



# Maths in Early Years



Maths is everywhere but to realise that as a child requires many learning opportunities, which can happen spontaneously during daily life but also can be planned in advance. Children are often enthusiastic about topics related to maths such as numbers, colours, shapes, sizes, time, so as parents we can enrich their experiences.



- **Count out loud** whenever you have a chance and when it is needed. Going upstairs or downstairs, sorting toys, while shopping, cooking, bringing clothes into the washing machine, and so on. Count actions too such as clapping hands, tapping your head, clicking your fingers or stomping your feet.

- **Cooking is an activity that covers many areas of learning including maths.** You can explore capacity (how much milk is needed?), size (do we use a big or small bowl), colours, temperature (how hot do we need the oven to be?), time (how long is it going to take until we eat muffins), shapes (what cutter would you like to use for the biscuits?).

- Purchase some **puzzles (second hand can do the job)**, and **construction toys** where pieces can be put together to create models. Boxes are very attractive so any delivery or recycled boxes can be transformed into creative models.

- **Talk about the day of the week, month and if it is morning, afternoon or evening.** After a few times children will recall these vocabulary. Use a big calendar, write events that will take place and let them play with it.

- **Singing nursery rhymes that include numbers** is one of the best ways to enjoy and learn.

1,2,3,4,5 Once I caught a fish alive

Zoom zoom zoom (good for counting backwards)

5 little ducks

5 little speckled frogs

5 little monkeys



- **Get a set of flashcards to play with them.** Show how the numbers look like and match cards to real quantities of objects. Go number hunting around the house spotting numbers everywhere. You will be surprised to see how many numbers are in our environment.

- **Water and sand play are very useful** to explore concepts such as empty, half full and full. Pouring to smaller containers or filling bottles with small objects can invite them to predict and experiment with capacity.

Learning maths is about experimenting with life itself, trying things out in daily life tasks and making knowledge meaningful in the many of the interactions we have with our children.

“The wider the range of possibilities we offer children the more intense will be their motivations and the richer their experiences”

Loris Malaguzzi