



# How to Respond to an Impatient Child



## What does NOT help and WHY...

- "Hold on a minute." → They have **little concept of time.**
- "Please wait..." → They have **limited self control.**
- "You're so impatient." → Labeling them **creates negative self-talk.**
- "Calm down!" → They have **minimal skills to self-regulate.**

**Instead, be playful:** "Can you pretend to be a racecar driver waiting for the starting light to change?"

**Offer coping skills:** "How about listening to your favorite song for a few minutes while you wait?"

**Be specific:** "I will answer you after I am done talking with the cashier."

## Remember to notice and praise **their efforts:**

"You waited so patiently while I was on the phone. Thank you."

"It's great that you figured out something to do while you were waiting for me!"

Kids' brains are maturing every day.  
**Patience is a skill that CAN be learned.**  
With practice and a sense of connection,  
kids can build their patience.



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-Noelle

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