

# Everyday maths activities for 5-8 year olds

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## Talk it, play it, see it, touch it, think about maths – every day!

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A selection of fun and easy-to-set-up activities that will help your child think about maths – every day.

### TALK IT

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Point out the maths in everyday life, and include your child in everyday activities where you use maths – **handling money, shopping, cooking,** and **travelling** by car or bus.

Talk about **time** - for example, how long does it take to walk to school/the park/the chip shop? What time do you need to leave the house so that you're at school on time? Explain that you are doing maths.

Use turn-taking to talk about **time** – for example, if they have a 20 minute turn on the computer, and they've already used 10 minutes, how much longer can they use the computer for?

Practise **counting** to higher and higher numbers, and backwards too. Counting by itself can be boring, so encourage them to count things like steps, jumps, bounces, (good for competitions too!), or clouds in the sky, trees, crisp packets, lampposts, red cars, ants...anything!

Talk about the **shape and size** of objects – use the internet to find interesting size facts like tallest and shortest people, or biggest and smallest buildings etc.

Sing **counting** songs, read books, play games, and watch films about maths – scroll down for a list.

### PLAY IT

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Play games with cards – players take 2 cards and **add** the numbers - the player with the highest number wins. You can play this game with **subtraction, multiplication,** and **division** too.

Create **patterns** – make up dances, songs, or **rhythms**.

Play with blocks like Lego or Jenga – encourage your child to think about **size, colour, shape, weight, texture,** and **create patterns** and **structures** too. Ask them to guess how many blocks they could pile up without them falling down and then build them up to see if they were correct.

Play with **containers** – how many socks can you fit in the box? Which container holds the most sand/water/beads etc. **How many** sweets are in the jar? Ask your child to predict an answer and then do the activity to see if they were right/how close they were.

Pick an object and give your child clues to that object by using **directional language**: up, down, over, under, between, through, beside, behind, in front of, and on top of. Make the game more challenging: give two or even three part directions e.g. 'It's on top of the table and to the left of the magazine'.

Ask your child to design their own **board game** (and dice), and play the game together. Afterwards, talk about what mathematical thinking, reasoning, or problem solving the game used or encouraged.

## SEE IT

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Go on a **shape** hunt – how many **circles, squares, rectangles, triangles** can you and your child find? Are they **2D** or **3D**? You can look for **patterns** and **symmetry** too.

Look for **numerals**...on doors, buses, cars, signs, at home, at the shops, on TV...anywhere. Remember to talk about what the numbers mean.

Put things in **order** – of **weight, height, size**. Ask your child to help you organise things at home.

Play 'I spy' but with **numbers** or **shapes**.

## TOUCH IT

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Play with things like shells, bottle tops, beads, - and **compare** them. These things are great for making **patterns** too.

Make **patterns** with objects, colouring pencils, paint or play-dough.

Build **structures** with Lego, or cardboard boxes.

Ask your child to help you **measure** out ingredients/**set the timer** when you are cooking.

When you eat food that can be shared, like pizza, crisps, cake, berries etc, and your child to help you **share it equally** with whoever's eating.

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## THINK IT

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**Estimate** – at the shops ask your child to estimate how much 2 or 3 items will come to, or how much more food you'll need if extra people come for tea.

When they need to tidy their room, ask them to **estimate** how many objects are on the floor, then **count** them as they put the objects away – were they right?

Play 'Think of a number' – you think of a number between 0-50, and they have to guess. They can **ask questions** like 'is it less than 5'?

At school children learn to **problem solve** long before they start to write sums. You can ask them to help you to solve problems at home, when you are working out 'how many altogether' or 'how many more', such as:

'We have 1 red apple and 2 green apples, so how many apples do we have altogether? How many more should we buy at the shop?' or 'We have 10 chocolates/oranges/crisps, if I eat 3, then how many will we have?'

Ask your child to **collect information** and create a tally chart, e.g. find out the family's favourite animal or fruit etc.

## Songs

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[Five Little Ducks](#); [One, Two, Buckle My Shoe](#); [Once I Caught a Fish Alive](#); [Five Little Monkeys](#); [The Ants Go Marching](#)

## Books

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For younger children (5-6):

[Mr Archimedes' Bath](#); [The Shopping Basket](#); [Two of Everything](#); [The Very Hungry Caterpillar](#); [E-books](#), [The Girl Who Never Made Mistakes](#) (great for teaching kids that it's OK to make mistakes, and that you can learn from them too).

For older children (7-8+):

[The Dangerous Book for Boys](#), and [The Daring Book for Girls](#) have some great activities that use maths - things like finding north, writing codes, making kites etc.

## Games

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Board Games: Monopoly, Connect 4, Jenga, Snakes and Ladders, Twister, [Sum Swap](#)

Playground Games: Hopscotch, Hide and Seek, What's the Time Mr Wolf, Jacks, Dominos, Skipping, Hula Hooping, 40:40

## **Websites**

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[Primary Interactive](#)

[BBC Schools Primary \(4-11\)](#)

[Math Playground](#)

[Cool Maths Games](#)

[Fun Brain](#)

[Oxford Owl](#)

[MathCats](#)

[Mixing in Maths](#)

## **Maths Apps**

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Some great lists on [Wired](#), [Fun Educational Apps](#), and [Squidoo](#).