

Making the Most of Maths



Pattern

Patterns are sequences (repeating or growing) governed by a rule; they exist both in the world and in mathematics.

Birth – 3 years



Sing songs and rhymes with repeated actions such as 'Row Row Row Your Boat'. Move with your child to the rhythm of the song, forwards and backwards. As your child gets older, encourage them to tap or clap along to familiar songs and rhymes. Play simple 'to and fro' games such as rolling a ball or car to each other so they know what comes next. Use the words 'ready, steady (pause) GO!'

3 - 4 years



Whilst playing alongside your child encourage them to look for patterns. Model simple repeating patterns with two items and encourage your child to talk about what would come next e.g., shoe, welly, shoe, welly. Go for a walk and collect natural objects. Can your child copy a repeating pattern? Leaf, stick, leaf, stick?

4 - 5 years



Look for opportunities to spot and create patterns in the environment. Discuss things like wrapping paper, fabrics (especially those from cultural traditions) and patterns in nature. Make musical patterns using sound and movement, clap, stamp, twirl. Sing songs like 'There was an Old Lady who Swallowed a Fly' and discuss what comes next. Draw pictures to represent the story. Did you get the characters in the right order?

Pattern during play



Make collections of loose parts and natural objects to encourage the development of pattern making. Use wooden blocks to make spatial patterns and introduce symmetry.

Pattern during routines



When getting dressed discuss the patterns on clothing. Which colours and patterns do you like best?

At mealtimes, what comes next? First we wash our hands, then we count out the plates and cups. We eat our food then we wash up!

Have fun at bath time by using soap in your hands to blow large and small bubbles.

Home Maths challenge – lots more ideas in the Cumberland Early Years Mathematics Toolkit [Early Years Maths Toolkit \(cumbria.gov.uk\)](http://cumbria.gov.uk)

Find a pattern in your house, e.g., wallpaper, tiles, on the duvet.

Can you describe it?

(It could be squares/circles....)

See if you can draw your own pattern.

