

# Everyday maths activities for Under 5s

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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 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? Explain that you are doing maths.

Practise **counting** up to twenty, and backwards too.

To help your child understand what numbers mean, ask them to find **the same amount of different items**. For example, find 3 spoons, 3 hats, or 3 socks.

Talk about the **shape and size** of objects, e.g. big car, little car, round ball, square table, rectangular book, and ask them questions like 'pass me the biggest box', or 'which one is the smallest shoe'.

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.

Create **patterns** – make up short dances, or **rhythms** using your body (e.g. clap, clap, stomp, belly slap, and repeat).

Play with blocks – get them 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.

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

Play with **containers** – how many socks can you fit in the box? Which container holds the most sand/water/beads etc.

## Clue Game

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.

To make the game more challenging give two part directions e.g. 'It's on top of the table and to the left of the magazine'.

## SEE IT

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

**Count** anything – how many lampposts are on our street? How many houses have a red door? How many packs of crisps do we have in the kitchen (and how many did we have yesterday)?

## TOUCH IT

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

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

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

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

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

## 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.

Play 'Think of a number' – you think of a number between 0-10, and they have to guess. They can **ask questions** like 'is it less than 5'?

At school children learn to **add** and **subtract** in practical situations that crop up in the classroom 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 3 red apples and 2 green apples, so how many apples do we have altogether?' or 'We have 6 chocolates/oranges/crisps, if I eat 3, then how many will we have?'

## **Resources for you and your child**

### **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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[Mr Archimedes' Bath](#)

[The Shopping Basket](#)

[Two of Everything](#)

[The Very Hungry Caterpillar](#)

[E-books](#)

### **Games**

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

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