

# THE NUMBERS GAME

Every day your child is facing challenges involving problem-solving, thinking and reflection skills that make him or her a natural mathematician. Babies as young as five months are aware of quantities and will notice changes in amounts of objects.

Help your child to prepare for learning maths at school with these simple games, rhymes and everyday activities. Maths teaching in primary schools has undergone a revolution in recent years – find fun ways of exploring maths at home, and then see how the fun continues as your child starts school.



## GET STARTED



## KNOWING NUMBERS

Play 'spot the number' – focus on the numerals 0 to 9, and challenge your child to find them everywhere – on front doors, clocks, car registrations, birthday cards and more.

- How many times can your child spot their age number in a day?
- Look how the figures 0–9 are used on phones, calculators and remote controls.
- Have some number role-play fun – at the market, bingo hall or raffle at the school fair.

## CRACKING COUNTING

- Get into the habit of counting everything with your child, from ducks on the pond to stairs up to bed.
- Counting songs and rhymes teach children numbers and order, as well as rhythm and rhyme. 'One, Two, Buckle my Shoe', 'Five Little Ducks', 'Ten in the Bed'... how many more can you think of?
- Play counting-based games such as dominoes, ludo, snakes and ladders or number snap.

## ACCENTUATE THE POSITIVE

Even if you didn't enjoy maths at school, avoid saying things like "I'm rubbish at maths" or "I always hated maths" so your child maintains a positive attitude.

**TOP  
TIPS**

## KEY CONCEPTS



There are lots of easy ways to introduce your child to the mathematical concepts they'll learn about at school.

### DIVISION AND FRACTIONS

Can they share out berries or raisins so everyone has the same amount?

### PATTERN AND SEQUENCE

Can they make a repeated pattern of building blocks, or beads on a string? Have a look at patterns in brickwork, tiles and paving.

### MEASURING

Find a tape measure or height chart and measure everyone in the family.

### COMPARISONS

Can they guess which is heavier: a kitchen roll or a small tin of beans?

### TIME

Play with a stopwatch or egg timer: can your child stand on one leg for one minute? How long does it take to run to the lamppost and back?

## MEGA-MATHS



Some simple activities introduce children to several mathematical concepts at once.

### A TRIP TO THE SUPERMARKET

At the supermarket, they could help you count apples into a bag, choose the biggest box of cornflakes, find the cheapest yoghurts and talk about different shapes of items.

### BAKING MUFFINS

Baking together involves recognising numbers in the recipe, weighing ingredients, counting eggs, measuring out oil or milk, dividing the mixture between paper cases and cooking at the right temperature for the right amount of time.

### PLAYING SHOE SHOPS

This might mean making price labels, measuring feet, matching up pairs, taking money and giving change and a receipt.



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