



Getting Ready for Kindergarten

Starting Kindergarten is an exciting time. Below are some important skills you can practice at home to support your child and prepare them for Kindergarten.

1. Listen to and follow simple instructions

By the time children start school, most children should be able listen to and follow two- and three-part instructions.

To practice this skill at home, you can:

- Give your child daily tasks around the house like, putting away their toys or setting the table for meal time.
- Use two- or three-part instructions like, “Pickup your toys and put them in the box”, “Take off your shoes and put them on the shelf” or “Put the spoons, cups and napkins on the table.”

2. Communicate their needs

Children should be able to clearly communicate their needs, especially to their teacher.

To practice this skill at home, you can:

- Encourage your child to speak in complete sentences and say how they are feeling. For example, “I would like some water please.” “My leg hurts.” “I need to use the bathroom.”

3. Self-Care

Children should be able put on and take off their own clothes. They should also be able to feed themselves at snack and lunch time and use the bathroom on their own.

To practice these skills at home, you can:

- Help your child dress themselves in the morning until they can do it independently. Make sure that they can put on socks, pull their pants and underwear up and down, put on and take off their jacket and shoes.
- Encourage your child to eat independently at meal times. Make sure they can use a fork and spoon to pick up food and put it in their mouth.
- Have your child practice opening and closing the containers his/her snack and lunch will be sent to school in
- Teach your child how to use the bathroom independently (pull down pants and underwear, wipe, pull up underwear and pants, flush toilet, wash hands)
- Teach your child how to thoroughly wash his/her hands



Hand-washing protocols

Staff are to wash their hands upon arrival at school property and before they go home.	Before and after any breaks.	Between different learning environments.	Before and after eating and drinking.
Before and after handling food or assisting students with eating.	Before and after giving medication to a student or self.	After using the toilet.	After contact with body fluids (i.e., runny noses, spit, vomit, blood, etc.)
After cleaning tasks.	After removing gloves.	After handling garbage.	Whenever hands are visibly dirty.

4. Sharing, take turns, resolving disputes and showing compassion for others

Getting along well with others, working together as a team and treating others with respect are important skills children work on when they come to school.

To practice these skills at home, you can:

- Play board games to help your child get use to taking turns.
- You or a family member can work with your child to complete a project or a task together. For example, complete a puzzle together or work in the garden or house to complete a task.
- Identify emotions and how people might feel in different situations. Talk about how your child might know someone is feeling a certain way (facial expression, actions, etc.). For example, how would a child feel if they fell down or if they were given a present.
- Practice ways to calm down when feeling upset like, counting to ten, taking three deep breathes in and out, etc.

5. Sitting comfortably for small amounts of time while the teacher is reading a book or giving instructions

During group learning times, it is important for children to listen carefully to a story or instructions.

To practice this skill at home, you can:

- Read with your child daily for five to ten minutes
- Slowly build up time sitting by singing songs or playing games together
- Sit and talk to your child about their day, ask what their favourite book or activity is.
- Set a timer to help. Start small and slowly work up to longer amounts of time.

6. Identify basic shapes and colours

Identifying colours and shapes are foundational skills for young learners. Colours and shapes are a key way that we describe and categorize our world. The written symbols we use for letters are numbers are really just shapes. As children develop proficiency at learning shapes such as squares and circles, they are developing the classification and visual discrimination skills to distinguish between 'k' and 'x' or between 'p' and 'g.'

To practice these skills at home, you can:

- Talk about shapes and colours in the surrounding environment
- Identify shapes in the community
- Identify clothing colours or crayon colours

7. Match and sort objects

Children should be able to sort and match objects based on simple attributes such as shape, colour and function (food, clothes, tools, etc.).

To practice this skill at home, you can:

- Sing songs or read books about opposites.
- Try sorting objects at home using two attributes at first and then increase to three or four attributes.
- Ideas for sorting:
 - Sort forks and spoons
 - Sort pants, shirts and socks
 - Match socks
 - Sort rocks

- Sort crayons
- Sort toys

8. Use a variety of ‘manipulatives’

It is important children have experience using a variety of different manipulatives. Using a variety of manipulatives will help to develop their fine motor skills and provide sensory experiences.

To practice these skills at home, you can:

- Play with Playdoh, Lego, building blocks, water, sand, rocks and string and beads
- Use a variety of colouring and writing tools (chalk, paint, markers, pencils, crayons, etc.)
- Cut objects with scissors (paper, string, foam, etc.)
- Use a glue stick and glue to create art

9. Become familiar with the letters and numbers

Developing children’s ability to recognize letters enables beginning readers to understand how printed text is associated with the spoken language. Recognition of numbers supports children’s development of other numeracy skills, such as counting.

To practice these skills at home, you can:

- Sing the alphabet song. Follow along with a finger if you have an alphabet chart or strip.
- Look at the alphabet in written form. Point out the letters in your child’s name or familiar objects. For example, “J is for Jane” or “D is for dog”
- When in the community, point out and say the letters you see on signs or say the letter that an object starts with. For example, “M is for McDonalds”, or “Look, there is a cat. C is for cat.”
- Practice counting aloud by one’s
- Count groups of objects to five or ten with one-to-one correspondence
- Identify numbers in the surrounding environment