

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

- Lines counters up in twos (making pairs) to check whether a number is odd or even, rather than just counting in ones.
- Spots and shows the leftover counter when a number is odd, for example holding it up separately from the pairs.
- Makes a double by matching two equal groups side by side, such as two groups of 3 to show double 3 is 6.
- Shares objects fairly between two people, two trays or two toy animals, giving out one at a time.
- Notices and points out what is left over when sharing an odd number between two, such as 7 shared between 2.
- Sorts number cards, dot patterns or groups of objects into two sets: ones that pair up exactly and ones with one left over.
- Uses fingers, two hands or mirrored objects to show a double, such as holding up 4 fingers on each hand for double 4.
- Arranges objects into a pattern (for example two rows) to check a quantity without needing to be told the answer.

Listen for

- "Everyone's got a partner, so it's even."
- "There's one left over, so it's odd."
- "Double 2 is 4 because it's the same again."
- "That's not fair, you've got more than me."
- "If I share 8 between us two, we get 4 each."
- "9 doesn't share evenly, there's 1 left over."
- "I know 5 is odd because one counter is on its own."
- "Half of 10 is 5."

Next steps

- Not there yet: give small, familiar amounts first (up to 4 or 6) and plenty of real objects to physically pair up or share between two toys, so the child can feel and see when one is left over rather than working it out in their head.
- Not there yet: model the pairing action alongside the child, counting aloud together in twos, and use matching equipment (for example identical counters or shoes) so pairs are easy to spot by sight.
- Not there yet: focus sharing tasks around two named characters or friends taking turns to take one object each, checking together at the end whether the amounts look the same.
- Secure: challenge the child to predict whether a number to 10 will be odd or even before checking by pairing, and to explain how they know using the vocabulary 'partner' and 'left over'.
- Secure: encourage the child to find all the double facts to 10 during continuous provision (for example in the construction area or with natural materials) and to record or explain what they notice about the pattern.
- Secure: invite the child to set up their own sharing problem for a friend to solve, choosing a number to 10 and deciding whether it will share equally between two or leave 1 left over.