

Part-whole mats for 7, 8 and 9

This set of three part-whole mats helps children see that a number (the whole) can be split into two smaller numbers (the parts). The empty mats for 7, 8 and 9 let children build their own ways to split each whole using real objects, supporting a deep understanding of composition for numbers to 9.

How to use

- Carpet time: place the mat with 9 as the whole on the floor. Give out 9 large soft counters and ask different children to put some into one part and the rest into the other part, saying the parts out loud, for example '4 and 5 make 9'.
- Continuous provision: leave all three mats in the maths area with small loose parts such as buttons, shells or conkers, so children can choose a mat and explore splitting 7, 8 or 9 into two parts during free play.
- Outdoor maths: chalk a giant version of a mat onto the playground. Children stand in the two parts themselves (for example some children in one part, the rest in the other) to make the whole shown on the mat.
- Adult-led small group: use the mat with 7 as the whole with two hoops as the parts and 7 beanbags. Children throw the beanbags into the hoops, then count how many landed in each hoop to describe the parts.
- Pairs work: one child covers the whole number with a pot while a partner works out how many must be in the other part, using the mat with 8 as the whole and 8 cubes split between the two parts.
- Role play: in a shop corner, use the mat with 9 as the whole and toy fruit as the items to be shared between two baskets, encouraging children to say and record which parts they made.
- Supporting SEND and children learning English: use identical physical objects (such as same-coloured counters) on the mats so the composition can be seen and felt, not just heard, and model the sentence 'and make' alongside pointing to each part.





