directions helps your child:

- Learn to be a careful listener
- Builds recall memory skills
- Learn how to hold more than one piece of information in her mind

Ideas to try with your child:

- Play the game “Mother, May I?”. This game encourages careful listening but also gives some control to the child. For example: “Mother, may I take 5 giant steps?” “No, you may take 5 baby steps.”
- “Simon Says” is a similar game to try. For example: “Simon says hop up and down three times and then sit down.” The child must do only what Simon says.
- Play “Touch Three.” Go to the park and have your child run to touch three things. For example, “Run and touch the tree, then touch the bench, and finally touch the swing.” You could modify this to play at home by asking children to go and get three items in your home. Then do the opposite and have them put those three things away. Adding the time element, you can say, “Let’s see how quickly you can...” It always gets kids motivated!

If your child is struggling:

- Prompt your child to remember one step at a time. “What did I say first? Next? Last?”
- Practice and participate in the games and activities alongside your child. Let her be in charge of deciding what to do in what order, while watching you at the same time.

Going further:

- Play a memory game in the car. “I’m going on a picnic and I’m going to bring an apple. The next person must repeat the first object and add one. “I’m going on a picnic and I’m going to bring an apple and hot dogs”. The game continues until no one can remember!
- Also try, “I’m traveling to the moon and I will take...” or “I’m going on an African safari...”

The WA State Department of Early Learning and the Richland School District believes that parents, families, and caregivers are young children’s best teachers. This resource guide, part of *Strong Foundations for School: Resource Guides for Parents of Young Children*, highlights a key developmental skill for **children ages 4-5** that parents can help improve at home.

