

Activity Idea

PATTERN HUNT

Recommended for Ages 5 – 8

Promoting Pattern Awareness

Why is pattern awareness important?

Creating and spotting patterns is a basic mathematical skill. Math often looks complicated, but it is full of patterns – even simple counting is a pattern, as is counting by twos or fives. As children begin to notice the relationship and regularity between the elements of a pattern, they also can learn to make comparisons and predictions.

How to get started

Talk about patterns with your child. You can demonstrate a simple pattern using blocks or any household items. Line them up in a pattern, for example:

Blocks: Red Blue Green Red Blue Green Red Blue Green, etc.

Dishes: Plate Bowl Mug Mug Plate Bowl Mug Mug Plate Bowl Mug Mug, etc.

After you establish your pattern, ask your child to predict what object/color should come next.

Now, walk around your home and point out other patterns that you and your child might see, on wallpaper, blankets, clothes, dishes, and tile for example. Talk with your child about the patterns that you see; talk about the repetition and sequencing that occurs in a pattern.

Now, give your child a chance to see if they can spot some patterns on their own. When they find something, talk with them about the pattern they've found. Ask them what makes it a pattern? If your child is interested, get out a ruler and measure the length between the repeating elements of the pattern.

Once your child can recognize patterns, they can try to create their own, with building bricks, blocks, or crayon and paper.