# Sides and Corners: How Your Child Learns about 2D Shapes in Year 1

## Key points

- In Year 1, children learn to describe shapes by counting sides and corners, not just naming them.
- A shape stays the same shape even if you turn it around, make it bigger or smaller, or tip it on its side—a triangle is always a triangle.
- Learning words like 'side,' 'corner,' 'straight' and 'curved' helps children talk about shapes precisely and builds the foundation for geometry later.
- Shape learning isn't a separate subject—comparing and sorting shapes helps children understand numbers, size and patterns in a hands-on way.
- Real-world shapes are everywhere: wheels (circles), doors (rectangles), roofs (triangles)—spotting them helps children see maths in everyday life.

## Things to try at home

- Go on a shape hunt around your home or garden—spot circles (plates, wheels), rectangles (books, windows), triangles (roof shape, pizza slice) and talk about what you see.
- Use playdough or paper to make simple shapes, count the sides and corners together, and let your child draw lines or place counters on each corner.
- Sort buttons, biscuits or household objects into groups—your child might choose 'has corners' and 'no corners,' or sort by shape; let them decide the rule.
- Ask questions while you're out or playing: 'How many sides does that sign have?' or 'Is that a circle?'—your child will enjoy spotting shapes and thinking aloud.
- Trace around household objects (plate, book, tile) on paper and talk about the shapes you've made together.

## Find out more

- National Curriculum for mathematics, Key Stage 1 (gov.uk)—the official expectation for what Year 1 children learn about shapes
- Your child's teacher—ask them which shapes and words they're focusing on this term
- Your child's school website—many schools share their maths approach and resources for parents