



Learning, growing, caring, sharing

Tips and tools for parents/carers



Helping your child with maths

P1 - 3

1. **Counting can be fun and entertaining.** Sing counting songs such as "One, Two Buckle My Shoe". Your local librarian can recommend fun counting books. Play Hopscotch - it's a counting game! There are lots of games where you count, such as *Snakes and Ladders*, and *Dominoes*.
2. **Computers + maths = fun.** There are great computer games available for maths - ask your librarian or check out your local computer shop. Make sure they are "parent approved". There are also super websites that have fun math games: do an Internet search for sites.
3. **Start easy and work up!** Once they have got the hang of counting by 1s, introduce skip counting, such as counting by 2s and 5s.
4. **Use household items for counting practice.** Practise adding and subtracting with objects found around your house like spoons or pots and pans. When they've become good at these skills, move on to simple multiplication.
5. **Tap into your child's curiosity.** Go on a number hunt together and discover places where numbers are used such as a clock, TV, computer keyboard, calendar, telephones and car number plates.
6. **Use everyday activities.** Your child's world is filled with everyday maths problems that can be solved. For example, "There are four people in our family and we each need a knife and a fork to eat dinner. How many knives and forks do we need to set the table?"

7. **Kitchens can be maths zones.** Bake some muffins or flapjack and ask your child to help you measure out the ingredients. It may be a bit messy but it's fun family time and there's nothing like fresh baking as a reward. Have maths fridge magnets available so children can start making number patterns and doing simple maths problems.
8. **Predict and compare.** Start to measure and estimate things like how far it is from the driveway to the house or how long a trip will take and then measure and compare the actual time it takes.
9. **Talk about time.** The concept of time can be hard to grasp. Talk to your child about minutes and hours. Then get them to try counting days and weeks - for example how many "sleeps" until the weekend or a visit to a friend or relative.
10. **Identify geometric shapes and sizes.** Play "I Spy". Instead of looking for words beginning with a letter, look for different colours or shapes and count the number you find in the room.