



# Early Maths Skills



Sometimes, as adults, we lack confidence in our mathematical skills but we use maths every day in so many different ways that we should never doubt how much we can help our children. There are opportunities for children's maths development everywhere. Within this booklet there are some ideas in how you can support your child at home.

## In the home

Count the steps as you go up or down the stairs.  
Talk about long or short hair as you brush it  
Talk about big or small clothes as you hang them on the washing line  
Count the socks etc on the washing line



## In the kitchen

Bake and cook together  
Weigh out ingredients  
Point out the numbers on the scales  
Talk about more and less  
Talk about the size of pan or bowl  
When eating ask who has got more and who has got less  
Talk about how many plates you need  
Talk about what shape the cake is  
Talk about cutting toast in half or into quarters  
Set the table together  
Talk about how many cups etc you need  
Set out 1 plate, 1 knife and fork and spoon for 1 person  
Wash up together



## Bath time

Use old plastic bottles, sieves, bowls and jugs in the bath  
Talk about full & empty  
Talk about more & less  
Count toys and ducks



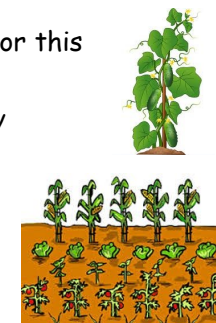
## Getting dressed

Talk about clothes that are too big or too small  
Talk about shapes, pattern and colour of clothes  
Point out numerals on clothes  
Sort pairs of socks, shoes and gloves  
Sort clothes according to whether they have zips or buttons  
Count buttons on coats and cardigans



## In the Garden

Talk about how many seeds or bulbs you are planting  
Talk about how tall the flowers are  
Talk about "too long" or "too tall" when cutting bushes back  
Ask whether the hole big enough for this plant  
How many bags of compost/ leaves/ rubbish do we have?  
How many plants will you water?  
Look at patterns



## Out and about

Look at house numbers together

Point out numbers that are the same



Look at bus numbers

Look for significant numbers such as their age e.g. 3



Count yellow cars or red lorries



## Shopping

Ask your child to help with the shopping and get 3 bananas etc.

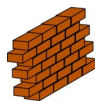
Ask your child to find the big packet or a small one

Point out whether things are the same or different

Ask your child if their bag is heavier or lighter than yours

Talk about how much it costs and sometimes let your child hand the money to the cashier

## Patterns and shapes in the environment



Talk about shapes and patterns of everyday objects

Point out rectangular shapes of bricks in a wall

Point out diamond shapes in a trellis

Point out the round or triangular shapes of road signs



Look for all the circular shapes you can see eg wheels, road signs, traffic lights

## Reading stories

Talk about the sequence of events, what happens next?

Is this the beginning, middle or the end?



### Some useful books:

Traditional tales:- Goldilocks and the Three Bears / The Three Billy Goats Gruff / The Three Little Pigs - counting, comparing sizes, sequence of events

'The Little Red Hen' - weighing, measuring, counting and baking bread.

'Ten in the Bed'— Counting, one more, how many? 'Who sank the Boat'— How many? Heavy and Small. 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar'—Counting. One more. Days of the week. Size. Symmetry.



'Titch' - Size. Counting. Shape.

## Songs & Rhymes

Nursery rhymes and songs introduce maths in a fun way and are especially good for learning about counting.

Baa, Baa, Black Sheep

1, 2, Buckle My Shoe

1 2 3 4 5 Once I Caught a Fish Alive

10 Fat Sausages Sizzling in the Pan....

5 Little Men in a Flying Saucer

5 Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed



## Building structures

Build with cardboard boxes, plastic tubs, bottle tops lids... anything you might throw away!



Encourage your child to use and understand words such as tall, long, wide, narrow as they create!

Use duplo, lego or wooden blocks (Here your child has to think about how shapes fit together, space, positions, directions and movement)



## Play with games and puzzles

Play Hopscotch, Hide n Seek, What's the time Mr. Wolf?



Any board game which involves counting is ideal



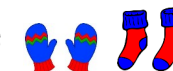
Jigsaw puzzles, 3D puzzles



## Sorting

You can encourage your child to sort lots of items!

Clothing—encourage your child to match pairs or count out certain items



Natural objects

Cutlery, coins, jewellery, food, toys



Useful websites:

<https://www.topmarks.co.uk/maths-games/3-5-years/counting>