

Starting Daycare

A Guide for Parents



Contents



Introduction

Starting daycare is a new stage for both the child and the whole family. This guide provides information about Finnish daycare and what is good to know before your child starts.

In this guide, you will find information about everyday life at daycare, starting daycare, your child's early childhood education and care plan, the clothes and items your child may need, and where families can get support.

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Daycare in Finland

Daycare is part of Finnish early childhood education and care. At daycare, children receive care, education and support for learning.

At daycare, children play, exercise, spend time outdoors, eat and rest. They learn new things together with other children.

What can your child learn at daycare?

At daycare, a child can:

- make friends
- learn Finnish
- practise being part of a group
- practise everyday skills
- learn new things through play.



Who takes care of the child?

The child has their own group and familiar adults.

The daycare staff are trained early childhood education professionals. They take care of the child's safety, well-being and learning.



Working together supports the child

Parents know their child best. Daycare staff also get to know the child through everyday activities at daycare. Tell the staff about your child's habits, needs and other important things.

You can always ask about your child's day. Also tell the staff if something worries you or if you have any questions.



The child does not need to know Finnish before starting daycare.

At daycare, the child is supported in learning Finnish.

Before starting daycare

Once your child has been offered a daycare place, the family will receive information about starting daycare and the daycare's routines.

Before daycare starts, the child and parent can visit the daycare together.

Before the first day



Tell your child about daycare.

You can explain what happens at daycare and that you will come back to pick them up after the day.



Tell the daycare if your child has a special diet or allergies.

This helps the daycare provide suitable and safe food for your child.



Tell the staff about your child.

For example, tell them what your child likes, how they can be comforted, and which languages they speak or understand.



Tell the daycare about anything important for your child's care.

For example, medicines or other things the staff should know.



Ask what your child needs at daycare.

The daycare will tell you what clothes and other items to bring.



Ask if anything is unclear.

You do not need to know everything in advance. The daycare staff are there to advise you.

Getting ready for daycare

Talk about daycare with your child beforehand. Explain that the parent will leave for a while and come back later.

Getting to know the daycare and having a calm start can make the new routine easier.



What is a typical day like at daycare?

The daily routine varies depending on the child's age, group and daycare centre. However, the day usually follows a familiar routine.



Morning

The child arrives at daycare. The morning may include breakfast, play and circle time.



Play and activities

Children play and do different activities together. The day may include, for example, physical activities, music, crafts or outings.



Outdoor play

Children spend time outdoors every day, regardless of the weather.



Lunch and rest

Children eat lunch together. After lunch, there is time for quiet activities. Some children take a nap.



Afternoon

Children have an afternoon snack. After that, they play, go outside or take part in other activities.



Going home

The child goes home according to their scheduled care time. You can ask the daycare staff how your child's day went.

Starting daycare can take time to get used to

Starting daycare is a big change for a child. A new place, new people and a new daily routine may feel unfamiliar at first.

At first, your child may:

- ♥ cry or miss their parent
- ♥ feel nervous about staying at daycare
- ♥ eat or drink less than usual
- ♥ sleep worse than usual
- ♥ be more tired than usual



Before daycare starts, the child and parent can visit the daycare together. The number and timing of the visits are agreed with the daycare. Ask the daycare how the visits are arranged.



Every child gets used to daycare at their own pace

Some children get used to daycare quickly. Others need more time. Little by little, the place, the people and the daily routine will become familiar.



How you can support your child

Get to know the daycare together

Before daycare starts, you and your child can visit the daycare together, as agreed with the daycare. This can help your child feel safer in the new environment. It also gives you a chance to get to know the daycare and the staff.



Give your child time to adjust

Getting used to a new environment takes time.



Keep goodbyes calm and simple.



Shorter days can make starting daycare easier.



Tell the staff if your child is having a difficult time.



Are you worried about something?

Talk to the daycare staff. Together, you can think about how to support your child.

Your child's ECEC plan (VASU)

Every child has their own early childhood education and care plan, called **VASU** in Finnish. The plan describes how the child's growth, learning and well-being are supported at daycare.



The parent and daycare staff discuss together, for example:



Your child's strengths



Your child's interests



Language and culture



Skills your child is practising



Your thoughts and knowledge about your child are an important part of the VASU.

Do this together with your child

About me

Fill in this page together.

Talk with your child about important things. Your child can also draw.

You can give the completed page to the daycare staff.



I like: _ _ _ _ _



What makes me happy: _ _ _ _ _



When I am sad, this helps me: _ _ _ _ _

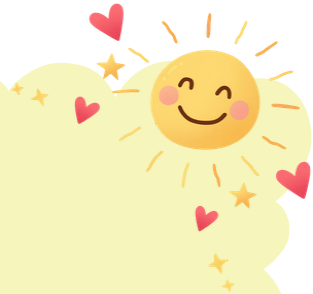


I speak or understand these languages: _ _ _ _ _



This is important to me: _ _ _ _ _

You can draw anything you like here!



What does your child need for daycare?

It is good for your child to have their own things at daycare. What they need depends on their age and the daycare's routines.

Usually, your child will need:

- spare clothes
- spare socks and underwear
- indoor shoes or slippers
- nappies, if needed
- a sleep toy or another familiar item, if needed
- a water bottle, if the daycare uses them



Write your child's name on clothes and other items.

This helps prevent them from getting lost or mixed up with other children's things.



Ask the daycare before your child starts what they need to bring. Different daycares may have different routines.

Outdoor Clothing for Different Seasons

In Finland, the weather changes a lot, so your child should have clothes and equipment that are suitable for the season.

If you are not sure what your child needs, you can ask a daycare worker.



Spring

In spring, the weather can change a lot. Your child should have waterproof shoes, a hat and gloves. Rain clothes are also needed in wet and rainy weather.



Summer

In summer, it is especially important to protect your child from the sun. Your child should have a sun hat or cap, sunglasses and sunscreen. It is also good to bring a water bottle. A warm jumper or jacket is useful for cooler days.



Autumn

In autumn, the weather is often wet and cool. Rain clothes and waterproof shoes are especially important. Your child should also have a hat, gloves and a warm layer of clothing.



Winter

In winter, your child needs warm base layers, a warm middle layer and winter outdoor clothes. It is important to keep the head and ears warm, so your child should have a warm hat or balaclava. Warm gloves and winter boots are also needed.



Do this together with your child

Pack the Daycare Backpack

Which things belong in the daycare backpack?

Choose the correct items together.



Daycare Hours, Absences and Messages

Tell the daycare in advance when your child will arrive and when they will be picked up.

It is important to follow the agreed daycare hours. This helps the daycare plan the day and staff working hours.

In Finland, agreed times are usually followed carefully.
If your child's arrival or pick-up time changes, tell the daycare as soon as possible.

Also tell the daycare if:

- ♥ **your child will be absent**
- ♥ **your child is ill**
- ♥ **the daycare hours change**
- ♥ **another person will pick up your child.**



Daycare may use an online service for messages. You can use the service to report daycare hours and read messages from the daycare.



In Joensuu municipal early childhood education, daily matters are managed through **DaisyFamily**.



The daycare will show you how to use the service.

Where Can I Get Support?

Lähiöotalo is a meeting place for families with children in the Rantakylä area of Joensuu.



At Lähiöotalo, you can:

- ♥ meet other children and parents
- ♥ take part in activities for families
- ♥ get support and advice with everyday matters
- ♥ spend time together with your child.

Families are welcome to visit Lähiöotalo during its opening hours!

Welcome to the warmth of Lähiöotalo!

Other places where you can get support

Siun sote Perhepuhelin: 0133302806

You can call if you are worried about your child, your own wellbeing or your family situation.

Joensuun Perheentalo, Kauppakatu 27b A2-4, 80100 Joensuu:

A free meeting place for children and families.

International House Joensuu: Advice for people who have moved to Joensuu, for example about services, integration and everyday matters.

JoMoni ry: Multicultural activities, advice and opportunities to practise Finnish.

Give this page to a daycare worker

How was your child's day?

Eating

☐

Ate a lot

☐

Ate a little

☐

Didn't eat much

Rest

☐

Slept

☐

Rested

☐

Quiet activities

Mood



Action

☐

Art

☐

Exercise

☐

Play

☐

Music

☐

Outing

Your child needs more of these at daycare:

☐

Diapers

☐

Spare clothes

☐

Socks

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We Wish You a Good Start at Daycare!



Lähiöotalo



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