

Card Smarts

All Grade Levels

Games with number cards can help children develop strategies for using numbers in different combinations by adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing.

What You Need

- * Sets of number cards, 1-10 (you can make your own using heavy paper or index cards)
- * Pencil and paper
- * Coin

What to Do

Here are some games that you and your child can play with number cards:

- * **Number Sandwich** With your younger child, review the numbers 1 through 10. Make sure that he knows the correct order of the numbers. Sit with him and shuffle and place two sets of number cards in a pile between you. Have him draw two cards from the pile and arrange them in order in front of him, for example 3 and 6, leaving a space between. Then have him draw a third card. Ask him here the card should be placed to be in the right order—in the middle? before the 3? after the 6?
- * **More or less?** Sit with your younger child and place a shuffled set of number cards between you. Flip the coin and have your child call "heads" or "tails" to see if the winner of each round will be the person with a greater value card (heads) or a smaller value card (tails). Then each of you will draw a card. Compare the cards to see who wins that round. Continue through all the cards. When your child is comfortable with this game, change it just a bit. Divide the cards evenly between the two of you. Each of you places the cards face down and turns over one card at the same time. Have your child compare the cards to see if his card is more or less than yours. If his card is more than yours, ask him how much more. If it is less, ask how much less. The player with the greater or smaller value card (depending on whether heads or tails was tossed) takes both cards. The winner of the game is the player with more cards when the cards have all been used.
- * **Make a number** This game is for your older child and can be played with family and friends. Give each player a piece of paper and a pencil. Deal each player four number cards with the numbers showing. Explain that, using all four cards and a choice of any combination of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division, the

player must make as many different numbers as possible in two minutes. The player gets one point for each answer.

Encourage children to use number cards to make up their own games for the family to play.