

Skill 4

The number of objects is the same however they are arranged.

Children need practice to be able to count objects in different positions, not just in a straight line. Arrange objects in a circle or in a heap. It then becomes more important to touch and move the object away so that they know it has been counted. Check that your child doesn't count each object twice or miss any out.



Number Recognition

The next stage is for your child to recognise numbers as symbols. They will probably already be able to recognise significant numbers like their age on birthday cards. But other ideas include spotting numbers when you are out and about on clocks, doors, buses and in shops.



You could also play number recognition games like bingo or match the number of objects to a number on a paper plate.

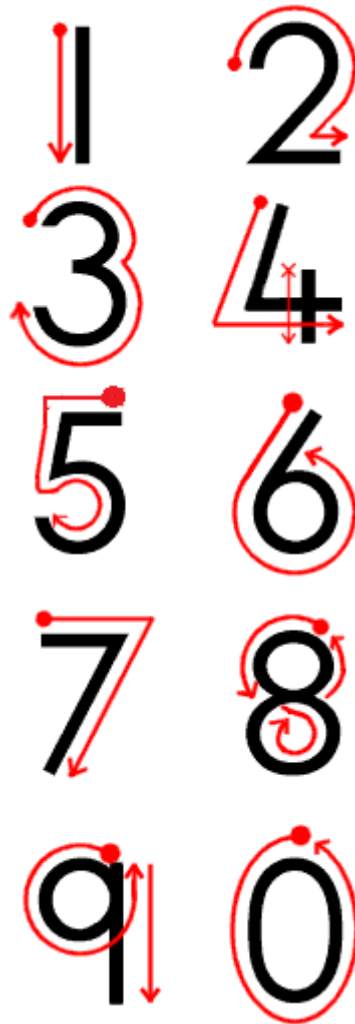
Writing Numbers

Once children recognise numbers they will want to start writing them themselves. To help encourage them to form their numbers correctly, use our number formation guide.

Number Formation Guide

Encourage your child to form numbers in the standard way. Bad habits are difficult to break, so following our simple guide can help to prevent problems at a later stage

Spots indicate the starting position of the pencil. The pencil should remain on the paper, following the arrows. For the number four, the pencil must be raised before completing the second part of the number. **Crosses** indicate the second starting position.



Saxon Primary School



Learning Through Play

Numbers



Promoting Partnership between home, school and the community

Pre-Counting Experiences

Even before children start to count there are 2 important experiences that they need.

Firstly, children need to be able to sort objects into sets. In order to be able to count objects, you need to be able to separate off some objects from those you are not counting. This is an early form of being able to identify a set of objects on the basis of them being the same.

E.g. the same colour, size, family and so on.

When playing, children can sort blocks, toy animals, model cars, dolls and so on into different sets and categories. Children can also categorize between those in their family and those who are not; between children and adults; boys and girls.

Secondly, children need a rich experience of talk using language such as 'one more' and 'another one'. A basic idea of counting is that numbers increase as you count; that six is more than five, for example. So when a child learns to ask for 'another one' they are getting an important early experience of learning to count.

Learning to Count

There are four main skills that children need to develop when they are learning to count.

1. Recognition of the sounds of the numbers.
2. The understanding of one-to-one correspondence.
3. The understanding of "How many are there?"
4. The number of objects is the same however they are arranged.

Numbers and counting can provide a lot of entertainment for small children. The following ideas are just a selection of how you can help your child to begin to learn to count and have fun at the same time!

Skill 1

Children need to learn the sounds of the numbers 'one, two, three...'

Children can start to recognise the sound of numbers from an early age if they hear number songs and rhymes and hear people counting.

Some examples of rhymes are:

*Five currant buns in the baker's shop
Five fat sausages frying in a pan
1 potato, 2 potato, 3 potato, 4*



1, 2, 3, 4, 5 Once I caught a fish alive

Children may even start to recite the numbers from 1-10, but this has little meaning at this stage.

Skill 2

Children need to understand 'one to one correspondence'. This means being able to match one object to one other object or person.

You can practise 'one to one correspondence' in all sorts of different contexts.

- When laying the table, match the knives with the forks.
- Have a tea party with your child's teddies and make sure each teddy has a cake.
- Make play doh cakes and give each cake a candle



Skill 3

Children need to understand what is meant by 'How many are there?'

As you count objects together, touch each one. This helps children to understand they are counting one thing at a time.



Count up to three at first and do not progress until your child can do this successfully. Gradually add one more number at a time. There are many opportunities to count in everyday life. Here are a few ideas:

- Count biscuits onto a plate.
- Knives/forks/spoons as you lay the table.
- Candles as you put them on a cake.
- When cooking, count baking cases, spoons of sugar or flour or chocolate.
- Count bricks, Lego or dolls when playing.
- Count apples as you put them in a bag at the supermarket.



- Count seeds as you plant them in the garden or flowers as you arrange them in a vase.
- Count characters in books
E.g. Goldilocks and the Three Bears
The Three Little Pigs
The Very Hungry Caterpillar
- Play games which involve throwing a number of objects, such as rolled up socks, into a waste paper bin or cardboard box.
- Play skittles and count how many get knocked over.