



Learning about Shapes

Every time you point out different shapes, different sizes and colors you are helping your child learn about and understand math skills. By helping your child to notice and learn about shapes, you are strengthening your child's math skills. Try these suggestions.

INFANT:

- Point out different shapes to your baby during playtime. Be sure to name the shapes: the square block or the round ball.
- When playing in sand or water, let your child use containers of various shapes and sizes.

TODDLER:

- Cut out different shapes using construction paper of different colors, (circle, triangle, square, rectangle, star). Using the tune of *Where is Thumpkin?*, sing: "Where is triangle? Where is triangle? Here I am. Here I am. How are you today sir? Very well I thank you. Run away. Run away." Switch words for each new shape.
- Have a "shape lunch." Ask your child: "Would you like squares or triangles for lunch today?" Then, cut your child's sandwich into four squares or triangles.
- Talk with your child about the colors, textures, and shapes you see around you: an orange, square of cheese; a white, oval egg; or a soft, blue, square blanket.
- Draw shapes in the air using large movements. Have your child guess the shape then have him "draw" one!

PRESCHOOLERS:

- Make "secret boxes" for your child to explore. Take three shoeboxes and cut a hand-sized hole in the side of each. Put a different interesting item inside each box (a few round milk lids, some rectangular Legos™, some square bean bags). Have your child put his hand inside and touch the object without looking. Ask your child: What do you feel? What shape is it? Can you guess what it is?
- Look at artwork together and talk about how the artists use lines and shapes.
- When playing with blocks, talk about how shapes might change. For example, "How could we turn the square building into a rectangle?"
- Go on a "shape hunt." With your child, look for shapes in your home. Help your child describe where he sees each shape.