

Top Tips for Supporting Your Child with Their Times Tables

Why is it important for my child to know the times tables?

When children know their times tables, mental arithmetic becomes easier. Practising times tables also helps children to understand number and number relationships, and to see patterns in numbers. These skills will help them to master the key concepts that they need to know and move quickly through more complex maths problems with confidence. As they grow older, knowing the times tables will help them with everyday activities like shopping, budgeting and cooking.

When does my child need to know their times tables?

The government says that children are expected to know the following tables in each year at primary school:

Year 1: count in multiples of 2, 5 and 10.

Year 2: be able to remember and use multiplication and division facts for the 2, 5 and 10 multiplication tables, including recognising odd and even numbers.

Year 3: be able to remember and use multiplication and division facts for the 3, 4 and 8 multiplication tables, including recognising odd and even numbers.

Year 4: be able to remember and use multiplication and division facts for the multiplication tables up to 12×12 .

Year 5: revision of all multiplication and division facts for the multiplication tables up to 12×12 .

Year 6: revision of all multiplication and division facts for the multiplication tables up to 12×12 .

1. Get them familiar with multiplication concepts

The first step with multiplication is to make sure your child is familiar with what the numbers in multiplications really represent. Before they can cope with multiplication they need to be confident with sequences of numbers. Counting objects, using blocks, LEGO or snap cubes can all help to increase your child's confidence with number bonds and multiplication facts.

2. Double your numbers

If your child learns how to double numbers this will help them to make connections between different times tables, for example the 2, 4, and 8 times tables.

3. Practise tables as a time-filler

When you're sitting at traffic lights or waiting in the doctor's surgery it is the perfect opportunity for a bit of times table practice! It's always better (for both your child and you!) to just spend a few minutes reciting or testing times tables rather than going into overdrive and spending too long practising them.

4. Use the right vocabulary

Make sure you are using the right language to talk about multiplication. For example, in $3 \times 5 = 15$. The 3 and the 5 are what we call factors of 15 and 15 is a multiple of 3 and 5.

5. Help them with the ones they find tricky

There are usually one or two multiplication facts in each times table that are more difficult. When you notice that your child is stumbling over the same fact each time, try to give them extra practice. You could even get your child to write the fact out in a fun way on a piece of card and then stick it somewhere prominent (like on the fridge) so that they have an extra reminder!

6. Divide and conquer

As well as learning the times tables, your child should also know the division facts for each times table. The way our homework is set up means that the children are making the division links straight away. It's important that the children work across the page and not down in columns.

7. Make it real

Try to find opportunities to get your child to use multiplication in problem solving, for example working out quantities for scaling up a recipe, or calculating the price of more than one item of shopping.

8. Create a challenge

Make it fun by turning times table practice into a competition or challenge for your child, by timing them and keeping a record of their scores. There are lots of free apps and website that will help with this.