

Making Patterns

Patterns are sequences that repeat. Children observe patterns at home, at school, at play and in nature. They notice patterns in clothing, songs, nature and even their daily routine. The ability to recognize patterns supports math skills. It helps children make predictions about what will come next.

The most common pattern is the ABAB pattern: red, blue, red, blue. Other patterns include the ABCABC pattern and AABAAB pattern. For example, circle, square, triangle, circle, square, triangle (ABCABC). Children can create patterns using colors, shapes, sizes or other characteristics that are repeated multiple times.



Ideas to try

Pattern Blocks: Children can create a pattern with different colors of interlocking blocks. You can also give them picture cards with sample patterns, and children can try to recreate the pattern.

What is Missing? Create examples of patterns on a piece of paper with fun foam shapes. Leave missing spaces in the pattern and have the children fill in the missing parts with extra fun foam shapes. For example, triangle, rectangle, circle, triangle, _____, circle, and have the child fill in the blank. As children become familiar with making patterns, you can increase the complexity of the pattern or the number of missing parts.

What Comes Next? Ask children to tell you what comes next as you create a pattern. For example, horse, cat, dog, horse, cat, ___.

Sound and Movement Patterns: Invite children to create physical patterns, such as clap-clap-hop, clap-clap-hop, or dance a pattern, such as shake, spin and wiggle (repeat).

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