



## 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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