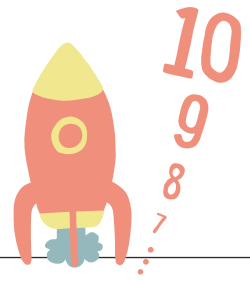


# LET'S TALK ABOUT MATH



## EVERYDAY FUN WITH COUNTING

Research finds that having a strong foundation in early math can lead to higher achievement in both math and reading later in school. Starting from birth, young children benefit from hearing number words and other math language, and later, from practicing math skills that involve counting during daily activities with parents and caregivers.

In the first five years, your child learns about counting by:

- Hearing the number sequence and, with experience, learning number names and repeating them in order.
- Observing adults counting objects and, in time, practicing counting by saying the number sequence themselves. With lots of experience, children learn the rules of counting and can count a group of objects accurately.
- Talking about the amount of things by using number words or words like “more” or “a lot.”
- Using counting in simple math activities: When you ask questions like, “How many will be left if we take one away? Could we count to find out?” this helps children begin to think about counting as a way to solve everyday number problems, including simple adding and subtracting and comparing quantities.

It’s fun and easy to help your child learn about counting as you talk, play and explore together. When you count objects with your child, describe the amount of things, and use counting to solve number problems in daily routines, your child learns important early math skills.

## HAVE FUN WITH MATH: PLAYFUL PARENT–CHILD COUNTING ACTIVITIES

### 0–12 MONTHS

Use numbers as you go about your day together. Count the steps as you walk up or down them while holding your baby. Sing simple number songs like “One, two, buckle your shoe.” Count your baby’s toes when you’re changing his diaper.

### 12– 24 MONTHS

Play “silly stacks” with your toddler. Count as you or your toddler stacks blocks. Stack two blocks or objects and then ask your toddler, “Do you want one more?” Keep offering “one more” for your child to add to the stack. This teaches your child the meaning of “one” and “more”—both important math concepts.

### 24–36 MONTHS

Make counting part of everyday routines. At the grocery store, ask your toddler to help you count out 3 green apples or 2 boxes of pasta and put them in the shopping cart. Before putting your toddler to bed, ask if she wants 2 kisses or 3 kisses. Count aloud as you give each kiss.

### 3–5 YEARS

Take a math walk on the way to the bus. As you walk, play a game where you and your child need to take “4 big steps,” find “6 pebbles” or touch “7 green leaves.” Ask and work together to solve “how many” questions, such as “How many steps from the front door to the side-walk?” Pose a simple number problem, such as “Grandma is coming to dinner. How many plates should we put on the table?”

YOU CAN FIND MORE TIPS LIKE THESE—AS WELL AS VIDEOS, INFORMATION, AND MORE—AT  
[TOOSMALL.ORG/LETS-TALK-ABOUT-MATH](http://TOOSMALL.ORG/LETS-TALK-ABOUT-MATH) OR [ZEROTOTHREE.ORG/EARLYMATH](http://ZEROTOTHREE.ORG/EARLYMATH).



TALKING IS TEACHING

