Near Doubles: A Mental Maths Shortcut for Year 2

Key points

- Near doubles are sums where the two numbers are very close to each other, such as 6 + 7.
- Children use a 'known double' (like 6 + 6 = 12) as a starting point to find the answer quickly.
- If the sum is 6 + 7, they can think '6 + 6 is 12, so 6 + 7 must be one more, which is 13'.
- This strategy helps children move away from counting on their fingers towards faster mental fluency.
- Schools may use a number line or a bar model (a visual rectangle) to show how these sums relate to doubles.
- The specific way this is taught may vary by school, so feel free to ask your child's teacher for their preferred method.

Things to try at home

- While setting the table, ask 'I have 4 forks here and 5 there; that's almost a double, what is the total?'
- Use a handful of buttons or pasta shapes to make two nearly equal piles and see if your child can spot the double hidden inside.
- Play a quick game of 'I spy' with numbers on street signs or bus numbers to see if any are near doubles.

Find out more

- Your child's class teacher
- The GOV.UK page on the National Curriculum in England
- The school's maths policy or parent handbook