

## Learning Numbers - keep it fun and work at your child/ren's pace.

There are four main skills that children need to develop before they can count – for fuller details see <http://www.topmarks.co.uk/parents/learning-numbers-through-play>







1. Recognition of the sounds of the numbers; children can start to recognise the sound of numbers from an early age if they hear number songs and rhymes and hear people counting.
2. The understanding of one-to-one correspondence. This means being able to match one object to one other object or person.
3. The understanding of "How many are there?" As you count objects together touch each one. This helps children to understand they are counting one thing at a time. Start with one to three and gradually add once your child gets the hang of counting correctly.
4. The number of objects is the same however they are arranged.

The next stage is for your child to recognise numbers as symbols which can be taught by playing number recognition games.

Once children recognise numbers they will want to start writing them themselves.

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Opportunities for finding, counting and using numbers are all around us; there are plenty of ways to help your child/ren to learn numbers:

-  Make counting part of your everyday: count fingers and toes; steps and stairs; buttons on clothes – let your child hear you counting – praise them when they join in.
-  Sing number rhymes together – there are plenty to choose from: 5 little speckled frogs; 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 once I caught a fish alive; ten in the bed; 1,2, buckle my shoe.....  
<http://www.nurseryrhymes.org/numbers.html>
-  Read stories which include numbers: Goldilocks and the three bears; Hungry Caterpillar; My Granny went to Market and many more....time to check out the library.
-  When sharing books together ask your child to count items on the page or find a certain number of something on a page.
-  Play 'find me' – ask your child to find a certain number of items (start with one to three and gradually get larger) This could be anything from toys or other items at home to daisies in the park, pebbles on the beach or carrots when you're out shopping.
-  Use playdough and suggest making a certain number of 'cakes', 'biscuits' or whatever they enjoy making....or use building blocks and suggest how many bricks high to make a tower.

- 👉 If you bake together count out cake cases, spoonfuls of ingredients, decorations on top.
- 👉 Threading – count how many buttons/cotton reels/pasta pieces etc as you are threading.
- 👉 Make number cards up to ten (just use the ones your child is able to manage and gradually add to them) – ask them to match the right number of items to the numbers – you can use whatever will hold your child’s interest – anything from toy trains to dolls or chocolate buttons to raisins.
- 👉 Make a homemade number poster using stickers or cutting and sticking for each number
- 👉 Play games that involve counting – if using a dice or spinner use a combination of symbol and dots – draw or stick on dots to help your child begin to recognise the symbols.
- 👉 Play bowling – there are various child size sets you can find to play at home – or use plastic bottles and a soft ball to make your own – see how many you can knock down. Toad dot the game write numbers on the ‘pins’ and ask your child which ones they have knocked down.
- 👉 Find number symbols on houses, cars, in the supermarket, on the calendar, on a clock or watch, on buses.....
- 👉 Practice the symbol shapes with playdough – roll it into a ‘snake’ then make the shapes.
- 👉 When your child is ready to write the symbols there are plenty of practice books you can buy – many are ‘write & wipe’ which can be used over again. There are also practice sheets available online such as <http://www.kidslearningstation.com/preschool/traceable-numbers.asp> and <http://www.worksheetfun.com/category/math-worksheetfunmenu/number/number-tracing/>
- 👉 For a whole selection of fun ideas go to Pre School Express - [http://www.preschoolexpress.com/number\\_station.shtml](http://www.preschoolexpress.com/number_station.shtml)  
DLTK <http://www.dltk-teach.com/numbers/>  
And Numberjacks <http://www.numberjacks.co.uk/>

**HAVE FUN!**

