

8 Ways Dads & Kids Can Be Math-Buddies



If you're planning together time with your child, it's unlikely you're going to say, "Hey, Junior, let's head to the kitchen table and do some math." Instead, Math is more likely avoided because it's a subject kids and parents butt heads over. But Math really doesn't have to be that way. Exploring numbers together can be a blast, especially when the Math applies to real-life problems and working out a solution feels like its own reward. Remember, kids are natural puzzle-solvers and solution-sleuths.

Here's the bottom line. If you still believe Math is about scratching away at long-division under the glaring eyes of an exacting teacher, then it's high-time you took a look at some more creative resources. Check out the following ways you might want to dig deeper, capture your child's interest, and come out smarter in the bargain.

- 1 Faced with real problems, kids love to find solutions:**
"I have \$150 left in the food budget this month, why don't you bring your calculator and help me shop."
- 2 Do the Math before you talk about it:**
Pay the bills together, then go over the Math; cook the meal together, then figure the calories/carbs/etc.
- 3 Open a savings account when they're still in pre-school:**
This is theirs to manage (within your well thought-out parental guidelines). Review, deposit, calculate, plan, analyze - at least monthly.
- 4 Be a positive example:**
Balance your accounts carefully; set aside your calculator and work out your bills on paper; research new cars or other purchases with your child, then figure budget and payments using Math.
- 5 Once they're interested, the boring stuff really isn't:**
A little success makes anything more engaging. Give your child some "wins" early on and they won't need the "this is booooooring" avoidance tool.
- 6 Play Math games:**
Everything from "old fashioned" board games that hone basic skills to on-the-fly inventions such as, "There are three of us here and five cookies. How do we handle the extra two?"
- 7 Plan Math field trips:**
My son was failing geometry so we dedicated an entire morning to photographing geometric shapes in the nearby city. He generated the list of shapes, I helped him find them, we both took photographs. Fun field trips could apply to any Math we could ever think of.
- 8 Put your child in charge of one part of the family budget:**
Cars: computing miles per gallon, cost of vehicle per mile, monthly impact of insurance, fuel, car payment and repairs, grocery shopping, school supplies, etc.