

# Helping your child with maths in the EYFS

## REAL LIFE MATHS

Families come across all manner of everyday maths situations when they are with their children - much more so than teachers who are confined to classrooms. By doing maths in real life, meaningful situations, children are more likely to develop the idea that maths is important, maths has meaning and maths is do-able! Wherever you see maths, talk about it! Below are some ideas that can be used on a Monday morning, a Wednesday tea-time or a Saturday afternoon!

Talking about numbers and shapes that you see in the environment

*What number do we live at?  
What number bus shall we catch?*

Cooking

*How many plates do we need on the table?  
Can you put 5 spoons of flour into the bowl?  
Can we cut the banana into 3 pieces?*

Money

*Let your children handle coins and see what numbers they can see on them. Let them pay for items and collect the change.*

Measures

*Using containers and water coloured with food dye can be great fun! Fill up different sized containers and see if children can pour from one into another. Ask them to estimate e.g. "how many of this bottle will fill up one of those bowls do you think?"*

Number

*Singing lots of number songs will help your child remember the order of numbers:*

*'Once I caught a fish alive'*

*'10 green bottles'*

*'Five little ducks'*

*'Ten in the bed'*

*'This Old Man'*

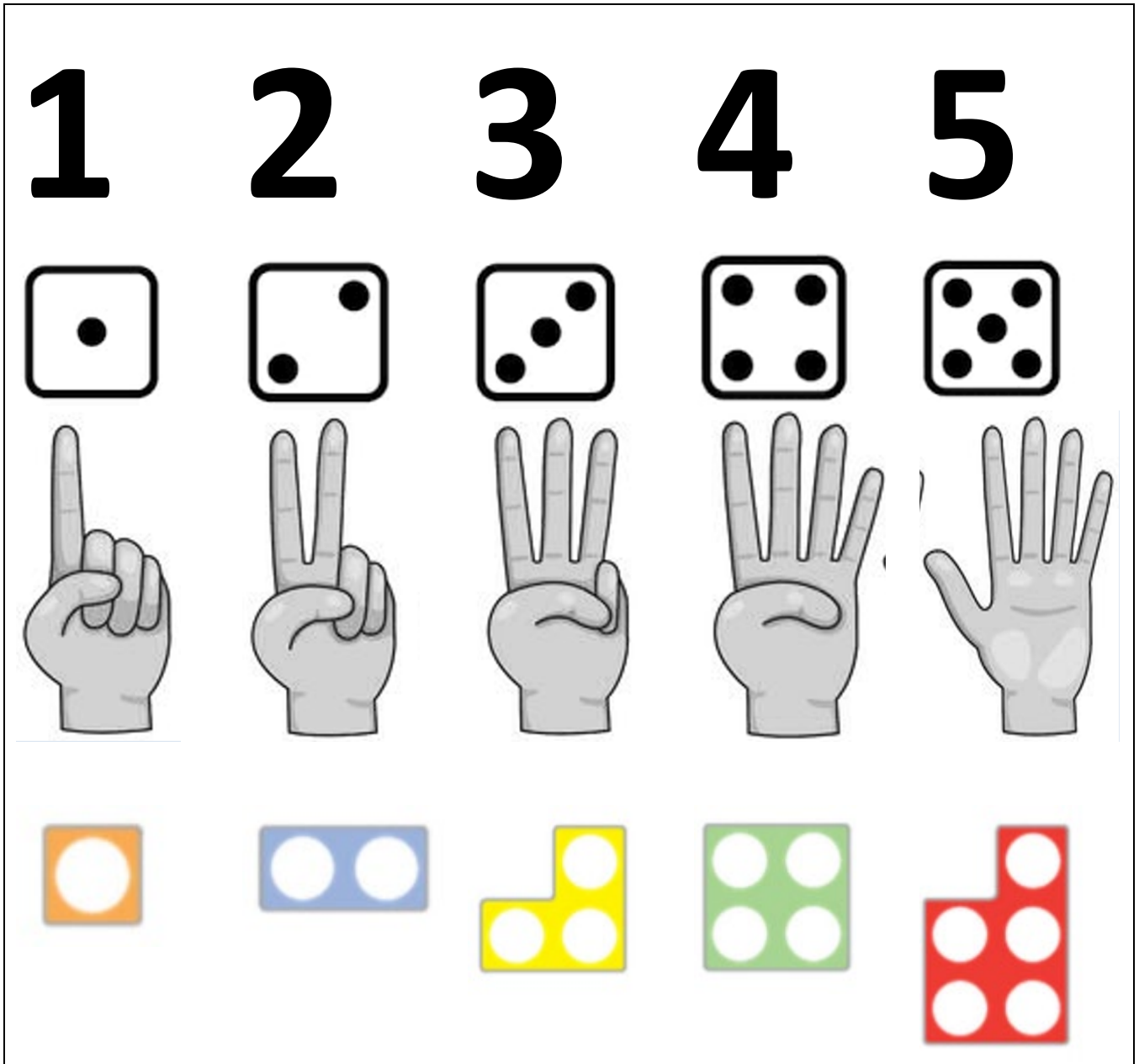
*Also, see the games below to consider how you can help your child with number.*

## Maths Games

Playing maths games with children is also a great idea! It develops positive attitudes, mental maths strategies (which are very important), and is a good way of keeping them away from the TV!

### Matching pairs

Print off these cards and cut them up. Lay them face down on the table. Turn over two at a time and try to find matching pairs. Children can also draw their own representations of the numbers to add to the game!

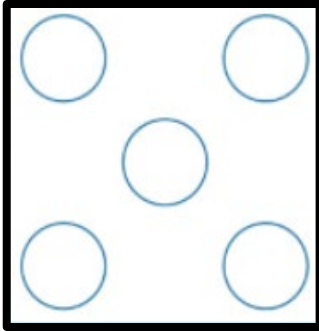


### Ordering numbers

Use one row of the cards above. Place the 5 cards face down on the table. Take it in turns to turn one over at a time. As they are turned over, build up a sequence so the numbers are in order.

\*\* You could replace a couple of the cards with blank ones that children have to write on to fit into the sequence.

### Numbers in numbers



Draw the picture of 5 circles shown on this card. Give your child different coloured pens/pencils and see what numbers they can “see in 5”.

For example, they may see 3 and 2 or 4 and 1.

They could use more than 2 colours, and perhaps see 3 and 1 and 1...the possibilities are endless.

### COUNTING

Lots of counting is great for children. Things to look out for include making sure that they:

- touch each item once, and match that touch to a number
- know that the final number they say is the total
- say the numbers in the correct order each time
- can rearrange the items, and the total will stay the same

### RECOGNISING NUMBERS

Gather together a small number of objects...toy cars, pasta shapes, pencils, coins or pebbles perhaps. Count them out together so you know how many there are. Ask your child to shut their eyes. Hide a small number underneath a bowl or cup. Reveal the objects and see if your child can say how many there are without counting them. They can check to see if they’re right by counting.

### SUBITISING

Subitising is when you can recognise a number of objects without actually counting them. Playing dominoes or board games with a dice is an engaging way to help develop children’s subitising skills.

[Click here](#) to find more different games or activities you can play at home to help develop your child’s subitising ability.

## FREE USEFUL LINKS

**National Numeracy** is a nationwide charity which is dedicated to improving everybody's numeracy skills. They have produced a Families' Toolkit which has lots more great ideas for things to do to help your children. [Click here](#) to go to it; scroll down to the 5 year olds and under section.

The **NRich** website has got absolutely loads of investigations and games that will challenge parents and children alike. [Click here](#) to have a go at some of their games, and [click here](#) to have a go at some of their investigations.

Top tips and games can be found on the **Learning Trajectories** website. [Click here](#) to access the family page.

An online counting game can be found by [clicking here](#).

**Number Blocks** is a pre school BBC television series aimed at introducing children to early number. Snappy animation and loveable characters combined with engaging storylines to gently introduce concepts of number to support early mathematical understanding. [Click here](#) to access the videos, games and other useful tips.

