

I am beginning to 'touch, count and move' objects to find out how many there are

Success criteria and assessment prompts

- I am beginning to give each item a number name
 - *How do I count these spoons? What do I need to start with?*
- I 'touch, count and move' when I am counting a small number of items
 - *Show me how you counted those bears. Have you counted all of the cars? How do you know?*
- I use 'counting' in my play
 - *What were you counting in the water tray, James? Show me what you did. You did three jumps then. I wonder if you can clap your hands three times too.*

Curriculum for Excellence outcomes

*I have explored numbers, understanding that they represent quantities, and I can use them to count, create sequences and describe order. **MNU 0-02a***



Stop and think!

Number words will gradually take on meaning and become related to the items being counted. There is no set order in which this happens.

Key development, learning and provision

- When children first meet the counting sequence it is just a sequence of sounds. As this sequence is repeated again and again in a variety of situations, the words become separated and children start to link the number words with quantities of objects.
- Initially, children need to touch and move each object individually as they count it, to help them to keep track of what has been counted and what is still to be counted.
- Children often touch each item in turn while saying a sequence of number words that don't match – they don't seem to understand that one word goes with one object (this is called **one-to-one correspondence**). Support children in coordinating 'touch and say'. As they practise this with you, and begin to understand more about why we count, they will learn to do it unaided.
- Children may miscount simply because the coordination required is still a bit too hard for them. They may touch an item more than once so that they count it again or they may miss out an object. Placing objects in a straight line and, if necessary, exaggerating the 'move' will be helpful. Objects could be moved on to a small dish as they are counted so that the sound generated also reinforces that an action has taken place.
- There will be many opportunities within any setting to actively encourage 'touch, count and move', for example, when moving the beads on an abacus or bead string; putting bricks away in their box; stacking cups or other items; sitting the teddies on chairs, etc.
- At this stage, children are learning to use each number word only once, and in the correct order. At first, they may use the number words in the wrong order. For example, instead of *one, two, three*, a child may say *one, four, two*. The child may understand that each item must have its own counting word, but has not yet learnt that the number words must be said in a given order.
- Children may benefit from games and activities where they say the number names in order. Use play contexts such as number songs and rhymes, as well as counting 'for real' (finding out how many hats they have made, how many apple slices are left, or how many children are on the climbing frame).
- When observing a child or playing alongside them, you might want to start a count with them. For example, *Let's see how many cars you've fitted into your garage*. If they are practising a physical skill such as throwing a ball or walking on a plank, comment on how many times they did something. Invite them to show you what they did and ask them to do a particular number of something similar.



Resource bank

Resource Sheets (RS) 6, 7–12 or 13–23 or 24a–34a, 24b–34b (optional), 88, Activity Boards (AB) 1–4 (optional), eBook 3, Interactive Group Activity (IGA) 1.1, Teaching Tools 2–5

Language

how many ...?	how could I ...?
I wonder if ...	how could you ...?
how do you know ...?	one, two, three ...

Play opportunities

Adult involved

Lost in the swamp

AB10, spotty 1–3 number dice or spinner (RS6), small world dinosaurs, AB1–4 (optional)

Put 10 or more dinosaurs in the swamp on AB10. One or more children roll the dice or spin the spinner to find out how many dinosaurs to rescue and put on dry land. They continue until all are saved. Encourage children to count the dinosaurs one at a time – it may help to have a rescue board showing 10 ‘nests’ so that children can touch, count and physically move the dinosaurs to safety.

Children can go on to make up their own games with figures or small toys on AB1–4 which show various scenes.

Number day

RS7–12, 13–23 or 24a–34a, 24b–34b (optional), washing line, pegs

Pick a number from one of the sets of cards on RS7–12, 13–23 or 24–34 to hang on the washing line and explain that it is today’s number. For example, choose 4. Find the numbers before and after 4 to hang up in position. Then focus on 4 all day: make four drum beats, clap four times, collect four bears, put out four biscuits at snack time, look for fours and 4s everywhere.

Special costumes

witches’ hats, fairy wings, clown shoes or wizards’ cloaks, poster paper, coat hangers, pegs or boxes (optional)

Make a big fuss about the new dressing-up items. Count them together, and make a sign showing how many there are. Talk about how many people can dress up in these at the same time. At clearing-up time work with children to check all the special costumes are back in their places and none are missing. If appropriate, provide the correct number of coat hangers or pegs or boxes so the items can be safely stored away. *Let’s count the pegs without a cloak ... We need to find two more cloaks.*

Child initiated

Acting out number stories

counting book, voice recorder, small world figures or soft toys to match those in the book, other props

Read the book with children, then display it alongside figures and props so children can act it out themselves. Help them use the voice recorder (if they need help) to tell the story, or say the number sequence, or count the ducklings/tigers/stripy snakes in the story.

Leaf printing

leaves, cut potatoes, number templates, paints, paper, brushes, scissors, glue, washing line

Provide a place where children can explore printing with leaves or other objects. Hang the results on a washing line to dry, and take the opportunity to count them. When dry, children may like to cut out their prints to make a poster or card or picture. *You’ve fitted three leaves on that paper. I wonder if there is room for a fourth. • What a lot of papers you’ve printed. Shall we count them?*



Giant dice

giant dice (1–3 or 0–5), wooden numbers, beanbags, buckets, skittles, ‘stepping stones’ made from carpet tiles or rubber mats

Provide interesting large-scale equipment for counting and see what develops. Watch what children do and offer support if they need it, but don’t take over their agenda. *Are you trying to get the beanbags in that bucket? Do you need help counting how many you’ve got? • Would you like me to roll the dice for you so you can make the giant steps?*

Everyday opportunities

- Involve children in counting how many aprons, paint brushes, children there are, whenever you need to do so for a real purpose.
- When counting a group or line of children, ask them to move away one at a time to make sure that everyone has been counted. Occasionally, get a silly puppet to do the counting, and make a mistake for children to identify and correct.

Home learning ideas

- Lend parents and carers a 1–3 or 0–5 dice or spinner. They can play a simple game with their child, taking turns to roll the dice, count the spots, and collect that many buttons/pasta shapes/pennies from a pot until there are none left. Talk to parents about the value of ‘touch, count and move’.

Possible next steps

- As children refine their counting skills, the ‘move’ element will become redundant, but let each child decide when they no longer need to move the objects as they count them. See AC NC0.7 (I can count aloud a set of objects, actions and sounds up to about five, recognising when there are none) for further development of counting.