

'First, Next and Then' Strips

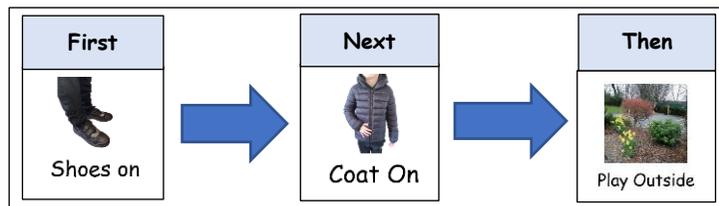
'**First, Next and Then**' strips are visual supports used with the spoken word which the child can move on to once they have mastered the '**First and Then**' concept. They can support the understanding of the sequence of two tasks before an activity or they can be used to teach a new skill. They are particularly helpful when a child is wanting something that is preferred or desirable, but two other things need to happen first.

Supporting the child's understanding of what is expected of them can prevent their anxiety and frustration rising and prevent an escalation in undesirable behaviour. It can also motivate them to do tasks they don't like doing when they can see visually that an activity that they do like comes after.

With acknowledgment of original concept: Premack, D. (1959). Toward empirical behavior laws: I. Positive reinforcement.

How do I use 'First, Next and Then' Strips?

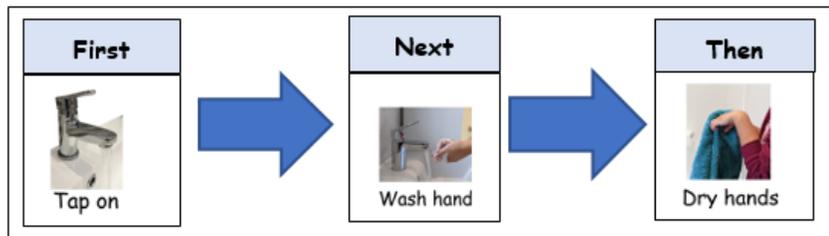
1. Decide which 3 step task or skill you would like to teach the child
2. Select a picture for the first task and stick this picture on the '**First**' box.
3. Select the picture for the second task and stick this picture onto the '**Next**' box
4. Select the child's preferred choice of activity for the '**Then**' box which the child gains immediately after the '**Next**' task is done. This preferred item or activity should be motivating enough to increase the likelihood that the child will complete the first two tasks. Stick this picture on the '**Then**' box



5. Gain the child's attention and then present the board to them with a brief clear verbal instruction e.g. "**First** put on your shoes, **next** your coat, **then** play outside."

6. If required, whilst the first task is being completed, refer back to the board to continue to motivate e.g. ***“one more shoe, then coat to play outside”***
7. When the first task has been completed, immediately refer the child back to the board and say, ***“Shoes are on, now your coat!”***
8. When the two tasks are completed, provide the preferred activity straight away and praise and celebrate their achievement!
9. In order to teach the child, it is important to give them the preferred activity as soon as the second task has been completed, or they may not trust you next time.

Another example to teach a new skill ***“First*** turn on the tap, ***next*** wash your hands, ***then*** dry them.”



What to do if the child is resistant to completing the steps

1. Continue to physically prompt the child to complete each task. Keep your focus firmly on the tasks, not the behaviour.
2. If the child does not progress and continues to resist, consider returning to 'First and Then' strips as they may not yet be ready to progress to this more complex system which requires more attention.

'First, Next and Then' template for you to print, laminate and use

