

# Guide to Earning Trust and Privileges



## About This Guide

If you find yourself craving certain privileges that we are hesitant to grant due to concerns about your maturity or trustworthiness, this tool is your ally. It's not just a guide; it's your pathway to demonstrating your readiness for more. The process is straightforward. Follow these steps, and you'll be on your way.

## Your Desires, Your Ambitions

Jot down a short list of privileges or freedoms you'd like, and that are within our power to provide. Maybe it's a later curfew, a new gadget, or something entirely different. Whatever it is, it's useful to be specific and clear. Separate each desire with a line break.

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## Refining the List

Return to the list above and complete the following steps for each desire:

1. Reorder and number the list from most important to least important so that the most important desire is at the top of the list.
2. If you were to make a dedicated effort, how long do you think it will take to earn each privilege? Just make your best guess.

When you are done with the steps above. Your list should look something like this:

1. *I'd like to have my own car -12 months*
2. *I'd like an 11 PM curfew on the weekend -2 months*
3. *I'd like to skip a day of school to go camping with friends next month -2 weeks*
4. *I'd like to have an Xbox in our home -1 month*
5. *I'd like to remove parental controls from my phone -6 months*

## Start with a Quick Win Desire

The remainder of this guide is focused on guiding you through a process that will help you earn one of the privileges or desires you identified. We recommend starting with a desire that can be earned in a few weeks to a few months, maximum. This will help you and us to get accustomed to working together with this process.

Which item from the list above will you focus on during the remainder of this process?

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### See It Through Our Eyes

The next few questions help you understand our concerns. Put yourself in our shoes. When you acknowledge our worries, it shows respect for our perspective, even if you don't completely agree. It's about mutual understanding. Remember, awareness and honesty are the foundation stones of maturity and trust.

### List and Explain Our Main Concerns

Try to explain the concerns similar to the way we would explain them. Remember, this is about helping you to see things through our eyes.

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### Have We Already Explained What You Need to do to Earn This Privilege?

If yes, what did we say? Focus on our explanation, not your interpretation.

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### Self-Evaluation of Trustworthiness and Maturity

Privileges are linked to trust and maturity. As these grow, so do your privileges. The next questions explore trust and maturity related topics.

There are several ingredients contributing to trust in a relationship. Below is a list of eight factors. If we were to ask us, what would we say about how well you are doing at each? It's OK to evaluate these factors in general, as opposed to evaluating specifically in the context of your desired privilege.

#### Reliability

Ask yourself this question, "How reliable am I at fulfilling my commitments and responsibilities?"

I need improvement      1      2      3      4      5      I am doing great  
                       

#### Consistency

Ask yourself this question, "Am I consistent enough in my behaviors and actions that my parents know what they can expect from me?"

I need improvement      1      2      3      4      5      I am doing great

## Honesty

Ask yourself this question, "How truthful am I in my communication with my parents?"

I need improvement      1      2      3      4      5      I am doing great  
                       

## Openness

Ask yourself this question, "Do I openly express my thoughts, emotions, dreams, and difficulties with my parents, even when the topics are hard to talk about?"

I need improvement      1      2      3      4      5      I am doing great  
                       

## Accountability

Ask yourself this question, "How good am I at accepting responsibility for my actions and facing consequences without hiding the truth, getting defensive, or blaming others when I make a mistake?"

I need improvement      1      2      3      4      5      I am doing great  
                       

## Respect

As yourself this question, "Do I respect my parent's in the way I speak to them and by following rules they set for me?"

I need improvement      1      2      3      4      5      I am doing great  
                       

## Intent

Ask yourself this question, "Are my behaviors and actions motivated by a genuine desire to do what is right, fair, or helpful? to the wellbeing of myself and others?"

I need improvement      1      2      3      4      5      I am doing great  
                       

## Judgement / Decision Making

Ask yourself this question, "How good am I at thinking about what might happen because of what I do and choosing things that help me grow, make things better, and avoid problems and bad results?"

I need improvement      1      2      3      4      5      I am doing great  
                       

## Recognizing Roadblocks

Acknowledging roadblocks is not only a sign of maturity, but it also allows you to approach discussions with your parents in a more informed and empathetic manner.

## Roadblock Identification

Identify potential barriers that might hinder you from earning your privilege, even if you demonstrate trustworthiness and maturity. Select all that apply.

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|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cost                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Time Constraints      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Age Appropriateness          | <input type="checkbox"/> Higher Priorities     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Legal Restrictions           | <input type="checkbox"/> Health Considerations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conflicts with Family Values | <input type="checkbox"/> Parental Capacity     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Safety Concerns              | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Limited Availability         |  |

## Crafting Your Plan

In the final section, we'll help you put together a plan you can communicate to us. We'll format the communication as a letter. This is useful for documenting agreements made between you and your parents.

## Starting the Letter

Begin your letter by addressing us and clearly stating your desire. For example:

*Dear Mom,  
I'd like to respectfully request the privilege of having an xBox in our home.*

Now it's your turn:

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## Empathizing With Their Concerns

Acknowledge our concerns directly. Demonstrate maturity by accepting responsibility for the past and proposing solutions. For Example:

*I understand you've been hesitant to extend this privilege to me in the past in part because of the following concerns:*

- 1. I haven't been getting good grades and you worry my grades will get worse if I spend time playing games instead of doing homework*
- 2. I haven't been reliable at fulfilling my daily chores. I understand this has eroded your trust in me.*
- 3. It's expensive to buy an Xbox and a few games*

Now it's your turn:

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## Communicate the Plan

Outline your plan to address our concerns. Be specific and don't forget to share your thoughts on the consequences if you don't keep your end of the bargain. For example:

*I'd like to work together to address these concerns. Here are some ideas I have about next steps:*

- 1. I'd like to make a commitment that I won't play Xbox for more than 30 minutes until after I've completed my homework, studies, and chores for the day. I'll use my phone stop-watch to keep myself in check.*
- 2. Although cleaning my room isn't a daily chore, I'd like to show my commitment to helping out around the house by doing better at putting my laundry in the basket and making my bed each morning before I leave for school.*
- 3. I still have \$300 from mowing the grass during the summer. I'd like to contribute \$150 toward the purchase. Also, I can borrow games from friends or check them out at the library. I'd still like to purchase some games, but we can talk about those purchases as they come up.*
- 4. If I don't keep my commitment to keep my room clean or to manage the amount of time I spend on the Xbox, I think I should lose the privilege for the remainder of the day and the next day.*

Now it's your turn:

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## Finishing the Letter

End your letter by expressing your understanding of the time and effort required to earn our trust. Propose regular check-ins to discuss progress and adjustments to the plan. Example:

*I know it takes time to demonstrate maturity and earn trust and I hope we can work together to move forward. In addition to the next steps above, or any adjustments we make together, I'd like to suggest that I start to complete a daily self-accountability check-in where I'll write a short description of progress, including taking ownership of any shortfalls. We should also start to have a weekly discussion about progress until I earn the privilege I'm asking for.*

*I'd love to get your feedback on this plan. Have I missed any major concerns? Do you have other requests on actions and next steps?*

*Respectfully,*

*[YOUR NAME]*

Now it's your turn:

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