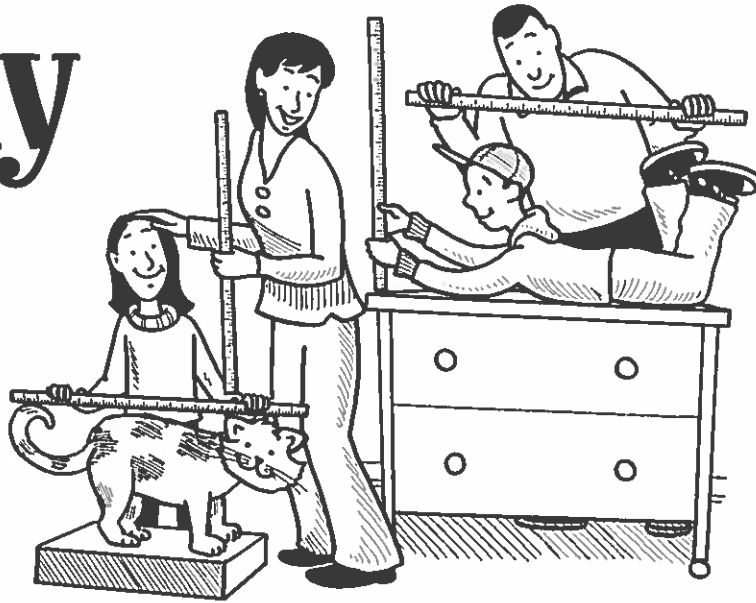


# Family Math Time



Morning,  
noon, or night...  
it's always math  
time! Make every  
moment count by  
adding math  
practice to your  
family's daily life.

## Shortest to tallest

Teach your youngster about measuring and comparing heights with this activity.

Have family members lie down one at a time, and let your child use yarn to measure them. Help him lay a different color yarn beside each person, from head to toe, and carefully cut it to fit. Then, have him line up colored markers end to end alongside each piece of yarn and write down each person's height: "Ethan is 9 markers tall." "Mom is 13 markers tall."

To compare the heights, tape everyone's yarn to a wall, from the floor up. You can work on math vocabulary by discussing the results. "Who is the *tallest* person in our family?" "Who is the *shortest*?" "Who is *taller*—Mom or Dad?"

*Tip:* If you don't have enough markers, try spoons, straws, or juice boxes that are the same length.

## Mix-and-match smoothies



Turn breakfast or snack time into a problem-solving adventure. Set out smoothie ingredients, and ask your child how many ways she could combine them.

For instance, you might put out two types of yogurt (vanilla, banana), two kinds of berries (strawberries, blueberries), and two flavorings (honey, chocolate syrup). Then, help your youngster write a menu listing all the combinations. *Examples:* Vanilla-Strawberry-Chocolate, Banana-Blueberry-Honey. How many different smoothies can your child find? (*Solution:* 2 yogurts x 2 berries x 2 flavorings = 8 smoothies.)

Finally, let each family member choose a smoothie, and whip them up together. Bon appétit!

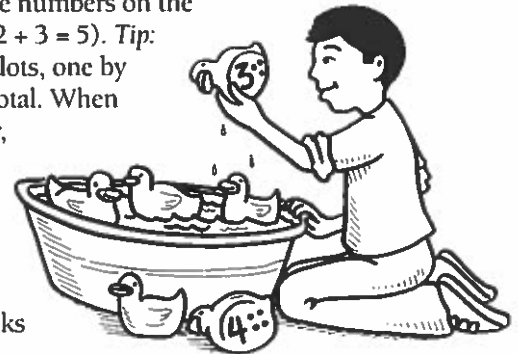
## Math in the bath

Help your child sharpen arithmetic skills with this version of the "Duck Pond" carnival game. Gather 10 rubber ducks or other floating toys, such as boats. Use a permanent marker to write a number, 1–10, and the corresponding number of dots, on the bottom of each.

Float the toys in the bathtub. Have your youngster pick up two and add the numbers on the bottom (*example:* 2 + 3 = 5). *Tip:*

He can count the dots, one by one, to reach the total. When he says the answer, have him put the two ducks on the side of the tub and pick two more. Continue until all of the ducks have been chosen.

*Variation:* Play this game outside in a wading pool or with a bucket of water.



## Laundry geometry

Which shapes can your youngster make while folding sheets and towels? Let her practice geometry while she helps you with laundry chores.

Ask her to fold a square washcloth to make a triangle. Have her unfold it, then fold it in a different way to create a rectangle.

Next, see if she can fold a rectangular towel or pillowcase to make a square. Once the linens and towels are all folded, have her sort them into piles of squares, rectangles, and triangles—and help you put them away.

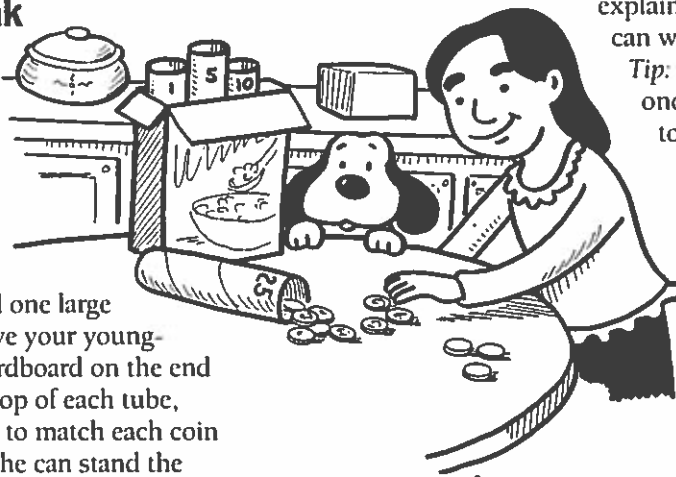
continued

## Cereal box bank

Let your child keep track of your family's spare change with this coin sorter. She will learn to recognize and count coins.

Collect four empty paper towel tubes and one large empty cereal box. Have your youngster tape a circle of cardboard on the end of each tube. On the top of each tube, help her write a value to match each coin (1, 5, 10, 25). Then, she can stand the tubes, open side up, in the cereal box.

Empty your change purse or pockets, and show her what each coin looks like and how much it is worth. Let her sort the coins into the correct tubes. Once they're sorted, she can dump out each tube separately and count the number of pennies, nickels, dimes, and quarters. Getting familiar with the color, size, and value of each coin will help her learn about money.



explain that every number represents an hour. She can write each number, 1–12, on a separate petal.

**Tip:** Tell her that the numbers are used twice a day, once for midnight to noon, and again from noon to midnight.

Then, help her think of an activity for every hour she's awake. On the 8:00 petal, she could write or dictate to you, "Wake up." Let her draw a symbol (a sun) as a reminder. For 9:00, she might say, "Go to school," and draw a bus. Maybe she eats a snack at 10:00 and plays on the playground at 11:00.

Finally, help her glue the petals around the plate, using the real clock as a guide. When she does a new activity, ask her to tell you what time it is. ("Bath time—it's 7:00!")

## Estimation station

How many beans are in the jar? Help your youngster practice estimating with this ongoing family guessing contest.

Keep a clear container, such as an empty water bottle or juice jar, on your kitchen counter. Each week, fill it with something different from your pantry (uncooked beans, nuts, mini pretzels).

Next to the bottle, place scraps of paper, a pen, and an envelope. Throughout the week, family members



can look at the jar and put their estimates in the envelope when they're ready.

Finally, empty the jar and count the objects together. The person who comes closest decides what goes into the container next week. *Idea:* Discuss strategies for coming up with an estimate, such as counting the objects in each layer and then counting the number of layers.

## Flower clock

Have your child make her own flower clock to practice telling time.

She can paint or color a paper plate and cut out 12 petals from construction paper. Show her a clock (nondigital), and

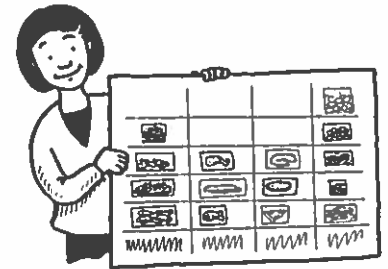
## Tasty graph

Your youngster can graph information to find out which foods are your family's favorites.

Gather grocery store advertising circulars, and ask each family member to cut out her 5 or 10 favorite foods.

Let your child sort the pictures into piles (macaroni and cheese, chicken, pizza), and help her create a graph. She can write the names of the foods along the bottom of a poster board and draw vertical lines to make columns. Then, have her tape the pictures in the correct columns.

Ask your youngster to count the pictures for each food. Which one is your family's favorite?



## Counting book

Give your child practice counting and recognizing numbers using favorite objects. When he makes his own number book, it's sure to become a bedtime reading favorite.

Ask him to arrange groupings of different items, numbering 1–10 (examples: 1 soccer ball, 2 shirts, 3 teddy bears, and so on). Then, have him take a photo or draw a picture of each set.

To make his book, he can glue the photos or drawings onto separate pieces of construction paper. Let him label each one with the number and description (4 trains, 5 action figures). Staple the pages together, and he'll have a book to read aloud. Encourage him to count the pictures as he reads each page.