

Daily Math Practice in Every Day Life

Regardless of the age of your child the opportunities to practice academics everyday exist all around you. A child's knowledge of numbers and math concepts will be stronger if the parent draws his attention to the relevancy of these in everyday life. Frequent practice increases the ability to recall information and gain additional knowledge.

Children with Down syndrome are visual learners. They will learn better if they see numbers and math terms in writing and use manipulatives instead of just listening to numbers and words. Using games to teach is a wonderful activity since social interaction tends to be strength. Music, when paired with gestures or written words, can help a student remember information.

MATH is all around you:

- Count anything you see or touch.
- Identify colors as you shop, look at books or magazines, go for walks or play in the park.
- Sort silverware (also an independent living skill).
- Categorize food as you put it away into the pantry, refrigerator, and freezer.
- Identify measuring cups and spoons as children help cook in the kitchen.
- Identify directions as you drive. I am turning right or left.
- Identify shapes in your house. I need the square pan or the rectangular baking pan.
- Count out items needed all the time. I need six forks on the table; we need 2 cups, 5 towels, etc.
- How many people are here? Will everyone get a cookie?
- There are 2 carrots and 4 of us. How many more carrots do I need?
- Allow them to pay for items, counting out the dollar bills. Do this only for small purchases .You can use a number line to help them count out the needed money. They don't need to identify cents, they just need to know they need another dollar if there are any cents in the amount they owe.
- Telling time can begin with recognizing the number for the hour, which again also reinforces number recognition.

If the child can count by 5's, then after recognizing the hour begin to teach time to :05. So it is 2:05, 7:05, etc.

Then count 5 more to 10 and practice, 1:10, 4:10, 9:10, etc.

Eventually continue all the way around the clock counting by 5's.

You can work on the concept of minutes later.

- Create patterns with blocks. Begin with simple ones (A,B). Green block, red block, green block. Eventually get more complicated.
- Use math terms such as more, greater than, less than, add, sum, subtract, bigger, and smaller.
- Make him responsible for inventorying certain items you normally buy. If you usually buy toilet paper when you have 2 rolls left, then they need to count

and tell you if there is enough or if you need to buy more. The list should be a reasonable length for the child but this begins to teach the idea that you need to assess your needs before you shop (thus creating greater independence later).

- If I need the medium pan, which one is it?
- Set oven temperature by matching numbers if necessary. Same thing with the microwave. Find the number of minutes (you could highlight them) and then the child presses those numbers. This reinforces math and cooking skills, both necessary for independence.
- Sort clothes light and dark, towels and clothes, etc.
- Putting away clothes also helps develop sorting skills.
- If I give you 3 raisins, how many will I have left?
- Count the number of people in a room.
- Look for a certain number while you shop.
- Look at ads and circle or find certain numbers.
- Ask which page of the book you are on.
- How many shirts are in the laundry?
- Count out the number of hangers you need.
- Measure detergent.
- Sort laundry by the person it belongs to.
- Who has the most potato chips?
- How many books are on this shelf?
- Which plate is bigger?
- Put the cookies in order from the smallest to the largest.
- Sort coins.
- Which plant is the tallest?
- How many pictures on the walls?
- Find all the black pens.
- Place numbers on the floor. When a number is called, go stand on it.
- See how many green items you can find in this room.
- Sort toys by those that make noise and those that don't.
- What is the smallest object on the table?
- This is aisle 9 at the grocery store. What will come next?
- Cookies are on aisle 12. Can you find aisle 12?
- **Always try to reinforce the math vocabulary they are teaching at school. If you say 1 plus 1 and the say add 1 and 1, the child may get confused and not understand it is the same thing. Find out from the teacher key phrases and how certain operations are being taught so it can be consistent.**
- **Teach at the level that your child is at until they really understand and then increase just slightly. For example, sort only 2 colors until they get really good. Later you can sort more types of objects or sort by more difficult attributes such as hard and soft.**