

# Counting



**Counting** is memorizing numbers in correct order (1, 2, 3, 4, 5...). Many preschool children can count up to five, some can count up to 10, and a few can count to 20 or higher. As children count, they practice the skill of pairing or matching objects so that one object equals one number. That is, when we say, “one,” we count one object and when we say, “two,” we count one more object.

## Ideas to try

**Counting Anything and Everything:** Count real objects around the home. Parents can have children count food items (how many beans are on a plate), coins, books, or just about anything. By counting real things, preschoolers can use their own experiences with objects to understand numbers better.

**Counting Songs:** Recite nursery rhymes and sing songs that include counting such as: One, Two, Buckle My Shoe; Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed; This Old Man; Five Little Ducks; and The Ants Go Marching One by One. This will give children an opportunity to practice counting in a playful way.

**Counting Books:** Read counting books with children. These books will help children actually say aloud the numbers as they see or hear numbers and count objects together. Some good counting books include: *Over in the Meadow* by Ezra Jack Keats, *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* by Eric Carle, *Count* by Denise Fleming, *Five Little Monkeys* by Eileen Christelow, *Ten Black Dots* by Donald Crews and *Anno’s Counting Book* by Mitsumasa Anno.

**Clapping Numbers:** While waiting in line, have children count as high as they can go. Have them clap as they say each number name. Add a new number each time you practice.

**Mealtime Numbers:** Have children count at mealtime by counting napkins and spoons, counting plates and cups for each friend or family member, or counting to make sure there are enough chairs for everybody for mealtime.

**Play Board Games or Card Games:** Play simple board games or card games to count spaces on the board and objects used in the game, and to recognize printed numbers.

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