



## PRE-SCHOOL MATHS LEARNING SHEET (NI CURRICULUM)

*Simple, practical activities for parents to use at home*

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### 1. COUNTING & NUMBER AWARENESS

Goal: Help your child recognise small quantities, begin counting, and understand “how many”.

Try at home:

- Count Together: Count steps, apples, cars, toys during tidy-up time.
  - Snack Maths: “How many grapes do you have? If you eat one, how many left?”
  - Number Hunt: Look for numbers on doors, buses, shops, remote controls.
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### 2. SORTING & MATCHING

Goal: Build early problem-solving by grouping items based on similarities.

Try at home:

- Laundry Sorting: Sort socks by colour/pattern.
- Toy Sorting: Sort toy animals by size or type.
- Nature Sorting: Leaves, stones, sticks — sort by size, colour, texture.

This supports the curriculum focus on early categorisation and problem-solving through hands-on play.

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### 3. SHAPE & SPACE

Goal: Help children notice shapes, spatial language, and properties of objects.

Try at home:

- Shape Hunt: Find circles, squares, and triangles around the house.
  - Building: Use blocks or boxes to build towers — talk about *tall*, *short*, *under*, *on top*.
  - Puzzle Play: Jigsaws encourage shape recognition and matching (highlighted in NI pre-school guidance).
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#### 4. PATTERN & SEQUENCING

Goal: Support early reasoning by recognising and creating patterns.

Try at home:

- Simple Patterns: Make sock patterns (stripy/plain/stripy/plain), or block patterns.
  - Rhythm Patterns: Clap-clap-tap, clap-clap-tap — ask your child to copy.
  - Nature Patterns: Arrange stones/leaves into repeating sequences.
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#### 5. EARLY MEASUREMENT CONCEPTS

Goal: Build awareness of size, weight, capacity, and comparison.

Try at home:

- Water Play: Use containers to explore full/empty/half-full.
- Size Talk: Compare “bigger/smaller”, “heavier/lighter” using toys or groceries.
- Baking Together: Pouring, measuring, and scooping help develop mathematical language.

These kinds of experiences are encouraged in the NI curriculum through real-life, play-based activities.

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#### 6. PROBLEM-SOLVING THROUGH PLAY

Goal: Encourage thinking skills, decision-making, and perseverance.

Try at home:

- Construction Challenges: “Can you build a bridge for your car?”
- Obstacle Courses: Work out how to get over/under/around objects.
- Everyday Questions: “How can we share these biscuits so we both have the same?”

The NI guidance emphasises ongoing problem-solving and hands-on learning opportunities to build reasoning skills.

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## A SIMPLE MATHS-RICH DAILY ROUTINE

- Morning: Count steps downstairs
  - Playtime: Sorting toys or blocks
  - Snack: Share food fairly
  - Outdoor Time: Spot shapes and numbers
  - Bath Time: Capacity play with cups
  - Bedtime: A counting or shape book
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