

Helping Your Child with Maths

Helping your child get dressed, baking together, going to the shops, singing counting songs, building with blocks – almost every activity we do with children involves maths in some way.

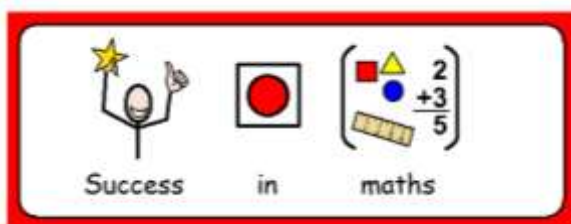
Talking about numbers and regularly counting everyday objects helps children see that numbers are part of daily life.

By simply spotting and using the learning opportunities in these everyday activities, you'll be supporting your child to grow into a happy and confident mathematician.

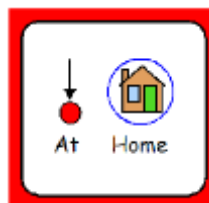
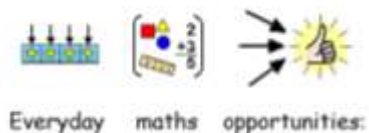
Mathematical Language

Mathematical language is all around us – words and phrases like *bigger*, *smaller*, *shorter*, *taller*, *more than*, *less than*, *beside*, *above*, *below*, *heavy*, and *light* are just a few examples.

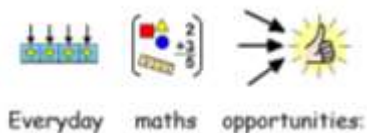
Using a rich and varied vocabulary helps children develop a deeper understanding of maths and builds their confidence at the same time.



- Talk to your children about maths in everyday life
- Play games with them that involve numbers and problem-solving
- Value mistakes as important learning opportunities
- Recognise that there is often more than one way to solve a problem
- Praise children for their effort and persistence rather than just the outcome
- Avoid saying things like “I’m useless at maths” – your attitude influences theirs

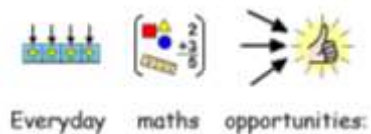


- Count everyday objects together – anything from stairs to pieces of fruit
- Sing counting songs and rhymes
- Build, draw, and write numbers together in fun and creative ways
- Play board games that involve counting, number recognition, or strategy
- Solve practical problems together, such as “How many altogether?” or “How many more do we need?”
- Sort, organise, and count collections of items like clothes, toys, books, shells, rocks, or birthday candles
- Use a variety of materials of different shapes and sizes for play and problem-solving activities
- When talking about TV programmes, ask questions like: *What time is it? What time does the programme start? Do we have enough time to do something else before it begins?*
- Gardening offers rich opportunities to practise measuring:
 - Length (e.g. centimetres between seeds or metres for rows)
 - Area (e.g. square metres for planting beds or paving)
 - Volume (e.g. litres of water or cubic metres of soil or mulch)
- Place a thermometer outside the window to observe and talk about the temperature each day
- Use a calendar to track gardening activities and progress. Discuss dates for planting, germination, and harvesting by reading the information on seed packets

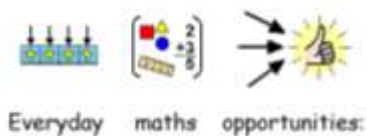


- Point out numbers when out and about. For house numbers, ask questions like: *What number do you think the next house will be? Will it be an odd or even number?*
- Go on a **number** or **shape hunt** – see how many different ones you can spot!
- Count forwards and backwards together as you walk up or down the stairs
- Point out numbers in magazines, books, signs, prices, packaging, and number plates – talk about how these numbers help us: to find things, to know how much, how many, or which one
- Get involved in making plans and designing constructions like houses, robots, or sandcastles
- When travelling, play games and ask questions like:
 - *Let's count all the blue cars we see on the way*
 - *How long do you think it will take to get there?*
- Count the seconds while waiting at traffic lights. Notice clocks along your journey – in shops, on buildings, or at stations
- Spot and talk about signs that include **pound symbols (£)** – what do they mean?
- Choose a shape and find objects of that shape along your walk. This can be:
 - **2D shapes** like circles, squares, rectangles, triangles
 - **3D shapes** like boxes, balls, cones, and pyramids
- Choose one colour of car to count on a journey. Next time, choose a different colour. Keep track over several trips – *Which colour is most common? Least common?*
- Look out for clocks and timetables. Ask children to:
 - Read the time
 - Convert digital time into traditional (analogue) time – *Where would the hands be?*
 - Read a bus or train schedule – *What time is the next one? What time is the last one? Is there a pattern?*

Time how long it takes to walk from one place to another – compare it next time: *Did it take more or less time?*



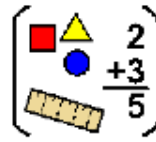
- Count the amount of each ingredient used in recipes
- Count how many items are being made – for example, *How many cupcakes are we baking?*
- Count the number of cups or spoons needed for each step
- Count the cutlery when setting the table – *How many knives, forks, and spoons do we need?*
- Make biscuits or cookies and explore the different shapes you can create
- Explore different types of measurement, including:
 - Cups
 - Teaspoons and tablespoons
 - Millilitres and litres
 - Grams and kilograms
- Talk about equivalencies between measurements, such as:
 - 250 ml = 1 cup
 - 16 tablespoons = 1 cup
 - 1,000 g = 1 kg
- Practise doubling or halving recipes (or increasing by $1\frac{1}{2}$ times, 3 times, or even 10 times)
- Explore **fractions** in cooking – e.g. using $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{1}{4}$, or $\frac{1}{3}$ of an ingredient
- Investigate **ratios** by adjusting the quantities in a recipe to make more or fewer portions
- Work out how much of each ingredient is needed and calculate the **total cost** – compare prices where possible
- Use a kitchen timer – talk about how long something takes to cook and how you'll know when it's ready



- Look for clocks and timetables. Ask your child to read the time.
 - If it's a **digital clock**, ask: *What would this look like on a traditional (analogue) clock? Where would the hands be?*
 - If you're waiting for a bus or train, ask: *What time is the next one? What time does the last one arrive? Is there a pattern to the timetable?*
- The **supermarket** is a brilliant place to practise counting and number recognition:
 - *Can you get us 5 oranges?*
 - *We need 2 cans of beans*
 - *How many juice boxes are in that packet?*
 - *What number is this aisle?*
 - *Can you find a number five on this packet?*
- Draw their attention to **prices**:
 - *This small packet of biscuits is £1.50, but this big one is £2. Which one should we get?*
- Compare two amounts using place value:
 - Help them to **compare the pounds first**, then the pence – e.g. £2.30 vs. £2.80.
- Use **unit pricing** to make comparisons:
 - For example: *This pasta sauce is 75p per 100ml, but that one is 95p per 100ml – which is better value?*
- Practise **estimation**:
 - Round prices to the nearest pound to make it easier to estimate the total cost of several items.
- Let your child **pay at the checkout**:
 - Ask them to work out how much change they should get back.
- Solve practical **multiplication and division problems**:
 - *A 1.5L bottle of cola comes in a box of 12 – how many litres are in the box?*
 - *Each packet weighs 345g – how much do 10 packets weigh?*



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