

Helping Your 4-Year-Old Build Attending Skills at Home

Attending means staying with an activity, listening to directions, and finishing a short task. At age 4, this skill is still developing and improves with short, consistent practice.

Key Tips for Success

- Practice 1–2 times per day
- Keep activities short (5–10 minutes)
- Sit with your child
- Remove distractions
- Praise effort, not perfection

Sit • Do • Done

1. Sit at the table or carpet
2. Do one short task
3. Done → movement break

Good activities: small puzzles, sticker books (5–10 stickers), sorting toys by color

Move First, Then Focus

Try before sitting: jumping, wall push-ups, animal walks
Say: "Your body is ready to work."

Use Visual Supports

First/Then cards, timers, picture checklists (2–3 items)

Practice Listening

Start with one-step directions
Praise: "You listened the first time!"

Read Together Daily

Choose short books, sit close, ask one question per page, stop while it's going well

Play With Purpose

Build together, take turns, copy patterns
Say: "We're staying with our work."

Calm Body Practice

Deep breaths, squeeze hands then relax, sit and count to 10

Chores That Build Attention

Put away 5 toys, match socks, help set the table

Remember

Small amounts of consistent practice make a big difference.