

# Addition and Subtraction

**Addition and subtraction** for preschoolers should be fun and hands-on. Children can practice simple addition and subtraction using small toys, blocks, or just about anything. Talk to children about taking one away or adding one more. Do not require preschoolers to memorize equations or respond to flash-card equations. These activities are not appropriate for preschoolers.



## Ideas to try



**Add and Subtract Everything:** Collect a variety of materials that can be used to practice addition and subtraction. Plastic bottle caps, old buttons, small blocks, puzzle pieces and old keys will all work. Collect them in a bag or jar and pick a time to add or subtract them. For example, while having a snack, encourage children to add and subtract goldfish or other small crackers.

**Bowling for Addition and Subtraction:** Using water bottles or soda bottles, create your own bowling set. Ask children to number each bottle from 1 to 10, and arrange the bottles in a triangular shape at the end of a long hallway or uncarpeted room, with one pin in the front, two behind it, three behind those and so on. Take turns rolling the ball toward the pins and see how many you can knock over in one try. Count up the number of pins that get knocked over and pins that don't get knocked over.

**Make 1, 2, 3 or 4:** Linking blocks are a perfect item to explore addition and subtraction because they can easily be put together (adding) and taken apart (subtracting). Give children 4 linking blocks, and have them make 1, 2, 3 or 4 by putting linking blocks together and taking them apart.

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