

Observation prompts: eyfs.ma.number.1

eyfs.ma.number.1 Have a deep understanding of numbers to 10, including the composition of each number.

Look for

- Child splits a group of 8 objects into two parts (for example onto two plates or two hoops) and checks that both parts still make 8 altogether.
- Child fills a ten frame to show 8 and points to the empty spaces to work out how many more are needed to make 8.
- Child rearranges the same 8 objects into different pairs, such as 3 and 5, then 6 and 2, and notices the total stays at 8.
- Child hides some of a group of 8 under a cloth or cup and works out how many are hidden from how many are showing.
- Child uses fingers, a bead string or a number track to move from a smaller number up to 8, counting on the extra ones needed.
- Child matches two part-groups to a whole group of 8 during continuous provision, such as snack time, construction or small-world play.

Listen for

- "I've got 5 and 3, that's 8 altogether."
- "If 4 are hiding and 4 are showing, that's still 8."
- "I need 2 more to make 8."
- "0 and 8 is the same as just 8, because I didn't take any away."
- "6 and 2 make 8, so 2 and 6 make 8 too."
- "I took 1 away from 8, so there's 7 left."

Next steps

- For children not yet secure: give fewer objects to start (within 6 or 7) and use a ten frame or egg box so every space is visible, moving one object at a time while counting aloud together.
- For children not yet secure: use a practical context such as sharing 8 pieces of fruit between two bowls, and pair them with a confident peer to talk through what they notice.
- For children not yet secure: encourage touching and moving real objects rather than imagining the split, checking the total by recounting all 8 each time.
- For children who are secure: pose missing-part problems, such as covering some of 8 counters and asking how many are hidden.
- For children who are secure: challenge them to find every way to make 8 and check they have not repeated a pair, including 0 and 8.
- For children who are secure: link composition of 8 to simple take-away stories, such as starting with 8 and removing some to find what is left.

Observation prompts: eyfs.ma.patterns.3

eyfs.ma.patterns.3 Explore and represent patterns within numbers up to 10, including evens and odds, double facts and how quantities can be distributed equally.

Look for

- A child splits a group of 8 objects (for example conkers, teddy counters, or pompoms) across two plates, two hoops or two hands, and checks that both parts still make 8 altogether.
- A child uses a ten frame or part-whole mat to show 8, moving counters between the two parts and noticing the total stays the same.
- A child reorganises the same 8 objects more than once to find a different way of splitting them, for example 3 and 5, then 2 and 6.
- A child matches a spoken or written number sentence to objects, for example lining up 4 bears and 4 more bears when a practitioner says '4 and 4 make 8'.
- A child uses fingers, a number line to 8, or a bead string to work out a missing part when one part and the whole are known.
- A child shares 8 items equally between two people or two trays during role play or snack time, checking both groups have the same amount.
- A child who is not yet secure physically recounts both parts every time, rather than trusting that the total has stayed the same.

Listen for

- "4 and 4 make 8."
- "If I move 1 over, it's 3 and 5 now, but it's still 8."
- "I've got 6 here and 2 there — that's 8 altogether."
- "How many more do I need to make 8?"
- "0 and 8 make 8 because I didn't move any."
- "That's not fair, you've got more than me" (when sharing 8 items unequally).
- "I need 1 more to make 8."

Next steps

- For children not yet secure: work with smaller, more familiar totals first (such as 6 or 7), using real objects the child can physically move between two hoops or plates, and count each part aloud with the child before counting the total.
- For children not yet secure: support 1:1 correspondence by pairing objects with fingers or dots on a ten frame, and model the language 'this many and this many make this many' during continuous provision rather than asking for written number sentences.
- For children not yet secure: use a visual part-whole mat with a very small number of large objects so the child can see both parts at once without needing to hold numbers in their head.
- For children who are secure with composition of 8: challenge them to find every way of making 8 and check they have found them all, recording their findings with marks, numerals or photographs of their arrangements.
- For children who are secure with composition of 8: introduce missing-number problems, for example covering one part on a ten frame and asking how many are hidden.
- For children who are secure with composition of 8: explore whether 8 can be shared equally between 2 people, linking to equal groups and starting to notice even and odd amounts within the numbers 0 to 8.