01 / VISUAL CUE CARDS

Stop, Look, Listen, Go!

Small steps. Plenty of time. Use these cues to practice clear, safe directions together—not to test children’s compliance.

Adult preparation: cut along the dashed borders, or keep this page as a visual guide.



STOP

Pause the task.



LOOK

Notice the person, picture or object.



LISTEN

Take in the whole direction; use accessible cues.



GO

Try the action or ask for help.

Attention can look different.

Eye contact and perfect stillness are **not required**. Offer pictures, signs, gestures or augmentative and alternative communication (AAC). “Listen” means access the message—not necessarily hear it. Allow sufficient time to process and respond; don’t rush to repeat.

Introduce each cue when children are comfortable. Use familiar words and adapt the cues to each child’s communication and sensory needs.

02 / COMMUNICATION + ADULT PRACTICE

Asking is part of learning.

Introduce these cards before practice. Accept pointing, gestures, signs, speech or communication devices. A child does not need to say the printed words.

Adult preparation: cut along the dashed borders. Keep all three choices available.



Please say it again



Please show me



I need help

A short practice script for adults

1. **Pause the music.** Reduce competing sound before giving the direction.
2. **Show one familiar object.** Give one specific direction: “Put the block in the basket.” Make the basket easy to identify.
3. **Wait.** Give the child sufficient processing and response time. Keep communication supports available.
4. **Model or repeat if needed.** Show the action, add a picture or sign, or repeat the same short direction. Avoid stacking on more instructions.
5. **Notice the attempt.** “You moved the block toward the basket.” Asking for help is an attempt, too. Adjust support rather than blame.

Safe directions. A voice for every child.

This is **not a requirement to obey every adult**. Practice safe, understood instructions. If an instruction feels unsafe, confusing or uncomfortable, children can pause, communicate “no” or “help,” and ask a trusted adult for help. Take that communication seriously.

03 / ADULT OBSERVATION SHEET

What helped today?

Record what you offered and what you noticed—not a judgment about the child. No child names or scores are required. There are no mastery deadlines. Use another copy whenever it is useful.

Optional date / routine

Optional setting / context

Blank practice notes · one moment per row

Instruction Exact words or cue used	**Support offered** Picture, sign, AAC, model, time…	**Observed response** Describe action or communication	**Next adjustment** What could the adult change?

Illustrative example only · not real student data

Instruction: “Put the block in the basket.” **Support:** Pointed to the basket and waited. **Response:** Pointed to “Please show me,” then placed the block after a model. **Next adjustment:** Offer the model alongside the direction next time.

Keep practicing · links + source notes

- Educator guide: teaching following directions in preschool and kindergarten
- Stop, Look, Listen, Go! song + video page · Watch on YouTube: youtu.be/-yEVwTh123k

Principles, not a song-efficacy claim: These sources inform clear directions and accessible communication. They do not establish that this song or toolkit improves outcomes.

- CDC · Giving Directions — specific, manageable directions. cdc.gov/parenting-toddlers/communication/giving-directions.html
- National Autistic Society · Communication with autistic pupils — adapt communication and allow processing time. autism.org.uk/learn/knowledge-hub/professional-practice/communication-pupils