

Visual Steps to Handwashing

Handwashing is an activity with multiple steps that may be difficult for some children to remember and sequence. Visual supports can assist a child to learn the steps involved in a task and in turn promote independence.

Displaying a visual showing the steps of handwashing can be a permanent reminder for the child and may reduce the number of verbal prompts or support required for the task.

How do I use a visual to support handwashing?

When supporting a child through each step of the routine, it's helpful to use both visual and verbal prompts together. You can do this by pointing to each image while saying the matching instruction.

For example:

Say "Turn off the tap. Now let's dry our hands," while pointing to each step in order. This helps the child connect what they see with what they are being asked to do.

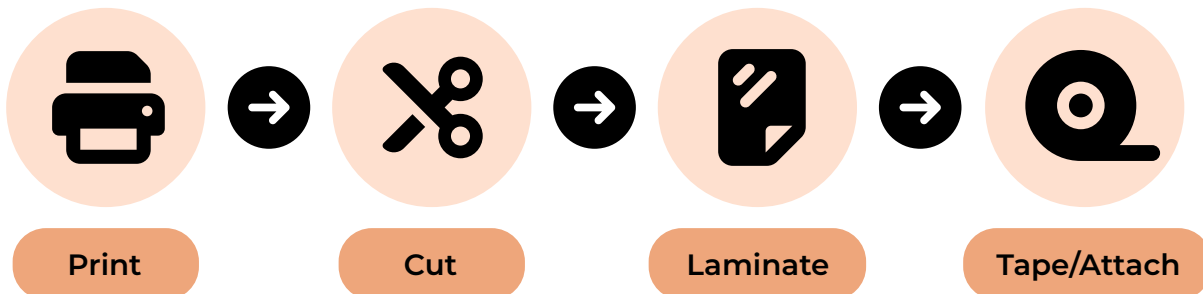
As the child becomes more confident and familiar with the routine, you can begin to gradually reduce these prompts. Over time, this supports the child to complete the steps more independently while providing structure for success.



Tips for making a visual for handwashing steps:

An example **ready-to-use visual** with generic illustrations can be found on the following page. Use this as a guide or create your own with photos of your own setting. See following tips for using this template:

1. Print page 3 of this resource.
2. Cut around the template guide marks of Part A and Part B.
3. Laminate Part A and Part B.
4. Using the attaching guide marks, attach Part B to the bottom of Part A with sticky tape (or similar) to create a continuous vertical visual of toileting steps.



Tip: This visual should be in a location easily accessible for the child and educator, such as beside or in front of the sink at the child's height. This makes it easier to point through each step of the process.



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Autism Queensland is here to help—get in touch to learn more:



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Handwashing Steps Visual

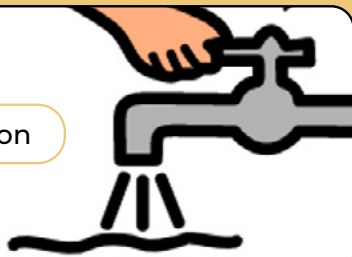
Print, cut, & use!



↓ Part A

Time to wash hands!

Water on



Soap



Scrub hands



Rinse hands



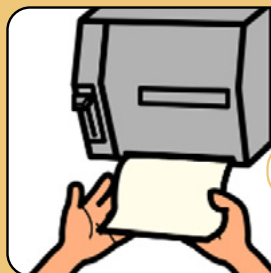
Attach top of Part B here

↓ Part B

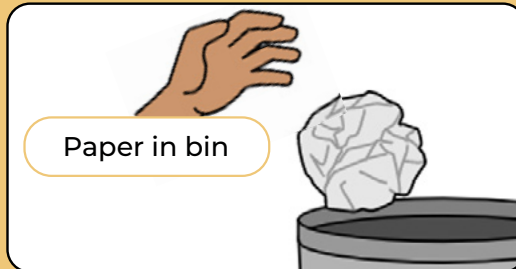
Water off



Dry hands



Paper in bin



Above illustrations are sourced from **My Boardmaker®**