

Fun with Math: Counting

Math is all around us, and your toddler has been developing math ideas and skills starting at birth.

We use math language every day, often without noticing. Research has shown that this matters. Laying a strong foundation with **early math talk** makes it easier for your child to grasp more difficult concepts later.



Math talk

Math talk grows with your child. It is *simply talking to your child about the math they experience* (naeyc.org). For example, when you take a walk and count the trees on your block (“let’s count the trees! I see one, oh, here is another, that’s two, and another one, that’s three”) or when you sort clothes (“this t-shirt is little, that’s yours, this one is bigger, it’s mine”) you are using math language.

We know children learn best through joyful, playful activities in the context of a loving relationship.

Let’s explore counting

Toddlers love to count, and while it seems simple, it’s actually quite a complex task. Pointing to objects or setting them to the side after they have been counted helps develop one-on-one correspondence, the idea that each item only gets counted once. Understanding and mastering this seemingly straightforward idea is an important step in your little learner’s math journey.



Activity

Use two dice (one dotted and one numbered) and some activity sheets to play an active game. Movement is a great way for kids to internalize this rather complicated idea. Look at the dice and talk about how they're the same and how they're different before deciding which one you'd like to play with first.

Take a look at the activity sheets and talk about what the child on the card is doing. Can you clap your hands just like the child in the picture? What else can you do? (You can create your own activity sheet by finding pictures of movement activities like clapping, jumping, and more.)

Practice rolling a die and name the number out loud (or count the dots). Now pick one of the activity cards (or decide on your own activity) and do the action the same number of times as the number you rolled.



Math language

Here are some math words to get you started: numbers (1-10), same, more, less, equal, match

Let's read



[Five on the Bed](#) by Addie Boswell

A young girl, her parents, and their dog and cat appear on, under, and next to the bed as they all get ready to sleep.