

## Making the Most of Maths



## Composition

Composition of number is the different ways we can make each number. Numbers are made up of other numbers.

### Birth – 3 years



Take part in finger (or toe) rhymes with numbers. Use available opportunities, including feeding and changing times for finger-play, outdoors and inside, such as 'Round and Round the Garden.' Sing finger rhymes which involve hiding and returning, like 'Two Little Dicky Birds.'

Encourage your child's innate ability to subitise. Offer two portions of a favourite pudding and watch how they choose the bigger portion (this does not work with broccoli!)

### 3 - 4 years



Make a point to notice and name numbers. Can you see the two aeroplanes in the sky? Do all three of you want a drink? Count in everyday routines and play recognising the cardinal principle that the last number counted identifies how many altogether in the group. Help to sort laundry. Count how many white socks and how many patterned socks. Children need the opportunity to see numbers within a larger collection. Allow children to discuss what they see. Construct a group from two different things. Make fruit skewers using pieces of two different fruits. Compare, how many strawberries do you have?

### 4 - 5 years



Subitise (look at a group of objects and realise how many there are without counting) natural objects while outside. Look, three snails, I see 2 and 1 or 1 and 1 and 1. Encourage exploration of five. The ladybird has five spots altogether. I can see 4 and 1, 3 and 2, 1 and 1 and 1 and 1. Show finger numbers up to five fingers. Fold some down, how many up, down and altogether? Sing 'Five Currant Buns' and keep checking how many are in the shop, how many were bought and taken home and how many altogether. Play skittles and discuss how many are stood up and how many have fallen over. This links to number bonds, which two numbers go together to make five?

## Composition during play

Provide a variety of resources that can be grouped together and moved around. Partition a group of objects into different amounts. Move them around and check you still have the same number. Arrange your teddies, farm animals or small world figures in groups as you play. Talk about how many cars are in the garage and how many are outside.



## Composition during routines

**Mealtimes** – use household objects, two spoons and one fork or three forks and one spoon.

**Keeping tidy** – collect objects you have been playing with and group them. Then separate the teddy group into two. Five teddies are 4 and 1, 3 and 2 etc.

**Out and about**- talk about what you can see when you go to the park. Count how many dogs and how many dog walkers you can see. How many people are on the roundabout and how many are stood waiting to get on? How many people are there altogether?



## Maths Challenge at Home – lots more ideas in the [Cumberland Early Years Mathematics Toolkit](https://www.cumbria.gov.uk/early-years-maths-toolkit) [Early Years Maths Toolkit \(cumbria.gov.uk\)](https://www.cumbria.gov.uk/early-years-maths-toolkit)

Ask your grown up for their keys. Count the keys on the key ring. Move the keys into two sets on either side of the key ring. Six is 3 and 3, 4 and 2, 5 and 1.



How many would there be if you lost one key? What if you added one more, how many would there be then?

