Games for maths groups #1

Games are a great way of incorporating fun into your maths program.

These games can be played by two or more children and are great for maths groups.

Some games can be played independently once children know how to play.

Others will work best with adult supervision if available.

This resource has instructions for playing five fun maths games.

They include:

- **Challenge** – comparing numbers to ten
- **Bean bag toss** – combinations for ten
- **Fill the bucket** - empty the bucket – adding and subtracting to ten
- **Ten pins** - combinations for ten
- **Close ball** – estimating and measuring length

Instructions for each game are presented on a one-page poster that is suitable for laminating and providing to adult helpers for ease of implementation.

Other easy-to-organise activities that provide counting practice, include such things as:

- Skipping with a rope – how many times can you skip without stopping?
- Bouncing a ball – how many times can you bounce a ball without missing?
- Walk along and count the numbers on painted ladders, snakes, or other objects in the playground.
- Bounce and catch – this game requires access to a wall and a ball each. Children perform each action, but begin again if the ball is missed or dropped:

    1 Throw the ball against the wall and catch it without it bouncing (one time)

    2 Throw the ball against the wall, let it bounce, then catch it (two times)

    3 Throw the ball against the wall, clap your hands, then catch it (three times)

    4 Throw the ball under your leg to hit the wall, then catch it (four times)

    5 Bounce and catch the ball (five times)

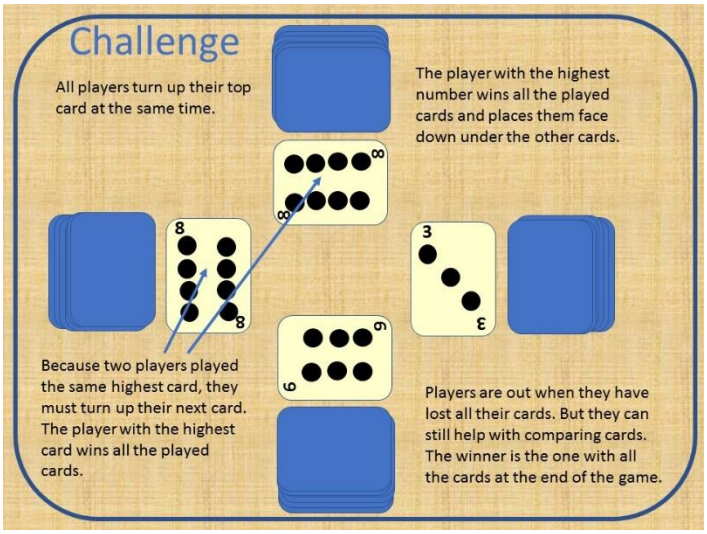
    6 Throw the ball against the wall, turn around, then catch it (six times)

    7 Throw the ball against the wall, clap two times, then catch it (seven times)

I hope you and your children enjoy these maths games and activities. Look for other suitable activities for maths groups in readilearn mathematics resources and games and puzzles resources.

Challenge

This is a fun game for comparing numbers to ten: more, less, same.



You need:

A pack of playing cards with the picture cards and Jokers removed. Explain that Ace in number one.

Or: Combine four sets of cards numbered 1 – 10

How to play:

Shuffle the cards.

Deal out all the cards equally between the players.

Each player places their cards face down in a pile in front of them. They do not look at their cards.

At the same time, each player turns over their top card and places it in the middle for all to see.

Players compare the numbers on the cards and the player with the highest number wins all the played cards.

If two or more players have the same highest number, then just those players "Challenge" by continuing to turn over their top card, until a winner is found. That player takes all the played cards.

Players are out when they have lost all their cards.

The winner is the player who wins all the cards.

Suggestion: For extra challenge, make cards with higher numbers for children to play with.

Beanbag toss

This is a fun game for practicing combinations for ten, and comparing numbers to ten.

You need:

A bucket and ten beanbags

A scoreboard

How to play:

Write the children's names on the scoreboard.

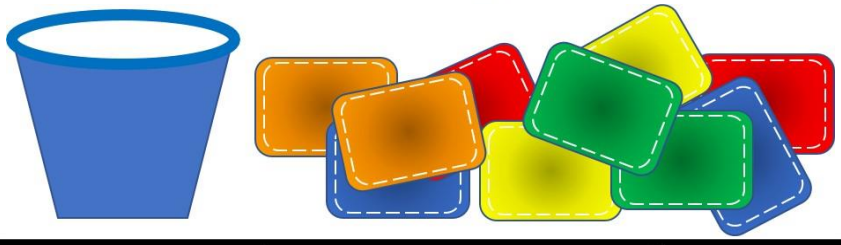
Children stand on a line about a metre away from the bucket.

They take turns to throw the ten beanbags, one by one, into the bucket. They record how many went in, and how many missed.

The winner is the child who got the most beanbags in the bucket.

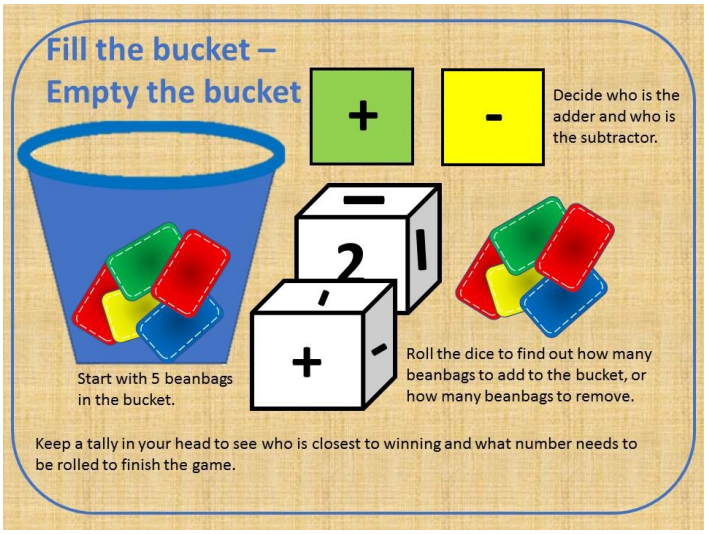
Repeat if desired and time allows.

Beanbag Toss



	in	out
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
Total		
The winner is:		

Fill the bucket – empty the bucket



This is a fun game for practicing addition and subtraction to ten.

Note: While this game is suitable for pairs, children could play with a partner, or more than one game could be played at the same time.

You need:

A bucket

Ten beanbags

A dice with only the numbers 1 and 2

A dice with + and –

A large card with + to signify the adder, and a large card with – for the subtractor.

Hint: Write the numbers and symbols on wooden cubes, or print the dice that are available in Busy Bee Number lines and dice.

How to play:

Start with 5 beanbags in the bucket.

Decide who will be the adder and who will be the subtractor.

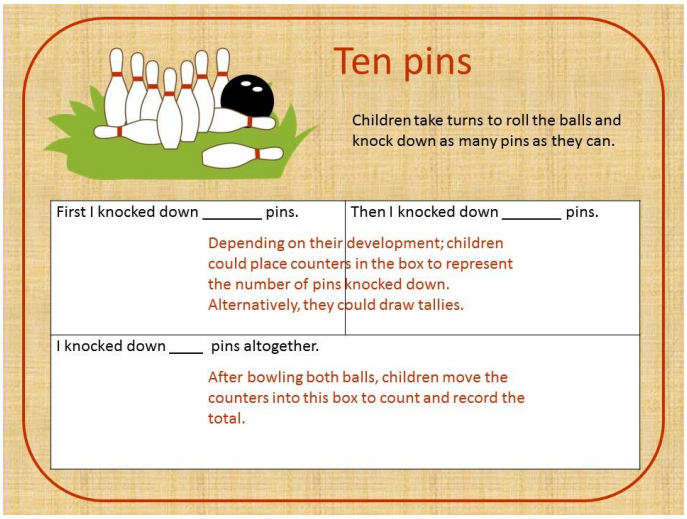
Take turns to roll the dice and add or subtract the number of beanbags as shown by the dice.

The **adder** wins when all the beanbags are **in** the bucket.

The **subtractor** wins when all the beanbags are **out** of the bucket.

Change roles and play again.

Ten pins



This is a fun game for practicing combinations for ten, and comparing numbers to ten.

You need:

A set of ten pins and 2 bowling balls.

Note: While inexpensive sets of tens pins are readily available, you could use blocks from the classroom, or make your own set of pins using plastic bottles with a small amount of sand. A tennis or cricket ball works well for bowling.

How to play:

Set up the ten pins and designate a line behind which children must stand to bowl.

Children take turns to roll the balls along the ground to knock down the pins. A turn involves rolling both balls, recording after each.

Children who are waiting could be involved in counting, and collecting the balls and setting up the pins.

When everyone has had a turn. Order them from the one who knocked down the most to the least number of pins.

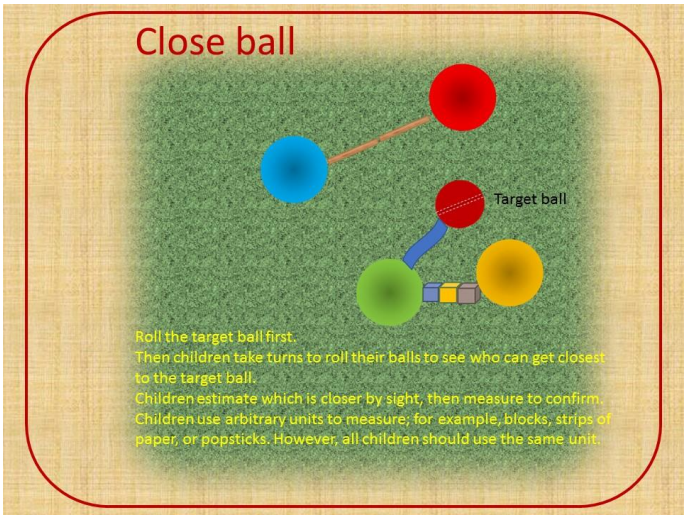
Suggestion: Include practice with ordinal numbers:

Have a set of cards with ordinal numbers to match the number of players; for example, first to fourth for four players.

Give children, or allow them to select, a card randomly to set play order.

At the finish, use the cards to order the children from highest number (first) to lowest.

Close ball



This is a fun game for estimating and measuring length.

You need:

A small heavy ball, such as a cricket ball.

A light ball for each player. Balls should be similar in size, but different in colour.

A small outdoor, preferably grassy, area.

Arbitrary units for measuring; e.g., blocks or popsticks.

How to play:

Roll the target ball a few metres away.

Children take turns to roll their balls to see whose ball will stop closest to the target ball.

When all children have rolled their balls, they estimate which ball is closer, then measure to confirm.

A variety of arbitrary units can be used to measure, as long as only one unit is used for each round.

Possible ways to measure include:

Cutting strips of paper and comparing the length by holding side to side or measuring with other units listed below.

Using blocks placed side to side, or popsticks placed end to end.

Measuring with hand or foot-widths.