



GETTING READY FOR FUN IN KINDERGARTEN

Parents with children transitioning to Kindergarten often ask what they could do to prepare for the best possible transition. Below are several skills students should demonstrate before entering Kindergarten.

Typically Required Skills

- Perform simple 1- to 3-step directions without assistance.
- Count to 20 and recognize the majority of the letters of the alphabet.
- Identify and write their name.

Additional Skills

- Manipulate small objects to improve small motor skills for writing/crafts.
- Dress on their own (e.g. tucking in shirts, tying shoes, carrying their own bag).
- Handle their own bathroom needs.
- Eat independently (minus opening packages, etc.).
- Complete a chore and organize/clean up their spaces.
- Focus for a 5-10-minute period of time while doing a task or listening to a story.
- Make lower-level decisions such as which fun task to do first.

FUN THINGS TO DO

- Read good books to your child every day to increase vocabulary, retention skills, and focus.
- Give your child 1- to 3-step directions to see if they can recall and complete without your help.
- Work on small motor skills to strengthen muscles—this can be done by working with Play-doh, Legos, pencils, crayons, children's scissors, stickers, clothespins, threading toothpicks, or pipe cleaners through strainers, etc.
- Assign your child a daily chore. The follow-through will serve as preparation for handling responsibilities in the classroom.
- If possible, take time to play on the school's playground over the summer to increase familiarity and have something to look forward to.
- Practice "listening skills" by reading together, asking questions as you drive around town, and asking thought-provoking questions after an event or favorite TV show.
- Practice the alphabet in fun ways, making sure not to "drill" so that learning is fun.
- Practice counting during daily life while walking up stairs, hopping, crafts, games, etc.
- Practice focusing on a 5-10-minute period of time doing a task like painting, retelling stories, etc.

Remember: Be sure to talk about the coming year and the fun of making friends and learning new things. Be positive and encouraging in your conversations, as kids take their cues from parents. If you seem sad or apprehensive, they will mirror those feelings.