

Number Glossary

Some of the mathematical words your child may hear in lessons, with simple explanations to help you support their learning.



Numbers and place value

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Number	A mathematical idea used for counting, measuring and ordering, for example 0, 1, 2, 3 ...
Digit	A single symbol used to make a number (0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9).
Place value	The value a digit has because of its position in a number, for example in 342 the 4 means 40.
Ones	The right-hand column in a number. Each one is worth 1.
Tens	A group of 10. The second column from the right in a number.
Hundreds	A group of 100. The third column from the right in a number.
Thousands	A group of 1,000. The fourth column from the right in a number.
Partition	To split a number into its place value parts, for example $347 = 300 + 40 + 7$.
Compare	To say which number is greater, smaller or if they are equal.
Order	To arrange numbers from smallest to largest or largest to smallest.
Rounding	To find a number close to the original, for example 73 rounded to the nearest 10 is 70.
Estimate	A sensible guess that is close to the real answer.

Calculations and operations



Add	To find the total or sum, for example $3 + 4 = 7$.
Sum	The answer to an addition, for example the sum of 3 and 4 is 7.
Subtract	To take one number away from another, for example $7 - 4 = 3$.
Difference	The answer to a subtraction, for example the difference between 7 and 4 is 3.
Multiply	To add a number the same amount of times, for example $3 \times 4 = 12$.
Product	The answer to a multiplication, for example the product of 3 and 4 is 12.
Divide	To share a number into equal groups, for example $12 \div 3 = 4$.
Quotient	The answer to a division, for example the quotient of 12 and 3 is 4.
Remainder	The amount left over when a number is divided equally, for example $14 \div 3 = 4$ remainder 2.

Solving and reasoning



Solve	To find the value of an unknown number or to work out the answer to a problem.
Answer	The solution to a calculation or problem.
Problem	A question to be solved.
Reasoning	Thinking about what you know to help you find a solution.

Types of number



Odd number	A number that cannot be shared equally into two groups, for example 1, 3, 5, 7, 9.
Even number	A number that can be shared equally into two groups, for example 2, 4, 6, 8, 10.
Prime number	A number with exactly two factors: 1 and itself, for example 2, 3, 5, 7, 11.
Composite number	A number with more than two factors, for example 4, 6, 8, 9, 10.
Square number	A number made by multiplying a whole number by itself, for example 1, 4, 9, 16, 25.
Cube number	A number made by multiplying a whole number by itself three times, for example 1, 8, 27, 64.
Factor	A number that divides exactly into another number, for example the factors of 12 are 1, 2, 3, 4, 6 and 12.
Multiple	A number in a times table, for example the multiples of 4 are 4, 8, 12, 16, 20 ...
HCF	Highest common factor. The largest factor that two or more numbers share.
LCM	Lowest common multiple. The smallest multiple that two or more numbers share.
Integer	Whole numbers and their negatives, for example ... -3, -2, -1, 0, 1, 2, 3 ...
Decimal	A number with a decimal point to show parts, for example 0.5, 1.2, 3.75.
Fraction	A part of a whole, for example $\frac{1}{2}$ means one half.
Whole number	The numbers 0, 1, 2, 3, 4 ... (no parts or fractions).
Negative number	A number less than zero, for example -4.
Positive number	A number greater than zero, for example 4.
Zero	The number that shows none, written as 0.

Patterns and sequences



Pattern	A rule that numbers follow, for example 2, 4, 6, 8 ...
Sequence	A list of numbers in a set order.
Term	A number in a sequence, for example 5 is a term in 1, 3, 5, 7 ...
Rule	An instruction that tells us how to find the next number, for example "add 2".
Next term	The number that comes after, for example the next term after 7, 14, 21, is 28.
Previous term	The number that comes before.
Position	The place a term is in a sequence, for example 4 is the 3rd term in 2, 4, 6, 8 ...

Other useful words



Total	The whole amount.
Equal	The same amount or value.
Equal to	The same value, for example $5 = 5$.
Greater than	Bigger in value, for example $6 > 3$.
Less than	Smaller in value, for example $3 < 6$.
Approximate	A value that is close to the exact value.
Near	Close to a number, for example 98 is near 100.