

What Does “Pairing” Mean?

It means becoming a person your student associates with **good things**, comfort, and safety, *without demands* at first.

Think of it as:

"I like being around you because when you come, nice things happen."

How to pair with your students:

1. Follow His Lead

- If he's popping a toy up and down → join in.
- Match his play — even if it's repetitive.
- Avoid interrupting or changing how he's playing.

Say very little — or use soft, happy tones:

“Pop! Pop! That's fun!”

Let *him* feel in control at this stage.

2. Offer Preferred Items Freely

- Give him toys or snacks **without asking him to do anything first**.
- Be the *giver* of good things: a pop toy, bubbles, music, etc.
- No "first do this, then..." — **give**.

Example:

If he loves bubbles, → blow them without expecting anything. Let him enjoy.

3. Be Predictable and Calm

- Use a **soft voice, slow movements**, and **gentle facial expressions**.
- Avoid sudden changes or loud praise that might feel overwhelming.
- Always let him know what's happening next with a visual cue.

4. Show Up Consistently

Even just being physically present nearby while he plays builds familiarity.



Sit next to him with no expectations.

Eventually, you'll notice small signs like:

- He looks at you
- He brings a toy near you
- He smiles or repeats your sound

That's *pairing progress*!

5. Avoid Demands in the Beginning





- No "Come sit"
- No "Say this"
- No "Point here"

This phase is about trust and comfort, not compliance. Once he trusts you, the learning and engagement will naturally increase.

Bonus Tips:

- Use **his interests** (logos, songs, pop toys) to connect.
- Give him **space** when he walks away. Let him know you're safe and not going to chase or push him.

PAIRING WITH YOUR AUTISTIC STUDENT

FOLLOW THEIR LEAD  Join in with what they're doing	GIVE FREELY  Offer preferred items with no expectations
BE PREDICTABLE  Use a visual schedule	NO DEMANDS  No instructions or requests

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