

Following Directions

Children follow directions in many situations throughout the day

- **Routine** – directions that they hear many times in their environment. For example: “put on your shoes”.
- **Novel** – are new directions, outside of familiar routines. For example: “Find the red book & put it in the backpack”.

As your child gets better with the routine directions, you can add more instructions to make the task more difficult. Try to stay at the level your child can complete successfully.

The general hierarchy includes:

- 1 step – simple** (e.g., Give me the car)
- 2 step – simple** (e.g., Give me the car and the boat)
- 2 step – complex** (e.g., Give the car to Julie and the boat to Mommy)
- 3 step – simple** (e.g., Give me the car, the boat and the tree)
- 3 step – complex** (e.g., Give the car to Julie, the boat to Mommy and the train to Cynthia)

You can help your child follow instructions using the “**Helper’s Rule**”:

1. Give an instruction and WAIT
2. Repeat the instruction with support
(i.e. gesture, pointing)
3. Repeat again and help follow through with hand-over-hand support