

A Tower of Numbers

Preschool

Playing with blocks is fun, but it also can teach basic math skills such as number recognition, counting, identifying patterns, recognizing symmetry and sorting.

What You Need

- * Sets of blocks that show both numbers (1–10) and letters (at least A through J)

What to Do

- * Give your child the blocks and tell her to sort them so that one set shows numbers and one set shows letters.
- * Tell your child to look at the number blocks and choose the block with the number 1. Then have her build a tower by choosing and placing the remaining number blocks in the correct order. Have her say the name of each number as she places the block.
- * Ask your child to build a second tower beside the first using only the letter blocks (beginning with "A") and placing them in order. Have her say the name of each letter as she places the block.
- * Let her knock over the towers and scatter the blocks in front of her. Then tell her to use all the blocks to build a really big tower. When it's finished, have her find and point to numbers and letters as you say the names.
- * Ask your child to use the blocks to make the following patterns:
 - one number, two letters
 - one letter, one number, two letters
 - A, 5, B, 4, C, 3
 - 1, 2, E, F

Young children can easily confuse letters and numbers. Throughout the day, have them notice and name both, or ask questions such as, "See the sign on that bus. Does it say 5 or E?"