

ZooBookKoo

Helping you to help your children

Ten Top Tips for Numeracy

These tips are designed to help parents develop a positive attitude towards numeracy for their primary school children

www.zoobookoo.com has many years experience researching and designing educational toys

1. **Get real !**
2. **Number line**
3. **Number bonds**
4. **Times tables**
5. **Activity place mats**
6. **Dice games**
7. **Think in 10s**
8. **Height chart**
9. **Pocket money**
10. **Maths for parents**

1. **Get real !**

From a young age and at every opportunity encourage your child to count out loud: eg apples in the shop. Build up to working out how many items you need to buy : eg if there are four in your family, and you will each eat two apples in a week, how many do you need for the week? Extend this to working out how many miles to go when travelling and other every day situations (more ideas below)

2. **Number line**

This is a line with numbers – usually to 20 to begin, continuing higher in schools. It visually demonstrates to the child increasing and decreasing quantities. Many of us learn visually. Learn to use it with your child. Make your own on a large sheet of paper – it could be a colourful snake, a long scarf etc, and work through lots of examples saying if you start on 6 and add 2 how many do we have. Try subtracting too.

3. **Number bonds**

These are as vital in the early days as the times tables are later. They form a building block for the harder sums. See below for a useful list of number bonds for various ages. Ensure your children know their number bonds by heart

4. Times tables

Probably the most important building block in a child's numeric development. It is a key stone to all other mathematical challenges, not to mention incredibly useful in real life. Listen the CD in the car, chant them, sing them, forwards, backwards, test each other, practice the easy ones they may have forgotten. Make it second nature for them – this is a gift for life

5. Activity place mats

Extend meal and snack times into useful together time. Before the meal and after you can have fun with write-on wipe off activity maths mats – available for all ages. There are even some Magic Mats which have invisible answers that the children can reveal by rubbing a magic box with their finger (see below for details). This can buy you valuable time to prepare dinner!

6. Dice games

Keep a dice game in your bag for those 'waiting' moments in restaurants or at the doctors. Many are great fun and are wonderful for reluctant mathematicians (education by stealth). Try Demon Dice or Diva Dice

7. Think in 10s

Think in 10s. You may do this instinctively but if not then start now. So 22 plus 13 is 22 plus 10 plus 3. Or 58 minus 39 is 58 minus 40 plus 1. It is so much easier to take away or add quickly in 10s and then add or minus the single digits. Practise this with your child to do this

8. Height chart

Run a height chart at home. Make or buy one. Discuss growth, working out the amount grown and the differences between siblings and parents. Ask relatives and friends to be measured. Great fun!

9. Pocket money

When your child is of an age where you feel they can have (or preferably earn through chores) pocket money, run a points system. Points are gained through the week for good behaviour, special moments of kindness or thoughtfulness, tidying up etc and they are lost for poor behaviour, nastiness etc. Each point is worth so many pennies. 5p is a good starting place (this will test your mental maths as they get older – imagine 6p per point!). You can gear the system to arrive at a figure you feel is reasonable for pocket money. You may need to run a chart to remember the score!

10. Maths for parents

Many schools and colleges offer various free 'maths for parents' courses. Get involved! This is a great way to understand how and what your child is learning. It's not the same as it was back in our day!

Helpful numeracy resources for parents and carers:

- Work sheets for ideas on how to 'get real!'
 - [Key Stage 1](#)
 - [Key Stage 2](#)
- Activity place mats
 - [Magic mats](#)
- Number bonds
 - [List of number bonds](#)
- Internet games:
 - [Mental maths](#)
 - [Maths games](#)
 - [BBC](#)
 - [Number line](#)
- Games on the go:
 - [Dice games](#)
 - Travel dominoes
 - Card games
- Numeracy resources for parents:
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