

## 25 Ways to Support Children's Counting Skills

Activity	What to do	Curriculum links
Count the stairs	As you climb any steps count up from 0. When going down stairs try counting back from a given number (especially if you know how many steps you will be going down).	Communication and Language Mathematics Physical Development
Choose a simple recipe and make something delicious	Count the instructions. How many things will we need to do? Encourage children to help with weighing and use language linked to weights like kilograms/grams. Introduce vocabulary linked to cookery and weighing. Read the ingredients list, encouraging children to read for a purpose and write a list of what ingredients you may need to buy.	Communication and Language Mathematics Understanding the World Literacy
Numbers all around	Look for numbers all around-on front doors, road signs etc. Choose a number and see who is the first to see it. Extend vocabulary by talking about the different home types, detached, semi-detached, terraced etc, discuss the community and what it is like living in the area, develop early geographical skills by thinking about numbers we see on the routes we take.	Communication and Language Mathematics Understanding the World
Spot the bus	Find out about local bus routes, what numbers do we see? Which number is bigger/smaller. Which bus has more people/fewer? Make our own shoe box buses with different numbers, make a line for the bus talk about 1 <sup>st</sup> in line 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 3 <sup>rd</sup> etc.	Communication and Language Mathematics Understanding the World
Spot the licence plate	Choose a number and see if you can spot it on a licence plate. Make own licence plates for cars/bikes/transport toys and choose numbers for these we could put in order from biggest-smallest.	Communication and Language Mathematics Literacy Understanding the World
Sorting sets	Collect sets of different everyday items including spoons, cups, toys, natural materials like pine cones. Sort into groups e.g. plastic/metal and count how many there are in each group. Compare amounts; which has more/fewer?	Communication and Language Mathematics Understanding the World
Set the table or have a picnic	Encourage children to set a table for a certain number of people or plan a picnic and count how many plates/sandwiches etc. you might need.	Communication and Language Mathematics
Timer challenge	Use an old kitchen timer/egg timer/timer on your phone... how many jumps/hops/strides/leaps etc can we do in a certain amount of time?	Physical Development Mathematics
Read stories	See websites below for recommended books that will support counting skills as you share books together <a href="https://literacytrust.org.uk/family-zone/birth-4/five-early-years-books-support-numbers-and-counting/">https://literacytrust.org.uk/family-zone/birth-4/five-early-years-books-support-numbers-and-counting/</a> <a href="https://www.theschoolrun.com/best-counting-books-for-children">https://www.theschoolrun.com/best-counting-books-for-children</a> <a href="http://www.earlyyearscreators.com/eyc/enabling-environment/top-10-books-promote-early-maths/">http://www.earlyyearscreators.com/eyc/enabling-environment/top-10-books-promote-early-maths/</a>	Communication and Language Personal, Social and Emotional Development Mathematics

Family member age	Use pictures of own family or faces from internet, label them with different ages, can children put family members in order from oldest to youngest. Can they make a number line with ages on and fit their own age onto the line?	Communication and Language Personal, Social and Emotional Development Mathematics Understanding the World
What is the time Mr Wolf?	Play the game What is the time Mr Wolf. Standing with back to children, they must shout at 'wolf' what is the time? Reply with time such as 4 o'clock and children take 4 steps forward.	Personal, Social and Emotional Development Communication and Language Mathematics Physical Development
Big chalk numbers	Using large chalks encourage children to mark make and write their own giant numbers. Can they find numbers of objects to match the numbers? Chalks can also be used to draw own hopscotch grids to develop counting on and back.	Personal, Social and Emotional Development Communication and Language Mathematics Physical Development
Number scavenger hunt	Write a simple scavenger hunt asking children to find different numbers of items for example 8 pine cones, 3 hoops etc	Personal, Social and Emotional Development Communication and Language Mathematics Physical Development
Measure me	Using measuring tapes, metre sticks etc. measure the children, using chalks to mark their height on outdoor wall. Discuss how the heights compare. Measure other things such as toys or furniture.	Personal, Social and Emotional Development Communication and Language Mathematics Physical Development
Numbers on dolls and houses /cars/trains etc.	Collect some toys and give them numbers. Affix numbers to boxes/buckets/containers and match the toys to the containers. Attentively, fill the container with different numbers of toys.	Communication and Language Mathematics Physical Development
Daily routine count as we get dressed	As children get dressed/prepare for PE/ outdoor time count item on... 1 sock, 2 socks, 1 leg 2 legs	Personal, Social and Emotional Development Physical Development Communication and Language Mathematics
Birthday card number line	Make number lines using birthday cards with age numbers displayed in them.	Personal, Social and Emotional Development Communication and Language Mathematics Understanding the World
Bottle skittles	Line up a set of empty plastic bottles. Encourage the children to roll a ball toward the bottles to knock them down. Count how many have been knocked down and how many remain standing. If the bottles fall down too easily try adding a little water or sand to the bottle of the bottles to weigh them down.	Physical Development Communication and Language Mathematics

Buckets and points	Write numbers on plastic buckets and give children bean bags, balls etc. to throw into different buckets then add their total.	Physical Development Mathematics
Find me a pair	Find matching items such as socks, gloves or shoes. Count how many you find in groups of 2. Try using a muffin/small cakes tray so children can use it to put pairs physically into trays (also supports subitizing skills)	Personal, Social and Emotional Development Communication and Language Mathematics
Loo roll stack	Use toilet rolls/old tubes/empty pots to stack into different amounts. This will help children to visual number patterns.	Physical Development Communication and Language Mathematics
Pom poms cake cases and tweezers	Use a set of pom poms and tweezers for children to transfer pom poms into each cake case using tweezers. Count how many pom poms are in each case. Which has more/fewer/most/fewest.	Physical Development Mathematics
Simple counting game with dice	On a piece of A4 paper draw a number of circles around outside edge (as few or many as you require) fill each circle with a pom pom. Give children a dice and each time they roll they get to collect that many pom poms. The child with the most pom poms is the winner.	Communication and Language Personal, Social and Emotional Development Physical Development Mathematics
Add some more	On strips of paper draw a line of circles (as few or many as required) give children a handful of pom poms and a dice. Each time they roll they add that many pom poms to the line until the line is complete and they win Encourage the children to talk about how many more they need on a roll to complete their line.	Communication and Language Personal, Social and Emotional Development Physical Development Mathematics
Play dough, spaghetti and Cheerios	Using lumps of playdough or plasticine put a strand of uncooked spaghetti in the middle and a bowl of ring- shaped cereal. Children can choose a number card or roll a dice and thread that many onto the spaghetti. Order the spaghetti into lines of most to least.	Communication and Language Personal, Social and Emotional Development Physical Development Mathematics