

Independence



Before they start school, help your child learn to do these things for themselves:

- Feeding themselves
- Dressing and undressing
- Washing their hands
- Going to the toilet
- Tidying up
- Using a tissue to blow their nose

Speaking and Listening



Having well-developed language skills when they start school will help your child to settle in and make progress. Talk to your child in your home language as much as you can. Try to give them as many opportunities to talk as possible – the more practice they get, the better.

Songs, rhymes and other speaking and listening games are a great way of helping your child learn turn-taking and sharing whilst they develop their language skills.

Sharing stories



Story-telling and book-sharing are easy ways to have fun with your child and to develop their thinking and language skills.

[Join your local library for free](#) and borrow picture and story books. Talk to your child about the pictures. Ask them questions eg ‘Can you see the boy? What’s he doing?’, ‘How many birds can you see in the picture?’, ‘What do you think will happen next?’ Use your home language or English. For more ideas, see ‘Reading with your child’ (available for free from [The BookTrust](#) in different languages).

Numbers and counting



Practise counting with your child. Ask ‘how many...?’ questions, for example ‘How many ducks can you see?’ and count with your child to find the answer together.

Look out for numbers in the environment - on houses, at the shops, on road signs - and talk about them with your child – in any language!

Making choices



Young children feel more confident when they are asked to make choices about what they would like to do. You can support this by offering a simple choice of two things eg 'Would you like to play a game or read this story with me?'

It works at meal times too. You could offer 'carrot sticks or cucumber slices?' or say 'would you like an apple or an orange after you've finished your bread?' This helps your child make (managed) choices about their food.

Fine motor skills



Letting your child use safety scissors (you should supervise!) or play-doh, play with Duplo or building blocks and get involved in household activities such as cooking or gardening are great ways of helping them to develop the hand strength, dexterity and co-ordination they will need to control a pencil.

Let your child express themselves with crayons, chalk, paints, sticks in sand or water and paintbrushes on the path.

iPads, tablets, mobile phones, apps



Many children like playing games on tablets and other devices. Make sure you know exactly what games your child is playing and try to limit the time they spend doing this. It is important that your child has experience of a range of activities, including spending time playing with others.

Note that YouTube has an age limit of 13 years. YouTube Kids is family-friendly and more suitable for young children.

Links



For songs and rhymes in lots of languages, see [Mama Lisa](#) website.

[YouTube Kids](#)

[The BookTrust](#) website – information about reading with your child

[Bilingual Quick Tips](#) - National Literacy Trust (in a range of languages)

[Tips for Technology for 0-3](#) and [3-5 year old](#) children

[Hampshire Libraries](#) – join and borrow books for free