



Parent Tips

to Support 1st Grade Math Learning & to Have Fun At Home

Parents can help develop math skills no matter what their child's age by exploring the math in the world around them. First graders are developing a more complex understanding of number. They know that 6 can be 5 and 1, 3 and 3, etc. They know that all sets of 6, no matter what objects, are equivalent. And the last number counted is the number of the set. These big ideas underpin more efficient counting strategies such as counting on from the larger number. They are also developing the idea that "nothing" is represented by 0, and that any number in the system can be written with the digits 0-9.

give your child many chances to count and measure:

- Read a recipe and have your child measure the amounts for the ingredients. Use different measures such as teaspoons, cups, and pints.
- Using a calendar, count by 7's and then 1's to find the number of days until an upcoming event.
- Plan a meal you'd like to cook together, then make a shopping list for items that fit your budget.
- If you bring some vegetables home from the store, have your child count them, counting on from the number of vegetables you already have.
- Find creative ways to measure: how many paper clips long is this sheet of paper? How many hands high is the dog?
- Read *How Big is a Foot?* by Rolf Myller, about a creative apprentice who comes up with a more accurate way of measuring size.

find ways to practice number operations:

- Pick a number between 1 and 20 (or between any 2 numbers up to 100). Have your child guess the number, then you tell if your number was greater than or less than his guess. Have your child keep revising his guess until he guesses your number. Then trade roles.
- Count 8 pennies, then hide 4. Ask "How many are hidden?" Does she know there are 4?
- Go berry picking. Explore the berry patch with your child. Which color berries are ripe and good to pick? Have your child pick ten berries, then eat one. How many does he have left?

find ways to collect and organize information:

- Read weather charts, movie schedules, and other common numerical information you find in the news.
- When you're doing the laundry, have your child match all the pairs of socks. How many socks are there? How many pairs?
- Compare and organize tools, dishes, or other objects based on size, color, or weight.

some family games that use math skills:

- Dice, cards, and board games can help your child learn addition combinations.
- Dominoes helps practice counting by 5's.
- The card game "War" helps kids recognize which number is greater and which is less.
- Yahtzee
- Mancala
- Checkers and Chinese Checkers
- Any game that includes counting board steps, such as Chutes and Ladders