



BE DIRECT for Educators:



Giving Effective Commands, Improving Student Compliance

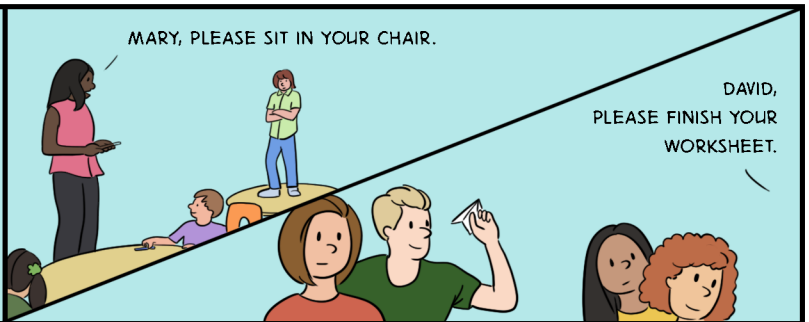
Be Specific

Tell your students exactly what you want them to do. Avoid vague statements like “behave,” “act right,” or “let’s get it together.”



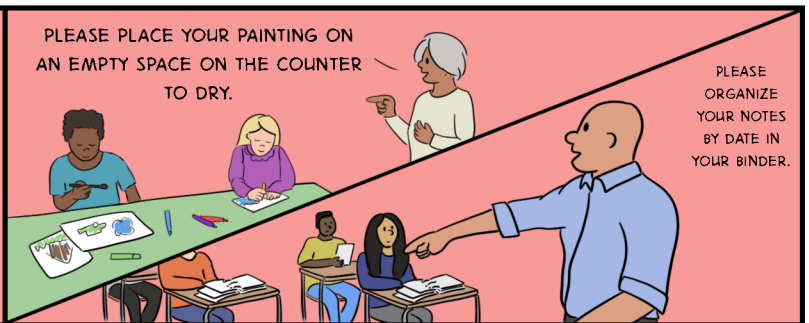
Every Command Positively Stated

Avoid using negative terms like, “No!” “Don’t” or “Stop!” These terms can make some kids respond negatively. Instead, state commands by positively telling your student what to do rather than what not to do.



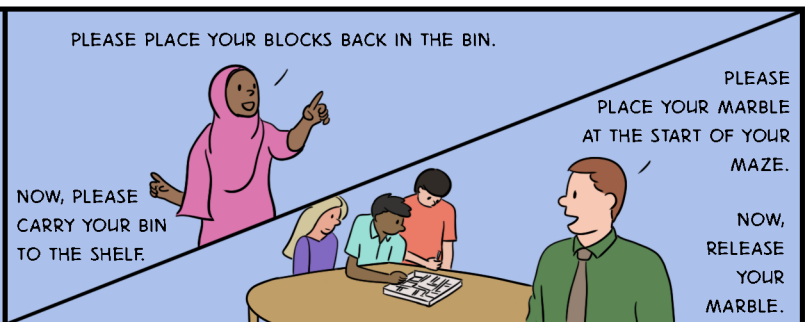
Developmentally Appropriate

Consider your student’s age so you give commands that are reasonable for their stage of development. Take developmental delays or learning differences into account.



Individual Rather than Compound

Give one command at a time, rather than stating several commands at once. This is especially important for young students and students with attention issues like ADHD.



Respectful and polite

Starting instructions with “please” makes your students feel respected and provides an example of using good manners, increasing their likelihood to follow your commands.

YOUNGER

PLEASE KEEP YOUR HANDS TO YOURSELF.

PLEASE KEEP YOUR EYES ON YOUR OWN PAPER.

OLDER

Essential commands only

Giving too many commands can make students feel overwhelmed and tune them out altogether. To avoid this, only give commands when you feel they are necessary. Try to ignore behaviors that aren't a big deal.

ESSENTIAL

PLEASE SHARPEN YOUR PENCIL.

SHARPEN YOUR PENCIL. TURN IT RIGHT. HOLD IT FIRMLY. CHECK IT. NOW SHARPEN IT MORE...

NON-ESSENTIAL

Carefully timed explanations

Students often want to know why you are making a command. Providing an explanation before stating the command will increase your students' likelihood of complying.

IT'S TIME TO CLEAN UP FOR RECESS. PLEASE THROW YOUR PAPER SCRAPS IN THE RECYCLE BIN.

WE'LL BE WORKING WITH STRONG CHEMICALS. PLEASE PUT YOUR SAFETY GOGGLES ON.

Tone of voice is neutral

Give commands in a calm tone and maintain a neutral facial expression. This will reduce stress for both you and your students, making them more likely to comply.

PLEASE RAISE YOUR HAND IF YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO SHARE.

PLEASE USE KIND WORDS IN CLASS.

Predictable and Consistent Response Command, Comply, Praise!!!

In all instances, after you give a command and your student complies, follow up with praise! Consistency is key, it teaches students that your responses are predictable. When students understand what they are supposed to do and know how you'll respond, they are much calmer and happier.

When students behave appropriately, respond positively! When students misbehave, use BE DIRECT skills to effectively manage those behaviors.