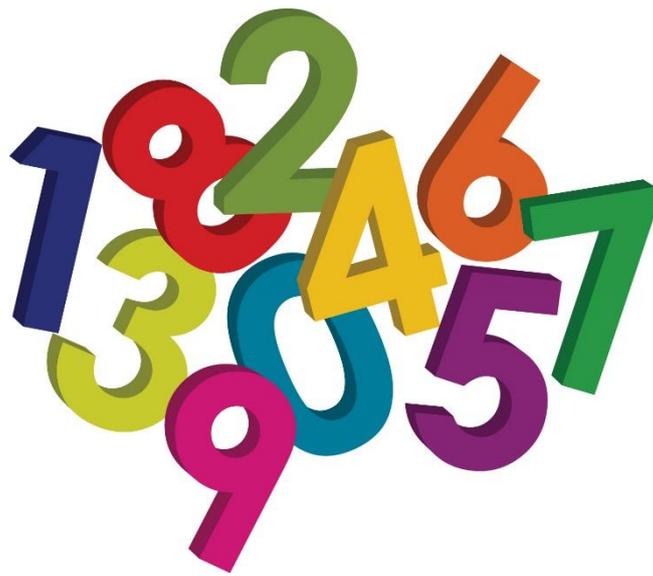


Helping Your Child At Home With Maths



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How can we help our child at home with their maths?

It's important to remember that maths is all around us. We come across problems that need to be solved using time and money in our lives all the time. We're managing risk and solving problems all day long, as well as estimating and measuring. So the short answer is "by involving them in day to day discussions which involve maths." The longer answer is as follows.

Around the home

There are lots of opportunities around the home to talk about maths. Here are some ideas:

- Talk about numbers in sport. How many points does your team need to avoid relegation? How many goals/ tries/ conversions/ points/runs has your team scored this season?
- When cooking, measure ingredients and set the timer together. Talk about fractions in cooking, for example ask them how many quarter cups make a cup.
- Discuss proportions when you make a cup of tea or squash as them how much milk or how much water they're using.
- Talk about the shape and size of objects. Use the internet to find interesting facts like tallest and shortest people, or biggest and smallest buildings etc.
- Talk about time. For example get them to work out what time you need to leave the house to get to school on time.
- Look for maths on TV, newspapers, magazines and talk about it together.
- Use newspapers. Talk to your child about percentages in special offers, the probability in the weather reports, the length of TV shows and compare the salaries in the jobs section.
- Solve maths problems at home. For example 'we have 3 pizzas cut into quarters, if we eat 10 quarters, how many will be left?'

- Talk about shape, size and quantity. Use the internet to find interesting size facts like most and least populated cities, highest mountains or deepest valleys etc.

Maths and Money

Money is linked really closely to maths and developing financial literacy is really important with young children. What about:

- At the shops. When buying a couple of items, ask them to work out how much they will cost together. As a challenge for older children, ask them to estimate what the weekly shop will come to.
- Use pocket money as an opportunity to talk about maths - are they saving for anything? How much do they need to save each week to buy it?
- Work out offers in supermarkets together. Ask them to work out which are the best deals.
- When travelling, ask your child to help you work out whether it's cheaper to drive or take public transport. Are there any deals you can get on public transport?
- Talk to them about getting a bank account. Look together at what's on offer for young people opening their first account and see which is the best deal.
- Ask your child to check your change.



Games

Games are a great way to both engage children and get them to use their mathematical skills. Some ideas for maths use at home with games include:

- Play with cards. Take 2 cards and add the numbers together, the player with the highest number wins. Try it with subtraction, multiplication, and division too.
- Get them to design a tree house, clothes or car or whatever they're interested in. Ask them to work out the right measurements.
- Play board games like Connect 4, Jenga, Monopoly, Scrabble (addition of tile scores) or Dominos.
- Ask your child to design their own board game and dice. Play the game together and talk about the mathematical thinking, reasoning, or problem solving the game used.

Out and About

Whether attending sporting events, walking around the local area or in the car, opportunities abound for teaching maths:

- When travelling somewhere familiar, ask your child to give you directions and timings, then test their directions out. If they get something wrong, ask them to think of the best way to get back to where you want to go.
- Look for patterns and symmetry when out and about.
- Sports are the perfect chance to think about speed, scores, time and angles. Get competitive; try out different angles to score from, ask them how many star jumps that they can do in a minute.
- Explore the local area. Ask them to guess how many people live in Willington or Derby, how far is the nearest airport is etc. Ask for the reasons behind their answer and check the answers online.

- Estimation. For example ask them to think about how they can estimate how many bricks were used to build a local landmark.
- Hobbies. Ask them to talk about the maths they have come across in the favourite hobby.
- Journeys. Ask them questions like how many miles or kilometres have we travelled, how many are left and what time should we get to our destination.



Books, movies and TV

Whatever your child is reading or watching, there are opportunities to talk about maths. For example:

- What is the total age of the characters in the 'Brown' family who Paddington lives with?
- How could we work out the height of the BFG? What units of measure would we use? What other lengths could this be linked to?
- Can you compare the difference between the judges' scores for Debbie McGee and Alexandra Burke on Strictly Come Dancing last weekend?

By discussing the maths found in books, TV and film, children see how maths is used all the time.

Maths Reasoning

Reasoning about Maths is all about the pupils explaining their ideas (in written form or verbally). This has now become a major focus of the new maths curriculum and children should be encouraged to answer examples of the following:

- Explain why the number 50 is a multiple of 2.

- True or false, $\frac{3}{4}$ is larger than $\frac{2}{3}$. Prove it! (Draw your ideas out.)
- Convince me that if you add the digits of any 3 digit number, the answer is always a 3, 6 or 9.
- Always, sometimes, never? A multiple of 3 is an odd number?

As you can see, there are loads of ways that parents can help their children with maths. And the great news is that these are all free, so no need to go down to your local bookstore and buy a book about maths! Make them aware that maths is all around them and their maths will develop with this. Remember though, that **MATHS IS FUN!**

Extract and ideas taken from <https://garyhall.org.uk/helping-your-child-with-maths.html> and supplemented with ideas from Willington Primary School.