



12 Activities to Take Math Outside for ES Students

If your kids jump out of bed excited to do math activities, that's great! However, if you have a reluctant math learner in your house, one way to make math more fun is to add **movement** and **outside** activities to math practice. Here are a dozen ways to incorporate movement, math, and the great outdoors!

- 1. Chalk it up!** Kids can practice many different math concepts, across grade levels, with the help of a number line. Using sidewalk chalk, draw a number line on your driveway, sidewalk, or patio. (Or get creative and mark a line in the grass somehow.) Have your child use the number line to practice counting, number order, and basic math facts. You can call out a number (or math fact) and your child can run (or hop, or twirl, or somersault!) to the correct number on the number line.
- 2. Jump to it!** With sidewalk chalk, draw boxes with answers to math flashcards (or facts) your child is currently studying. Show the flashcard (or say the math fact) and ask your child to run to the box with the correct answer.
- 3. Treasure hunters.** Create a map of your neighborhood or yard. Have your kids solve math problems to reach the next clue. For instance, "Start at the big tree, facing the fence. Take four giant steps plus three hops. What number will you see?" They should find the number 7, with another math clue leading them to the next number. At the end of the game, have a small prize so they'll feel like real treasure hunters!
- 4. Do a number dance.** Kids who love to dance will love this movement activity. On the sidewalk, use chalk to draw a 5x2 "number mat" with the numbers 0-9. (Indoors, use masking tape on an uncarpeted floor.) Give your child an expression (addition, subtraction, multiplication, or division, based on your child's grade level) with an answer between 10 and 99. Kids can determine the correct answer and jump to put their left foot on the correct tens place and their right foot on the correct ones place. They will be dancing as they practice math facts and place value!
- 5. Count and learn on a neighborhood walk.** Take a walk with your child to find math all around. For example, you may pass flowers blooming. Ask questions like these... How many flowers in the yard are red? How many are white? Yellow? What equation would tell you the total for all the flowers (red + white + yellow)? What is the total?
- 6. Run a math facts race.** Write a series of math facts on the sidewalk using chalk and challenge your child to "race" from start to finish. Your child can shout out the answer for each equation as he or she hops, skips, and runs to complete their facts and beat their best time.
- 7. Draw a colorful math facts "garden."** Have your child draw a basic flower with numbered petals— 1 to 10. Write a number to multiply (or add or subtract) by in the middle. Have your child fill in the petals with the correct answers.
- 8. Hunt for shapes during a walk.** Write down the names of shapes your young child wants to try to find during your walk together. On your walk, carry a pencil and your list on a clipboard. Each time your child finds the shape, he or she can trace it on the sheet and make a mark. Have your child count how many times you saw each shape.
- 9. Paint-and-hide number rocks.** Painting rocks is a fun activity all by itself! When you paint numbers on them, you can play hide-and-seek with painted rocks! Hide the rocks in your yard and have your child find the rocks and solve equations using the rocks/numbers they find!
- 10. Math hopscotch.** A hopscotch board can be used for a lot of math activities. You and your child can make one for skip counting, number recognition, math facts, or pattern recognition.
- 11. Number Splash.** This outdoor activity involves sidewalk chalk and water balloons! Draw circles and write out answers to any math facts or math practice, using sidewalk chalk. Call out the equation or number practice and have your child throw the water balloon on the correct answer.
- 12. Design a board game.** Draw a winding path (with sidewalk chalk outside or pieces of paper inside) and fill the spaces with math facts. Have your kids roll the dice and move from space to space. Mix it up with jumps, skips, somersaults, or other movements. If they get the answer right, they move to the new space. If not, they can try again from the beginning. For young kids, use the winding path for counting (1 to 100, for instance) with 10 hops, 10 twirls, 10 jumping jacks, etc. Use different symbols for each type of movement.

We'll be sharing more tips so watch for the next installment of DLD Daily Dozen!

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