



Introducing Mathematical Tools

Let your child explore mathematical tools such as rulers, a measuring tape, thermometers, and calendars. These “tools” will help your child develop math skills that are important in school. The fun activities below will help you help your child learn to measure.

INFANT:

- What animals do you see outside? Name these different creatures for your baby: birds, squirrels, ducks, dogs, cats, rabbits. Which animal does your baby seem most interested in? Make the sounds of each animal. Which sound makes your baby giggle?

TODDLER:

- Trace your child’s hand or foot onto a piece of paper. Let your child color in or decorate the tracing. Then trace your hand or foot. Whose is bigger or smaller? Use a piece of string or a ruler to find out.
- Play Stop and Go. Color one side of a paper plate red and write the word “stop” on it. Color the other side green and write the word “go.” If you’d like, glue a stick to the bottom so you can easily hold it. Let your child pretend to be a car and you pretend to be the traffic light. Tell the “car” to stop at the red sign and go at the green sign. Once your child has the hang of this game, see if he’d like to tell you when to stop and go.
- Keep a record of your child's height by marking the wall and measuring the height every month, or every year. Young children enjoy seeing how big they are getting and predict how big they will be next year. The marks on the wall are simply a graph of their growth.

PRESCHOOLERS:

- Help your child to weigh herself (or toys, or the dog) on the scale. Explain to your child what the weight is and what it means.
- Read *Inch by Inch* by Leo Lionni. Have a ruler handy while you read it.
- Let your preschooler play with objects that can be put together: simple puzzles, boxes of different sizes, Tinkertoys™, Lincoln Logs™, Legos™, or blocks that stack. Get down on your child’s level, ask what he or she is doing, and praise your child every time he or she makes something new.
- Have your child explore a calculator. You can say numbers and have your child find them and press them. You can also introduce your child to the addition sign.
- Use a stopwatch or timer for relay races and other games.