

FUN

Activity ideas

to help your child get ready for school

Starting Reception is a big step for your child, and for you too!

Children learn best through play, chat and everyday routines.

Practising small skills at home can help your child feel more confident, independent and ready for Reception.



Here are some simple and fun ideas to try, and why they matter.

Download the Starting Reception Reward Chart to encourage your child to practise the skills at home.

Teddy bears' picnic time!

Have a picnic in the garden, at the park or even on the living room floor.

Let your child practise:

- Eating with a fork and spoon
- Drinking from an open cup
- Opening their lunchbox
- Trying new foods

MAKE IT FUN

invite teddy to join in

cut fruit into fun shapes

have a "crunchiest carrot" competition

Remember:
Spills and mess are
part of learning!



Why this helps

In Reception, children need to be able to eat their snacks and lunch independently. Practising now helps your child feel confident and less worried at mealtimes. Trying new foods can also make school lunches easier.

Create a calm corner

Make a cosy, screen-free space with:

- Cushions
- Blankets
- Books
- Colouring or puzzles

Spend a few quiet minutes together each day:

read stories

talk about stories

ask questions

"What do you think happens next?"

"How is the character feeling?"



Why this helps

Children need to listen, focus and manage busy days in Reception. Quiet time helps children learn how to pay attention and enjoy books and stories.

Obstacle course adventure

Use cushions, chairs and blankets to make a simple obstacle course at home, in the garden or park.



WHY NOT TRY

jumping

crawling

throwing and catching a ball

balancing

climbing

Why this helps

Moving their bodies helps children build balance, coordination and strength of school activities like PE, climbing and sitting comfortably at a table.

Listening ears



Play simple listening games:

- **Simon Says**
Players must only follow the command when the instructor says "Simon Says" e.g. Simon Says ... put your hands on your head.
- **Musical Statues**
Play music while everyone dances, and when the music stops, everyone must freeze like a statue—anyone who moves is out.
- **Copy my clap**
Player one claps a short rhythm and the other players listen carefully and then try to repeat the exact same clap pattern. Take it in turns to be the leader.
- **Follow the leader**
Sit facing your partner and take it turns to create simple patterns of claps for the other person to repeat.

Why this helps

Children need to listen to instructions and pay attention for short periods at school.

Dressing practice



Give your child time to practise:

- Putting on shoes
- Doing zips
- Pulling up trousers
- Putting on coats

Why this helps

Teachers cannot dress every child at once. Being able to manage coats, shoes and clothes helps children feel confident and ready for outdoor play, PE and toileting.

Spot their name

Help your child recognise their own name by trying:

- Writing it on a picture they have drawn
- Making a name treasure hunt
- Building it with magnets or blocks
- Spotting letters from their name on signs and food packets



Hide their name around the house and see how many they can find!

Why this helps

Children see their name everywhere at school — on trays, pegs and books. Recognising their name helps them settle in and feel like they belong.

Talk, play and explore

Talk together during everyday moments:

- On walks
- While shopping
- At bath time
- During play

CHAT ABOUT

colours and numbers

feelings

shapes and sounds

what happened during the day



Why this helps

Talking builds vocabulary, confidence and listening skills. Children who can share their needs, join conversations and talk about feelings often find it easier to make friends and learn in class.