



Tips to Count, Group, and Compare

With Your Infant (0-12 months)

Move to the beat.

Tap your baby's tummy or clap their hands together to the rhythm of a song. Or rock them as you sing a lullaby.

Count.

For example, count and wiggle each of their toes. Or count as you gently bounce them in your lap.

Compare objects.

Help your baby explore things that are the same and different. Let them shake containers that make different sounds. Or give them different types of fabrics to touch (like smooth and scratchy). Talk about the differences.

Fill up and dump out.

For example, use a container to scoop and dump water in the bathtub. Use word like "in", "out", "full" and "empty".

With Your Toddler (12-36 months)

Compare sizes and amounts.

Your toddler may be interested which things are "big" or "little". You can also talk to them about whether they want "more" or "less".

Count sets of objects.

Point to each object as you count and say how many there are in total. "One, two, three, four—there are four strawberries." Split the objects into two groups and count each.

Look for shapes.

Name and describe shapes. "That window is a square with four sides." As they get older, see if your child can find and name shapes around

Match and sort.

Match and sort objects by their features like color, shape size, or what they do. For example, sort blocks by color as you put them away.

Build.

Encourage your toddler to stack blocks or objects like plastic cups. Talk about what they're doing using position words like "below" or "above".

Clap in a pattern.

See if your toddler is interested in clapping along or dancing with you.

With Your Preschooler (36-60 months)

Count around town.

Count and find numbers in your community! You can count the sidewalk squares or look for numbers or signs.

Add and subtract.

Count with your child using your fingers. Fold down one finger and count how many are left. Hold up a few fingers on the other hands and count how many you have now.

Grocery helper.

The next time you go to the store with your child, give them a job. Use "size words" when you ask them to help you. Say, "We need three large potatoes" or "Can you find two small red onions?"

Puzzle play.

Do a puzzle (you can make one by drawing a picture and cutting it into a few pieces). If your child needs help, give hints using position words like "below" or "above".

Making patterns.

Make a movement pattern game. Take a step, then a hop, then a step, then a hop. Let your child choose the next movement to add.

Match and sort.

Match and sort objects by their features like color, shape, size, or what they do. For example, your child can help sort the silverware when you put it away.

