Times Table Strategies to Use at Home

A Guide for Parents

Learning multiplication tables is a crucial skill for life, and supports children's calculation skills in many areas of maths. Children begin to learn the basics of multiplication and division early on at school, and their skills and knowledge build as they progress. By the end of year 6, they are expected to know off-by-heart all times tables and related division facts. The best way to learn tables is through practise and repetition, but there are simple games you can play to test how well the tables facts are going in!

If you and your child are looking for some new ways to get those tables learnt, try these:

Chant the table being learnt over and over, but using a different silly voice each time. Or take it in turns with a partner to say one fact each, again in a silly voice. Or try singing the tables along with your favourite song!

Make a multiplication grid. Use squared paper to create a 13 x 13 grid. Across the top row write the numbers 1 to 12, and down the left hand column write the same numbers. Your challenge is to fill in the squares in the middle by multiplying the number at the far left by the number on top. To make an easier version, use numbers 1 to 3 or 1 to 5, depending on the tables being learnt.

Play tables bingo. Write the multiplication questions on separate pieces of paper and place in a bowl. Make a 4 by 3 square bingo card each and write 9 of the answer numbers onto it. Take it in turns to draw a question out – if the answer's on your card, cross it off. The winner is the first to cross off all their answers.

Look at the way the different digits work in the 9 times table. What happens when we add the digits of each answer? Challenge: does this continue even past 12 x 9?

There is a multitude of brilliant interactive games and apps to help with learning tables. Search on the internet and see what you can find.

Look for patterns in the answers to the different tables. Do any tables have only even answers? Do any share a common digit?

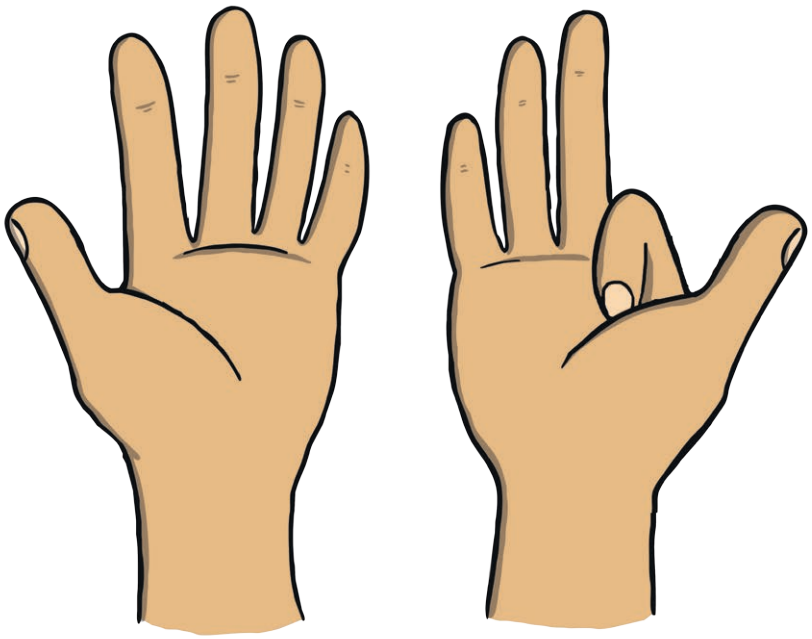
Here's a handy trick for learning the 9x tables using your fingers. Hold all ten fingers up, palms facing you, then lower the finger relating to the number you are multiplying 9 by – for example, for 2 x 9 you would lower the index finger of your left hand. The fingers to the left of the lowered finger are the tens digit of the answer, the fingers to the right of the lowered digit are the units digit. So 2 x 9 = 18 (one finger to the left, 8 fingers to the right).

Make it real. Look for areas in everyday life where we need to use multiplication skills. For example, 'everyone wants three potatoes with dinner so how many potatoes do we need to get ready?'

Have a speed challenge – how many questions can you answer correctly in 30 seconds? Try mixing up the tables you know or throwing in some division questions too.

Once your multiplication grid is completed, used coloured pencils to find number patterns e.g. all numbers ending in a zero, or all even numbers.

Practise saying the table in different ways, e.g. '1 times 3 is 3, 2 times 3 is 6', or 'one 3 is 3, two 3s are 6', or '3, 6, 9 etc'.



For links to some great multiplication tables resources, see this our resource: **How to Learn Times Tables with Twinkl.**