Help Your Child Succeed in

KINDERGARTEN

Mastery Schools
LEARNING

Starting in kindergarten, children learn skills they need to succeed in school and in life. Here are things you can do at home to help your child get ready.

1. Start with your child’s name.

Many things will be labeled by name in kindergarten. Teach your child to recognize his/her name by labeling things at home.

2. Teach the alphabet.

Sing the ABC song with your child. Even better, print out a copy of the alphabet that shows both upper- and lower-case letters and point to each letter as you sing. Teach your child to identify each letter in order (A-Z) and out of order. Practice by identifying letters on signs you see throughout your day.

3. Learn the letter sounds.

Search online and download videos showing the different sounds letters make and practice them with your child. Buy flash cards showing things that begin with each letter. You can also create your own flash cards or download them from the internet.
Teach the numbers 1 to 10.

Teach your child to count from 1 to 10. Even better, print out the numbers and point to each as you say its name.

Show what numbers mean.

Develop your child’s “number sense” by grouping objects to show each number’s value: 1 apple, 2 books, 3 pencils and so on. Suggest counting groups of objects at home or in the neighborhood.

Practice reading books.

Using a children’s book from home or the library, have your child practice how to hold it (solid spine on left), turn the pages (one by one from the front), read left pages before right pages, and read each page (top to bottom, left to right).

Read every day.

Read aloud with your child every day for 10-20 minutes. If parents aren’t available, have older brothers and sisters read, or grandparents.

Retell those stories.

When you read with your child, ask him/her to retell the story at the end. Ask what happened first, what happened next and last.

Learn from pictures.

Read picture books with your child. Ask him/her what is going on in each picture, what characters may be thinking, and what might happen next.

Practice colors and shapes.

Teach your child to recognize and name the colors red, blue, yellow, green, purple, brown, black and white, as well as basic shapes like squares, circles, triangles and rectangles. Ask your child to point out colors and shapes at home and in the neighborhood.
PhysicaL skills

Kindergarten students will learn new physical skills to help their learning. Help your child prepare by practicing these skills before they start school.

1. Show how to hold a pencil.

Your child will need to know how to hold and use pencils, crayons and markers. Show your child how to support the writing tip using the thumb and first finger.

2. Put those crayons to use.

Encouraging use of crayons and markers builds physical “fine motor” skills and helps your child learn to communicate on paper. Provide paper and writing tools and show your child how to shape letters and numbers as well as draw freely.
Encourage active play.

Physical activity can help students succeed in school. It allows them to burn off energy so they can focus on school work. Encourage your child to bounce a ball, play catch or learn to skip to improve coordination.

Practice with scissors.

Many learning activities will involve scissors. Using blunt-tip, child-size scissors, teach your child how to safely use them by holding them facing down and holding scissors by their handle and not the blades.

Learn to use glue and paint.

There will be a lot of art projects in kindergarten. You and your child can have fun together spreading non-toxic washable glue and sticking things to it. Also try painting with finger paints or a brush and watercolor paints.
GETTING ALONG

In kindergarten, children build social and emotional skills they need to succeed in school and in life. Here are things you can do to help your child get ready for kindergarten.

1. Talk about kindergarten.
   Kindergarten is a fun place to learn and play with a group of classmates. Play games as a family, read books together and go on outings as a group.

2. Discuss why groups have rules.
   Rules keep children safe and help them work together. Set up simple rules for your child to follow at home.

3. Practice following directions.
   Give your child simple one- and two-step directions. Ask your child to repeat them, then follow the directions.

4. Practice taking turns.
   Set up play dates with other children at home or a playground. Play board games or games like Simon Says in which people take turns.
Teach respect for feelings.
Ask what your child is feeling, what he/she thinks another child is feeling, or what feelings a character on television may be having.

Practice being kind.
Talk about how people get along better when they are kind to each other. Praise actions that show kindness, such as saying “I’m sorry.”

Develop ways to calm emotions.
Discuss how it’s okay to get angry or upset — but not okay to respond by hitting, yelling, or acting out. Help your child find ways to calm down, such as breathing deeply or thinking happy thoughts.

Encourage "grit" and persistence.
Grit is the ability to keep trying even when the task is hard. Persistence is the ability to stick with a task even if it takes a long time. Encourage grit and persistence by giving your child tasks that are a little harder or longer than he/she has done before.

Develop self-reliance.
Your child will be asked to put on and take off jackets and other clothing, handle bathroom needs, clean up after play and follow a daily routine. Practice these skills until your child can do them without help.

Build self-confidence.
Teach your child how to introduce himself/herself to others: “My name is Arianna. What’s your name?” Encourage your child to politely ask questions about things he/she doesn’t understand.
Mastery Schools serves more than 14,000 students in grades K-12 in Philadelphia and Camden, New Jersey.

14 Mastery campuses offer kindergarten.

Kindergarten at Mastery is just the starting point. We proudly offer academic excellence from crayons to cap and gown!

I’ve never seen a school that puts so much into making sure that the students are on the right track. When I drop my boys off in the morning, I know they’re in good hands.
– L. Davis, Mastery parent

I like how they focus on reading a lot. At some schools, if the kids don’t get it, they just don’t get it. But at Mastery, they help make sure kids learn to read.
– D. Thomas, Mastery parent

“Mastery staff members are loving, helpful and all around MVPs. They have gone above and beyond for my girls in every way possible.
– N. Nieves, Mastery parent

To learn more about kindergarten at Mastery, visit masterycharter.org/kindergarten

We’re social!
@Mastery_Schools
@MasterySchools
@MasterySchools and @MasterySchoolsofCamden