



Terrible Twos

No one looks forward to the terrible twos, a developmental stage that usually begins sometime in the toddler years.

Although many parents don't expect the terrible twos to start until their toddler is two years old, it is important to note that it can begin anytime during your child's second year, and so anytime after their first birthday, and unfortunately, sometimes even before.

Characterized by toddlers being negative about most things and often saying 'no', the terrible twos may also find your toddler having frequent mood changes and temper tantrums.

To help you cope with this normal stage in your child's development, you should always remember that your child isn't trying to be defiant or rebellious on purpose. He is just trying to express his growing independence and doesn't have the language skills to easily express his needs. This can also be the reason why your toddler frequently gets frustrated and resorts to hitting, [biting](#), and [temper tantrums](#) when he doesn't get his way.

By learning more about this normal stage in your child's development, it can make it easier to get through it and make sure that you aren't contributing to more battles than are necessary.

Other tips for helping your toddler during the terrible twos include:

- having a regular **routine** for meals, naps, bedtime, etc. and try to stick to them each day
- offer **limited choices** only, like 'would you like apples or oranges for your snack' and not just 'what do you want for your snack.' This helps your toddler feel like he is making some decisions and has power over things, but he isn't able to choose unacceptable alternatives.
- learn to **set limits** about things and don't be surprised when your toddler tries to test those limits to see what he can get away with
- don't give in to **tantrums**
- begin to use **time-out** and **taking away privileges** as [discipline techniques](#)
- provide your toddler with a **safe environment** that is well [childproofed](#) to explore and play in. It really isn't fair that your toddler should get in trouble for playing with something he isn't supposed to if you left it within reach.

You don't stop playing because you grow old, you grow old when you stop playing