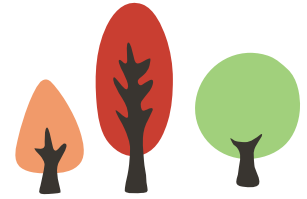


Add It Up



Here's an easy way to think about introducing addition: **group like things together, then add them up.** (Say, "Let's put all your red blocks in one pile and your blue ones in another. Now, let's count how many blocks there are **all together.**") Be sure to **use easy concepts and small numbers**, and whenever possible, **use familiar objects as examples** rather than numbers. The playground is a perfect place to practice addition with these tips below.

AT THE PLAYGROUND

From the number of things to play on to the number of children playing, there are many ways to **use math words when visiting the playground.** Get started with these, then make up your own.

- **Count** how many big-kid swings you see, and how many little-kid swings. Then count the two groups of swings **all together.**
- If there are children on the swings, say, "There are five swings all together. And there are three children on the swings. **How many** swings don't have children on them?"
- If you see people walking dogs, ask, "Are there **more** people or dogs?" After your child answers, ask, "**How do you know?**" "Yes, we can **count to find out!**"
- **Count** your steps as you walk from the bench to the swings. Then count your steps as you walk to something else. Which took **more** steps? Which distance is **farther**?

PLAYING OUTSIDE

Use lots of number words as you walk along.

- Have your child run to, **touch**, and **count** a few trees. Ask, "**How many** trees did you touch?" Have her run, touch, and count a few more. Then hold up your fingers to show each number. Help her **add** the numbers to find out **how many** trees she touched.
- Find a picnic table and take a rest. Ask, "Are there **more** benches or tables? So there are **fewer** tables than benches. Fewer is the opposite of **more.**"
- Say, "We each brought a water bottle, so we had **four**. I recycled mine. **How many** do we have now? **How do you know?**"
- On the way home, play a game. Say, "Let's pretend I have some stars. If I gave you **two** and I kept **three**, how many stars did I have before I gave you some?" (Fingers can be useful tools for this game.) Repeat using other objects and numbers.