



How to support your child in learning to brush their teeth

Learning to brush your own teeth is an important life skill to ensure excellent oral hygiene and to be able to look after yourself. Whilst we don't teach toothbrushing in school, we've created this guide to help you support your child to learn how to brush their teeth. Depending on what stage your child is at on their journey to learning this skill, you can look at the appropriate stage and see what they need to learn next.

Stage	What can they do now?	How can you support them to move to the next step?	How often should you do this?
1	They are resistant to attempts by an adult to brush their teeth	Give them frequent opportunities to explore tooth brushing equipment in water play such as brushing plastic teeth and laminated teeth with marks on them. You can even dirty a toy's mouth & get your child to help clean it up. There are some ideas below including giant cup teeth! Model brushing your own teeth and make it appear fun! 	2-3 times a week until they are comfortable around a toothbrush and begin to accept their teeth being brushed
2	They are beginning to tolerate an adult brushing their teeth or have a go themselves	Support them to brush their teeth, giving them opportunities and encouragement to have a go themselves Hey Duggee has a 2 minute song & cartoon to help children brush here: https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/puzzles/earn-your-tooth-brushing-badge-quiz 	Every day
3	They are regularly brushing their own teeth with support from an adult where appropriate	Continue to give them lots of opportunities to practice and lots of encouragement and praise	Every day
4	They are brushing their own teeth with minimal support	Give them opportunities to practice in different settings (where possible) to prepare them for planned changes such as a holiday away from home. E.g. Can they brush their teeth in a different sink in the house, when staying with other family, on holiday?	As much as possible
5	They are brushing their own teeth twice a day	Help them to understand why we need to brush our teeth if they are able to understand this. This video might be useful if you watch a small part at a time: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aOebfGGcjVw&ab_channel=SciShowKids	Until they are secure in their understanding