

# BACKWARD CHAINING



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## WHAT IS BACKWARD CHAINING?

Backward Chaining refers to breaking down the steps of a task and teaching them in reverse order. This gives the child an experience of success and completion with every attempt. For example, an adult might support a child to put on pants by scrunching up the pant legs then rolling them over the child's feet and up to their knees. The child would then complete the last step: pulling the pants up around their waist. The adult fades back each time, doing less and less while the child does more and more.

## PROCEDURE FOR BACKWARD CHAINING

1. Break down the task into small steps
2. Complete all the steps except for the last one
3. Teach the last step. Use appropriate and/or necessary level of prompting
4. When your child has mastered or nearly mastered the step they are working on, they are ready to begin learning the next step (child only needs verbal or visual prompts).
5. Next, complete all but the last two steps of the task.
6. Teach the second-to-last step. Use prompting as needed.
7. Allow your child to finish the rest of the task on their own
8. Repeat 4, 5, and 6 until they have mastered the second-to-last step of the procedure.
9. Continue in this manner until they have mastered all steps of the task.

Have you seen our tip sheet on prompt levels for building independence? It may be helpful to review it before starting backward chaining!

