

Reinforce Math Skills With Everyday Activities

Report to PARENTS

A solid foundation in math is essential for students to succeed in school and beyond. Incorporate math into your family's daily life—without a lot of time, effort, or expense—with these fun ideas.

In the kitchen. Cooking is not only a terrific way to help children understand fractions—it's also excellent family bonding time. Show younger children how measuring two half-cups of flour yields the same amount as one full cup. Ask older children to help you cut a recipe in half or double a recipe. Have them write down the new measurements and check the computations together.

At the grocery store. Bring a calculator with you to the store when you shop. Young children can add up how much you have spent on groceries or saved with coupons. Kids in third grade or higher can help determine which size of detergent offers the best value, or whether using a particular coupon is cost-effective.

In the garage. A tire gauge is one of the simplest tools for a child to use, and can help him or her learn about addition and subtraction. Show your child how to measure the pressure in your bicycle or car tires. Then, have your child help you determine how much air you need to add or release. Older children can calculate gas mileage.

On the computer. Find activities that reinforce math skills, from computer games like Math Blaster to apps.

On the road. Long car trips were made for math games. Pick a number from one to 10 and have each family member try to find a license plate with the target number. Younger children can add the numbers together. Children who have learned subtraction can try to find one that involves adding a few of the numbers and then subtracting one.

Kids who have learned multiplication and division can put those skills to use.

At the toy store. If your child is trying to save up to buy something special, keep a chart of how much money they will need and what they have saved to date.

At home. Classic games such as dominoes, cards, puzzles, or Monopoly teach math reasoning. Sewing and building projects both involve plenty of computation. Teach your child how to measure and sew fabrics together, or build basic structures out of wood (with adult supervision).

Above all, avoid passing any math phobias that you might have on to your child. It's important for children to hear at home that what they're learning is valuable—that all the work they're doing trying to comprehend division or fractions or measurement will pay off their whole lives.



Web Resources

Common Sense Media provides reviews of education apps.
www.commonsensemedia.org

PBS Parents has a math portal with tips, games, and everyday activities.
www.pbs.org/parents/education/math/

The **Figure This Family Corner** offers tips, tricks, and downloadable brochures.
www.figurethis.org/fc/family_corner.htm