

Learning How to Pour

by Tim Seldin

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Learning to pour liquids is much easier if you give your child small pitchers with handles that are the right size for her small hands, and which are not too heavy for her to control when they are full. The entire process is also made much easier if as a first step you teach your children how to pour something dry, such as uncooked rice or lentils, from one small pitcher to another. For this first exercise, very small pitchers such as those used for cream are the best size. If you put a colored tray under the pitchers, any spilled rice or lentils will be contained and can be easily seen and cleaned up.

Show your child how to grasp the handle of the pitcher using whichever hand she is most comfortable with. Demonstrate how to support the pitcher just under the spout with her other hand. This gives her maximum control. The exercise is to pour the dry rice or lentils from one pitcher into the other. When done, she repeats the process with the other pitcher. Emphasize the importance of being careful. "Darling, see if you can pour the rice from one pitcher to the other without spilling a single grain of rice."

When your child has mastered this task, you can make it more challenging by giving her slightly larger pitchers, and then by having her try to pour the rice into a glass. You can make it more likely that your child will succeed by not putting more rice into the pitcher than the glass will hold.

Finally, when your child is ready, replace the dried rice with water. Challenge her to pour the water into the glass without spilling a drop. Remember, this process is not learnt in a day! It takes most young children many months of practice to gain the eye-hand control needed to pour correctly.

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