

Handy Handouts®

Free informational handouts for educators, parents, and students

Math Around the Home

by Suzie Hill, M.Ed.

Practicing math skills can be fun and easy for children. There are many things in your home that will encourage children to love math and, at the same time, improve basic math skills. Here are some fun games and activities to help your child develop better math skills.

Bath Time



- Give your child a better understanding of *capacity* (the amount of liquid a container will hold). Ask your child how you might measure the water in the bathtub. Would you use gallons, cups, or teaspoons? Allow him or her to play with plastic gallon jugs, cups, liters, and measuring spoons to help him/her understand the relationship between different measurement tools.
- Practice math facts. Have your child spread shaving cream on the side or the back of the tub. Call out addition, subtraction, multiplication, or division problems and have him/her draw or write the answer with his/her finger in the shaving cream.
- Use foam numbers that stick to the wall when wet. Have your child make up math problems using the numbers and answer them. Be sure your child says each problem from beginning to end. For example, $2 + 3 = 5$. For best results, have him/her say it 3 times and point to each digit as he/she reads.
- Have your child find and identify all of the shapes he/she can in the bathroom. Be sure to have him/her describe each shape. For example, "The tile is square. It has four sides."



In The Kitchen



- Have your child help put away groceries. He/she will be working on sorting skills by sorting the groceries into different categories and putting them in their place.
- Have him/her compare items by weight and amount.
- Ask him/her to describe the shapes of packages and why foods come in different kinds of packages.
- Making cookies is an excellent way to develop an understanding for multiplication. Have him/her line the unbaked cookies in equal rows. Ask him/her how many cookies are in each row, how many rows there are, and then how many cookies there are altogether. Extend this activity by adding chocolate chips to the cookies. Ask questions like "If you have 3 cookies with 4 chocolate chips in each, how many chocolate chips do you have in all?"
- Ask your child to help you read recipes and measure ingredients.





Handy Handouts®

Free informational handouts for educators, parents, and students
(cont.)

In The Den

- Teach your child to recognize different times of the day on a clock (dinner time, bedtime, bath time, etc.).
- Play math card games. There are many math games to play with cards. For example, you can put down two cards and have your child add them together, subtract one from the other, multiply them together, or simply choose which is greater.
- Make up math songs and sing them with your child. Almost any song can be a math song. For multiplication, substitute the facts for the words in your child's favorite song. For example, 3, 6, 9, 12, 15, 18, 21, 24, 27, 30 works well with This Land is Your Land, This Land is My Land.
- Read aloud books about math. There are many good literature-based math books today. These books make learning and talking about math fun for children.



Recommended Books to Read Aloud

Sir Cumference and the First Round Table: A Math Adventure by Cindy Neuschwander and Wayne Geehan

Sir Cumference and the Great Knight of Angleland: A Math Adventure by Cindy Neuschwander

Multiplying Menace: The Revenge Of Rumpelstiltskin by Pam Calvert

The Shapes We Eat by Simone. T. Ribke

Math Curse by Jon Scieszka and Lane Smith

Greedy Triangle by Marilyn Burns

Once Upon a Dime by Nancy Kelly Allen

A Place for Zero: A Math Adventure by Angeline Sapragna Lopresti

If You Made a Million by David M. Schwartz and Steven Kellogg

Resources:

Math in the Home. (1999, June). Retrieved February 19, 2008, from www.ed.gov/pubs/parents/Math/mathhome.html

Math Cats. (2000). Retrieved February 19, 2008, from www.mathcats.com/grownupcats/ideabankactivities.html#familymath

Family Fun. Retrieved February 19, 2008, from <http://familyfun.go.com/arts-and-crafts/season/expert/dony0500aamath/>

For more FREE Handy Handouts®, go to www.handyhandouts.com