

# Give your child the best start in maths: enjoying everyday maths with your 4 year old



## Playful counting together

- **counting forwards and back:** number rhymes and picture books, showing fingers, counting as high as we can; *What's the next number?*  
*10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, coming – ready or not!*
- **counting objects:** shopping - *Can you get me 3 apples?* checking amounts - *Have we got 4 spoons?* Eating food- *How many left?* counting a collection e.g. toy cars, leaves
- **counting actions and sounds:** stairs, jumps and claps



## Playing with numbers

- **recognising 'how many' without counting** (subitising): e.g. 2 dogs, 4 fingers, 5 dots on dice or dominoes
- **spotting numbers around us:** e.g. on birthday cards, car number plates, TV remote, door numbers, clothing and shoe sizes
- **playing games:** hopscotch, card games and board games



## Sharing and comparing

- **comparing numbers:** e.g. when sharing snacks or toys (*same number, more, less, not as many*)
- **comparing and ordering things:** e.g. playdough, heights, growing things, distances, nesting dolls (*bigger, longer, taller, further away*)
- **talking about measuring tools which adults use:** e.g. tape measures, height charts, weighing scales, measuring jugs (*too much, not enough, too heavy*)
- **talking about time:** e.g. clocks, watches, calendars, timetables *lunchtime, Saturday, birthday, How many sleeps? How old? (soon, next, after, fast, slow)*



## Playing with shapes

- **matching and comparing shapes:** e.g. inset and jigsaw puzzles, shape pictures (*straight, curved, corners, bumpy, round*)
- **building:** e.g. boxes, wooden blocks, Lego or Duplo, construction sets; making dens indoors and outside (*on top, flat, corner, wobbly*)



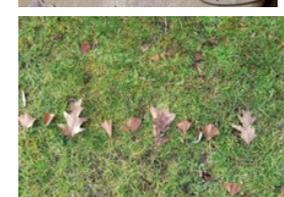
## Places and spaces

- **positions:** e.g. pretend play with toy houses, roadways, dinosaurs; tidying up, (*inside, under, in front of, behind, before, after, between*)
- **routes and directions:** e.g. describing the way to the park, giving directions (*forwards, backwards, sideways*)



## Pattern spotting

- **describing and making patterns:** e.g. patterns on clothes, fences, pavements; making patterns with leaves, pebbles and shells, patterns in music, rhymes and action songs *Which bit is repeated over and over? (same, different)*



For more ideas see [ECMG Family Postcards](#), [maths picture book lists](#)