

Part-whole mats for 6, 7 and 8

These three cards show empty part-whole mats with the whole already written in the top circle: 6, 7 and 8. Practitioners use them to help children see a number as two parts that fit together and come apart, building towards every way to make 8.

How to use

- Carpet time: place the mat with 8 as the whole on the floor. Ask one child to put some teddies in one part and count how many are left for the other part. Say the whole sentence together, for example '3 and 5 make 8'.
- Continuous provision: leave all three mats in the maths area with pots of shells, buttons or conkers. Children choose a mat, split the total between the two parts in different ways, and check both parts still make the whole.
- Small world and role play: use the mat with 7 as the whole in the garden centre role play. Children share 7 plastic flowers between two pots sitting on the two parts of the mat.
- Partner game: two children share a handful of up to 6 cubes using the 6 mat, one child hides some under a cloth on one part, and their partner works out how many are hidden by looking at the other part.
- Adult-led group: give each child their own mat with 8 as the whole and 8 cubes joined as a tower. Children snap the tower at different points, place the two pieces on the two parts, and say the matching number fact.
- Outdoor chalk version: draw the part-whole mat shapes in chalk on the playground to match the 7 card, and ask children to stand themselves or place hoops so the two groups make the whole.
- SEND and EAL support: use real objects children already know (favourite toy cars, snack items) on the mats rather than abstract symbols, and model the sentence frame '___ and ___ make ___' slowly, pointing to each part as you speak.





