

All About Addition and Subtraction

What Are Addition and Subtraction?

Addition is used to figure out the total of two or more numbers. Subtraction is used to find the difference between two numbers.

Why Is Learning About Addition and Subtraction Important?

Addition and subtraction are useful for many activities of everyday life, like setting the table, making change at the supermarket, and playing some games. Addition and subtraction prepare children for learning about other math topics, including multiplication and division, in school.

What Do Children Need to Know About Addition and Subtraction?

- Adding means putting groups together.
- You can use counting to see how many there are all together.
- You can add in any order.
- Subtracting means taking objects away from a group.
- After some have been taken away, you can count what's left over to get the answer.
- Preschoolers can understand addition and subtraction without learning addition or subtraction facts, and without learning the plus (+) or minus (-) signs.

How Can We Help Children Learn Addition and Subtraction?

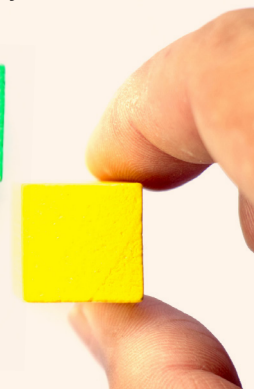
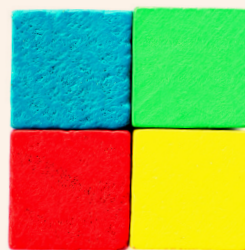
- Find opportunities to use and talk about addition and subtraction in everyday life.
- Read books or sing songs involving these ideas.
- Use objects, including your fingers, to show how to put groups together or take some away. Using objects or fingers can also help with counting.

Babies and Toddlers

- Focus on counting skills to prepare for addition and subtraction later.
- If you are counting sets of objects, you can add one additional object and say, "Look, one more!"

Preschoolers and Older Children

- Count to figure out how many objects, such as toys or forks, there are after one is added or taken away.
- Combine small groups of objects and count to see the total.
- Group a set of objects in different ways. For example, put eight toy cars into groups of five and three, and then into groups of four and four.
- Read picture books with children that involve adding one or taking one away, for example, *Albert Adds Up!* by Eleanor May.



Count to see how many are left after taking one away.