



When your Child Refuses to Do a Time Out...

Remove a Privilege

For some children, the act of physically taking a child to a Time Out chair can be dangerous for the parent or child or cause emotional stress. In these situations, parents can remove a privilege as a way to get the child to sit or return to the time out chair, or to comply with the parent's initial command after sitting quietly.

STEP	PARENT ACTION	EXAMPLE
1	Parent gives explanation	"You didn't do what I told you to do, so you have to sit on the time out chair."
2	Parent takes child to time out	(Parent stands up immediately and takes child to the time-out chair.)
3	Parent gives direct command to sit on chair	"Sit here quietly until I tell you to get up." (Child refuses to stay on the chair)
4	Parent gives explanation and warning	"You got off the chair before I said you could. If you get off the chair again, I will put the Legos away for an hour."
5	Parent takes child back to time out chair	(Takes child back to chair)
6	Parent gives direct command to sit on chair	"Stay on the chair until I say you can get off."
7	Parent gives explanation and warning	"You got off the chair before I said you could so I am putting the Legos away. If you get off the chair again, I will put Mr. Potato Head away for an hour."
8	Parent takes child back to time out chair	(Takes child back to chair)
9	Parent gives another direct command to sit on chair	"Stay on the chair until I say you can get off."
10	Parent waits for at least 5 seconds of quiet	(Child sits quietly. If child gets off chair again, repeat the steps once more.)
11	Continue with time out process, step 8 – 12, "Two-Choice Time Out"	

Choosing a privilege

There are 3 basic guidelines for choosing privileges to remove: they must be important to the child, small in scope, and easy for the parent to enforce. If children don't care whether they lose a privilege, it is not a powerful enough incentive to use to get them to comply. Make sure the privilege you choose to remove is something that is valuable to the child. Keep the privilege small in scope; there are many more small privileges in the child's life than large ones and losing a small privilege is often more believable than a large one! Last, remember that you actually have to take the privilege away if your child does not comply, so don't threaten to take away something if you can't follow through.

How many privileges to lose?

We ask parents to take away no more than 3 privileges. If the child won't comply after losing 3 privileges, they are entrenched in their non-compliance. Continuing to engage with them will give that non-compliance too much attention. It is also harder for parents and children to remember what privileges are lost if there are too many to keep track of!

How long should a privilege be removed?

No matter how old a child is, we suggest that parents remove privileges for no longer than one day. Every day, a child should start with a new set of privileges that vary according to the activities and demands of the day. Parents should think about how mature their children are when deciding how long to remove a privilege. Young children may not need more than 15 minutes without a toy to understand the importance of minding. If you remove a privilege for too long, the child may forget that the privilege was removed and why!

Follow through consistently

It is better to remove only a few small privileges and ALWAYS follow through than to remove many and find some reason for not following through. If you do not follow through with taking away a privilege after a child has made the choice to lose it, the thought of losing a privilege will lack any power to get the child to comply. So be strong!