

Mathematical Development in the Early Years.



A guide for parents and carers.

Fun activities to do at home

Counting and putting numbers in order

Use old magazines, comics or greetings cards. Cut out pictures of animals, or anything else your child is interested in. Label the animals 1 to 5 and then beyond.

Shuffle the animals. Put them in order from 1 to 5. Remove one animal. Ask your child which number is missing. Repeat with other numbers and more than one missing number. Ask your child to say what number comes before or after a number you choose. When your child can do this, repeat with numbers 1 to 10, then 1 to 20.

Out and About

Choose a number for the week, e.g. 5. Encourage your child to look out for this number all the time. Can your child see the number 5 anywhere?

In the street - on doors, on car number plates, on buses

While out shopping- on the shop till, on shelves, in shop windows

Find five apples, toys, spoons, straws, sweets, etc. Make patterns, such as five knives, five forks, five spoons, five knives, five forks, five spoons... Practise writing the number 5. Choose a different number each week.

Hunt for shapes too. Can you find a shape with three corners? How many cylinders can you find? Which shapes can you spot?

Dice game

Use a 'dotted' dice and write the numbers 1 to 6 on a sheet of paper (or use the numbered animals).

Throw the dice. Can your child guess how many dots there are?

Check by counting.

Ask your child which number on the paper matches the dots on the dice.

There are lots of natural resources the children can use too, to support counting and calculating as well as making patterns and weighing!



Some useful games and activities for children-



Lego one more, one less

For this game you need a dice, a coin and some building blocks or Lego bricks.

Take turns to roll the dice. Build a tower with that number of blocks or bricks. Then toss the coin. Heads means take one brick off. Tails means add one on. If you can guess how many bricks there will be after this, you keep them! The first to collect 20 bricks or more wins!

Counting

Practise counting. Start at 5, and count on from there to 11. Start at 9, count back from there to zero. Choose a different starting number each time.

Cupboard maths

Ask your child to help you sort a food cupboard out, putting **heavier** items on the lower shelf and **lighter** items on an upper shelf.

Using the fruit bowl, I have 3 apples and 2 bananas, how much fruit do we have? There were 6 carrots on your plate, how many are there now?

Can you use the vegetables to make a repeating pattern? Potato, carrot, onion, potato, carrot, onion.

Can you order the food shopping by height?

Dice counting

Take turns to roll a dice and count back to zero from the number thrown. For example:

Four, three, two, one, zero!

Some more activities to try

Build a tower

For this game you need a dice and some building blocks or lego bricks. Take turns. Roll the dice. Collect the number of bricks to build your own tower. The first to 10 wins!

For a change, start with 10 blocks or bricks each. Take away the number on the dice. First to exactly zero wins.



Roll a shape

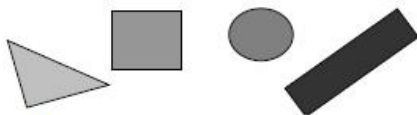
Cut out 12 shapes.

Make 3 triangles, 3 squares, 3 rectangles and 3 circles.

Take turns to roll a dice and collect a shape that has that number of sides, e.g. roll a 4, collect a square.

The first to have four different shapes wins.

If you can name each shape you go first next time!



Doing the washing

Match the socks and then count in 2s. Sort the socks by colour and size. Find four shoes that are different sizes. Can you put them in order.



Measuring

Are you taller than a ...?

Marking height on the wall.

Cut hand shapes out of paper.

How many hands long is the sofa?

How long is the table? Which is longer?

Who has the biggest hands in our family?

How many steps from the gate to the front door?



Games

Playing adding games with playing cards, turning two over and working out how many altogether.

Snakes and ladders or other simple dice games, for number recognition and counting on.

Bingo, with numbers or shapes

Hopscotch

Above all early maths should be about enjoyment, exploration and having fun. Think practical objects and activities you can see or do.

Some websites for you to try.

<http://www.ictgames.com/>



<http://www.poissonrouge.com/>



<http://www.crickweb.co.uk/Early-Years.html>



<http://nrich.maths.org/early-years>

Have fun!!