



Growing Mathematicians at Home

A Family Guide for Supporting Math Skills & Problem Solving (Grades K–6)

★ Why Math at Home Matters

Math isn't just about worksheets and tests—it is a way of thinking, problem-solving, and noticing patterns in the world. Engaging in fun, low-stress math activities at home helps children:

-  **Build Confidence & Growth Mindset:** Overcoming challenges in math teaches kids that effort leads to growth and success.
-  **Strengthen Problem-Solving Skills:** Math practices logic, pattern recognition, and critical reasoning used in everyday decision-making.
-  **Connect Learning to Real Life:** Seeing math in cooking, shopping, sports, and time helps kids understand *why* math matters.
-  **Boost Academic Success:** Early math skills are one of the strongest predictors of long-term school achievement across all subjects.



Early Mathematicians (Grades K–2)

- **Count Everything:** Count steps to the front door, snacks on a plate, or toys in a bin. Practice counting backwards too!
- **Notice Shapes & Patterns:** Spot shapes on street signs, food containers, and architecture. Make patterns with colored socks or blocks.
- **Play Simple Games:** Board games with dice build number sense, counting, and visual math skills.
- **Use Hands-On Objects:** Use coins, buttons, or cereal pieces to add, subtract, and group items into equal piles.



Growing Mathematicians (Grades 3–6)

- **Cook & Bake Together:** Practice fractions and measurement by doubling or halving a recipe or reading measuring cups.
- **Math in the Real World:** Estimate total grocery bills, calculate discounts, compare prices per ounce, or figure out change.
- **Time & Money:** Ask children to calculate elapsed time (*"If the movie ends at 4:15, how many minutes do we have left?"*).
- **Play Strategy Games:** Games like *Yahtzee*, *Monopoly*, *Chess*, or card games build deep mathematical thinking and logic.

Math Talk Prompts for Everyday Activities

 Before Solving	 While Working	 After Finding an Answer
• "What do you notice about this problem?" • "What information do we already have?" • "What is the question asking us to find?" "What estimation can you make before we calculate?"	• "What is another strategy we could try?" • "Can you show me with objects or a quick diagram?" • "What step should we do next?" • "How could drawing a picture or picture model help?"	• "Does your answer make sense? How do you know?" • "Is there a different way you could solve this?" • "What was the most challenging part of this problem?" • "Can you explain your thinking to me step-by-step?"

3 Easy Ways to Create a Math-Positive Home

- **Positive Mindset:** Avoid saying "I was never good at math." Show children that anyone can become good at math with practice!
- **Focus on Thinking, Not Speed:** Praise strategy, effort, and creative thinking rather than how fast an answer was found.
- **Celebrate Mistakes:** Frame mistakes as valuable learning opportunities that help the brain grow stronger!