

Parent Guide



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What is this resource and how do I use it?

Number bonds are a key part of your reception child's mathematical understanding. There are many practical games and activities that you can play with your child to help them with their understanding of number bonds. This guide lists just a few here - adapt them as you require. Some activities you may already do without really realising it!

What is the focus of this resource?

Number Bonds

Maths

Activities for Home

Further Ideas and Suggestions

There can be a lot of vocabulary to learn or revisit when your child starts reception! This [Maths Jargon Buster](#) is just what you need to keep you and your child on the right track.

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Practical Games for Learning Number Bonds at Home



As with most things in early childhood, practical activities and games are very effective for helping your child to really understand number bonds. Try some of these activities and games at home to support your child in their learning.

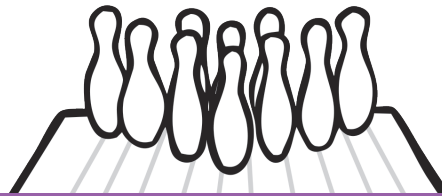
Sweet Bonds

Enjoy a sweet treat while practising maths skills! To practise number bonds of five, give your child five sweets and challenge them to separate them into two groups, counting how many are in each group. Can they find another way to separate them? Then, as your child is enjoying their treat, ask them how many they have had - they might not be sure but they can use their number bonds to work it out!



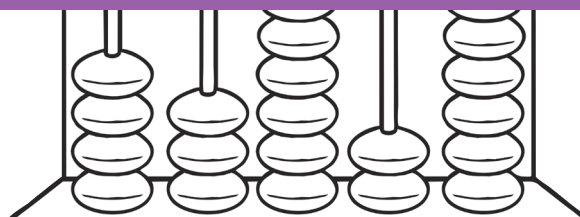
Play Skittles

You might say this is the perfect number bond game! Set up the number of skittles you want to practise number bonds of (e.g. 3, 5, 9 or 10). Count the number of skittles that are knocked down after each roll and ask your child how many more need to be knocked down to knock them all over. You can make your own skittles by upcycling plastic bottles or kitchen roll tubes.



Use an Abacus

An abacus is a great tool for visually exploring number bonds to ten. You can make a DIY abacus using pegs and a coat hanger. You will need the correct number of pegs, depending on the number bonds you wish to investigate with your child and a triangular coat hanger (so it has a bar across the bottom to clip the pegs to). Attach the pegs to the bottom of the coat hanger in different number bond arrangements or give your child the challenge to find out how many different ways they can find to make a number.



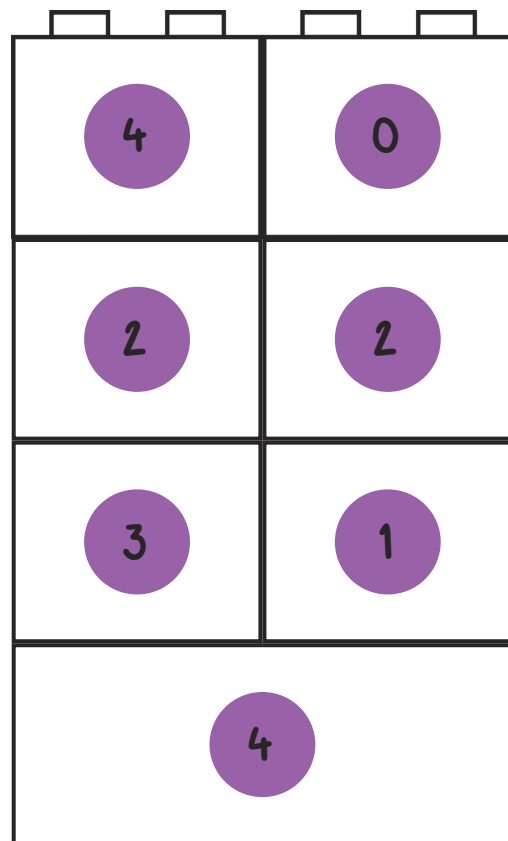
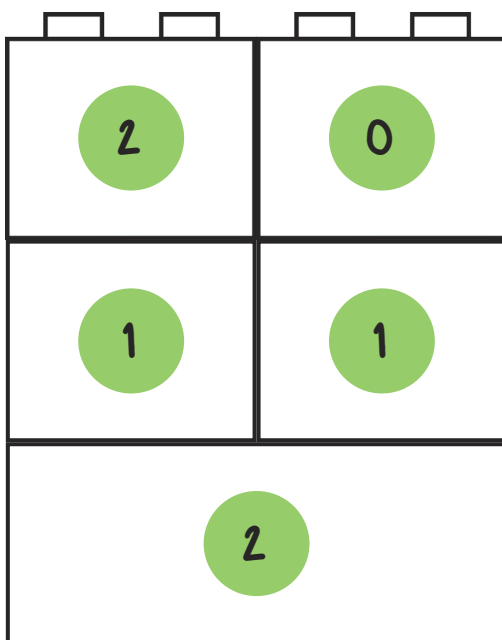


Practical Games for Learning Number Bonds at Home



Build Towers

Using a dry wipe pen, write the number you want your child to make on a large block. Then, write different number bonds to make that number on smaller blocks that will fit together on top of the larger one. Challenge your child to find all the different ways to make the large number and build a tower with them. You could do this with different large numbers on blocks to make towers of different heights - this does make it pretty challenging so maybe keep this for when your child is getting confident with their number bonds.



Struggling to make sure you've got all the number bonds covered? We have a little cheat sheet in our [Number Bonds Explained for Parents](#) parent guide - have a quick look at the examples of number bonds to save yourself a bit of time!



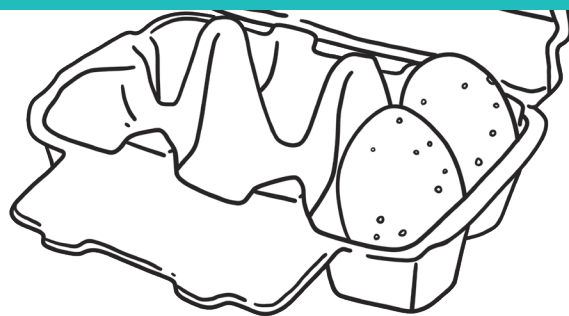
Practical Games for Learning Number Bonds at Home



Use Your Recycling

Use an empty egg box and pom-poms – find an egg box for ten eggs to work on number bonds to ten or cut the grooves from a 12-egg box so you get the number of spaces you need. Add pom-poms to different numbers of spaces and together look at how many spaces are still empty. Challenge your child to write down as many ways to make their number as possible.

Give your child tweezers or tongs to move the pom-poms with for a little fine motor development too!



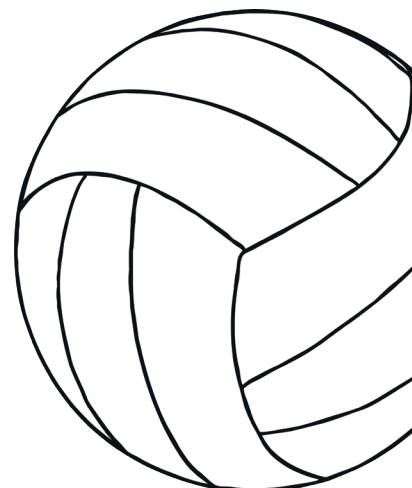
Hunt the Number Bonds

Write pairs of number bonds on separate sheets of paper or sticky notes, for example, 3 and 2 (you could also use visual aids). Do this for all number bonds of five (or whatever bonds you are practising). Then, hide the numbers around your home. Your child's challenge is to find a pair of numbers that are number bonds of five and bring them back to you. Can they find them all? You might like to add a time limit for an extra challenge!

You could also play this as a simple matching cards game, where you lay the cards out face down and take turns to turn two cards over at a time - great for keeping in your bag as an on-the-go card game.

Play Catch

Choose a number to practise the number bonds for, e.g. eight. Throw a ball, beanbag or balloon to your child and say, 'Five'. They need to throw the item back, completing the number bond as they do say (so in this instance, they would need to say, 'Three'.) Continue as many times as you like.





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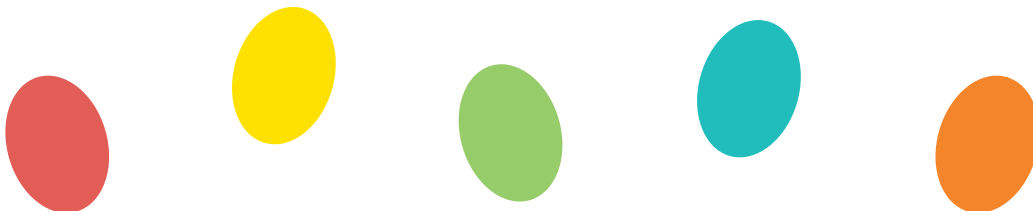
Lay the Table

Number bonds are used daily by adults and children alike! Laying the table is a great example of this. Encourage your little helper to recall and use number bonds when getting cutlery out for dinner for example. You could say, 'I've got one fork here. How many more do you need for all four of us?'. Look for other practical activities you can slot some number bond work into!



Finger Painting Fun

This one is a little messy! Get two colours of paint - one for you and one for your child. Choose a number to practise number bonds for and write it at the top of a piece of paper. Then, you make a number of fingerprints in a line and your child has to make the correct number of fingerprints to complete the number bond. Once your child is confident with this, try going faster - this will add to the fun for your child, making the number bonds even more memorable!



Disclaimer: Some ingredients and/or materials used might cause allergic reactions or health problems. You should ensure that you are fully aware of the allergies and health conditions of those taking part. If you have any concerns about your own or somebody else's health or wellbeing, always speak to a qualified health professional. Activities listed within the resource should always be supervised by an appropriate adult. Children should be supervised when using sharp items such as scissors or other tools. Please make sure you are aware that children may put craft items into their mouths, and that they should wash their hands afterwards. By using this resource, you acknowledge that it is the responsibility of supervising adults to ensure the safety of children in their care and that we will accept no liability as a result of the activity.