

Comparing cards: pairs of groups to 10

This set of 12 picture cards shows two rows of counters lined up in pairs with a dotted line joining each pair, so children can see straight away whether one row has more, fewer or the same number of counters as the other. Practitioners use the cards across the unit to model comparing quantities to 10 by matching one to one, to teach the words more than, fewer than and the same as, and to link these comparisons to numerals.

How to use

- Carpet time (s1): hold up a card, for example the one showing 3 and 5, and invite children to trace each dotted line with a finger from a counter in the top row to its partner in the bottom row. Say together whether the bottom row is more than or fewer than the top row.
- Adult-led group work (s2): use a card such as the one showing 6 and 4. Ask children to point to the counters in the longer row that have no partner on a dotted line, then count those spare counters to find how many more or how many fewer.
- Small group task (s3): give children a card such as the one showing 2 and 7 alongside a tub of real counters or loose parts. Children build both rows to match the card, then add counters to the smaller row or take counters from the larger row, lining them up one to one each time, until the two groups are the same.
- Adult-led work with numerals (s4): peg or place a numeral card (0 to 10) under each row on a card such as the one showing 8 and 6, and ask children to say the matching sentence, for example 8 is more than 6, 6 is fewer than 8.
- Continuous provision: put the cards in the maths area with a basket of counters so children can rebuild the rows themselves in free play, checking their matching by lining counters up one to one rather than by how spread out each row looks.
- Sorting game: shuffle the cards and ask pairs of children to sort them into three hoops or trays labelled more, fewer and the same, using the cards showing equal rows (such as 5 and 5, 4 and 4, 8 and 8) to check they have found every same card.
- Supporting SEND and children learning English: pair the visual dotted lines with simple spoken sentences and matching gestures (hands apart for more, hands together for the same), and let children point to counters rather than relying only on spoken answers.
- Partner talk: sit children in twos with one card between them. One child covers the numeral cards while the other predicts more, fewer or the same by looking only at the dotted lines, then they check together by counting.



