

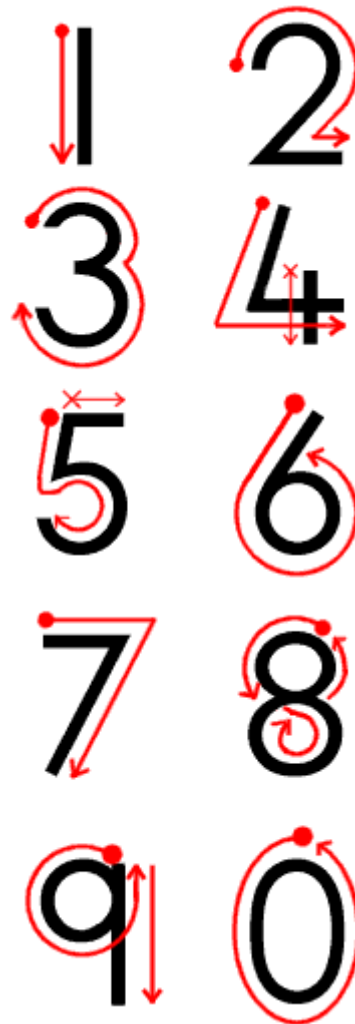
### How to help your child at home:

- Use number language, e.g. 'one', 'two', 'three', 'lots', 'fewer', 'hundreds', 'how many?' and 'count' in a variety of situations.
- Model and encourage use of mathematical language e.g. asking questions such as 'How many saucers will fit on the shelf?'
- Help children to understand that one thing can be shared by number of pieces, e.g. a pizza.
- As you read number stories or rhymes, ask e.g. 'When one more frog jumps in, how many will there be in the pool altogether?'
- Talk with children about the strategies they are using, e.g. to work out a solution to a simple problem by using fingers or counting aloud.
- Encourage estimation, e.g. estimate how many sandwiches to make for the picnic.
- Use tactile numeral cards made from sandpaper, velvet or string.
- Include counting money and change in role-play games.
- Provide collections of interesting things for children to sort, order, count and label in their play.
- Make books about numbers that have meaning for the child such as favourite numbers, birth dates or telephone numbers.
- Use rhymes, songs and stories involving counting on and counting back in ones, twos, fives and tens.
- Make sure children are secure about the order of numbers before asking what comes after or before each number.
- Talk about the methods children use to answer a problem they have posed, e.g. 'Get one more, and then we will both have two.'
- Make number lines available
- Play games such as hide and seek that involve counting.

### Number Formation Guide

Encourage your child to form numbers in the standard way. Bad habits are difficult to break, so following our simple guide can help to prevent problems at a later stage

Spots indicate the starting position of the pencil. The pencil should remain on the paper, following the arrows. For the numbers four and five, the pencil must be raised before completing the second part of each number. Crosses indicate the second starting positions.



# Early Years Foundation Stage

## Numbers and Counting



*Every child, every chance, every day*

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## Introduction

Numbers can provide a lot of entertainment for small children. They first become aware of the sounds of numbers, and then they begin to understand what they mean. Finally they need to recognise them when they are written down. There are **four main skills** that children need to develop before they can count.

### 1. Children need to learn the sounds of the numbers 'one, two, three...'

Children can start to recognise the sound of numbers from an early age if they hear number songs and rhymes and hear people counting. Some examples of rhymes are:

*Five currant buns in the baker's shop  
1, 2, 3, 4, 5 Once I caught a fish alive  
Five fat sausages frying in a pan  
1 potato, 2 potato, 3 potato, 4*

Books and stories that include numbers can help too. At story time make a point of counting the characters and the key items in the pictures. Some examples of books are:

*Goldilocks and the Three Bears  
The Three Billy Goats Gruff  
The Very Hungry Caterpillar  
The Three Little Pigs*

These reinforce the fact that numbers relate to different amounts. Children will then start to notice numbers in speech and begin to develop an understanding of how they are used.

It is a good idea to point out numbers that appear in everyday contexts such as on a clock, a telephone, on doors and money. This will help children to understand that numbers have a practical use, as well helping them to recognise written numbers.

### 2. Before learning to count a child needs to understand 'one to one correspondence'. This means being able to match one object to one other object or person.

You can practise 'one to one correspondence' in all sorts of different contexts. Laying the table is a good idea. Alternatively you can do this in a play situation such as: sharing cakes between toys or counting sweets.

### 3. Children need to understand what is meant by 'How many are there?' and more/ less than

Encourage the children to count objects then decide if there is more or less than a second set of objects. Introduce the idea of adding 1 more object and saying whether there is more or less before counting them. Counting opportunities arise with everyday objects such as cutlery or biscuits. Ask your child to guess how many objects there are before counting them together.

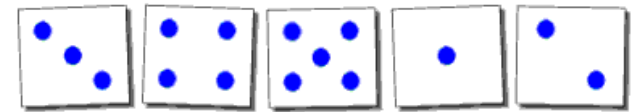
Games which involve throwing a number of objects, such as rolled up socks, in a waste paper bin or cardboard box can give good counting practice. If you have two containers then number them so the children can work out their score.



### 4. The number of objects is the same however they are arranged.

#### Ordering Numbers

Make some cards with numbers on one side and the corresponding number of spots on the reverse. Lay the cards out with the spotted sides upwards and ask your child to put them in order.



It is important that he or she can recognise the number of objects however they are arranged. Using the cards theme, you can represent some numbers with different patterns of spots. Ask your child to match the cards with the same number of spots.

#### Other numeracy skills the children will have the opportunity to develop in the foundation stage include:

- Recognising the differences in quantity when comparing sets of objects
- Beginning to relate addition to combining two groups
- Relating subtraction to 'taking away'
- Using simple number lines
- Estimating quantities
- Solving problems

