

What are Early Math Skills?

Believe it or not, young children are natural mathematicians! Very young children are able to distinguish quantity, even before learning to count. Children are being exposed to math through everyday experiences and by exploring the world around them from the moment they are born. For toddlers and very young children, early math skills to support can include making comparisons, measuring, spatial relationships, and counting!



Why are they important?

In the first few years of life, children learn the basic language of math, supporting them in developing more advanced concepts such as: addition and subtraction, quantifying, and classifying.

What can you do to help?

Use math language! As parents and caregivers, we use math throughout our daily routines. Using math language to describe your actions and thinking processes exposes children to key early math concepts. Use these math words, and more, throughout your day!

- Big, small, tiny, huge, medium
- Longer, shorter, heavier, lighter
- Above, below, near, far, behind, beside
- Grew, shrank, full, empty
- More than, less than, equal
- First, next, before, after

Tips for Supporting Early Math Skills

Mealtimes

“Would you like **more** apple?” “You drank **all** your milk! Your sippy cup is **empty**!”



Playtimes

“Let’s put the **big** blocks on the **bottom** and the **little** blocks on the **top**.” “You put the trucks in a line and all the cars in a line. Which one is **longer**?” “You’re going **up** the steps and **down** the slide!”

Daily Routines

“**First**, let’s put pajamas on, **next** we’ll brush teeth.” “Let’s see **how many** scoops of water it takes to **fill** the cup!”



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