Adding Three Numbers: Making it Easier

Key points

- Children learn that they can add numbers in any order and the answer stays the same.
- A 'friendly pair' is two numbers that add up to 10, which makes the rest of the sum easier to solve.
- Using 'doubles' (like 4 and 4) is another quick way to find a starting point.
- This approach helps children move away from just counting one by one.
- Every child learns at their own pace, and some may need more time or different tools to help them.
- Specific methods used in class may vary, so it is always a good idea to check with your child's teacher.

Things to try at home

- While shopping, pick three items and see if any two of them make a 'friendly 10' first.
- Use buttons, pasta shapes, or pebbles to group numbers together in different orders.
- Play a quick game of 'I spy' with numbers on signs or packets to find pairs that make 10.

Find out more

- Your child's class teacher
- The GOV.UK website (National Curriculum in England)