ACTIVITY + PARENT GUIDE

Make 10

One whole. Many ways to see it.

Ten is one of the most useful landmarks in early mathematics. Children who can see how numbers fit together to make 10 have a powerful tool for addition, subtraction, and later multiplication.

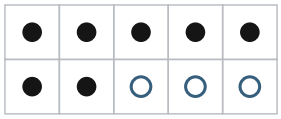
This resource helps children:

- compose and decompose 10,
- recognize complements of 10,
- find a missing part without starting over, and
- use 10 as a friendly number for calculation.

AGES 5–7

YOU NEED

10 small objects such as coins, beans, buttons, or cubes; a pencil; and, if available, two colors of counters or cubes.



7 and **3** make **10** $\quad 7 + 3 = 10$

WHY THIS MATTERS

Making 10 is more than memorizing pairs such as 7 and 3. The deeper idea is that 10 can be taken apart and rebuilt. That part-whole thinking later supports strategies such as $8 + 7 = 10 + 5$ and, much later, $9 \times 7 = 10 \times 7 - 7$.

THE PARENT QUESTION TO KEEP ASKING

"What do you see? What is missing? How could 10 help?"

MULTIPLICATION FLIP
Olaseni Fadipe, Ph.D.

1. See what is missing

Use the empty spaces, not just another count.

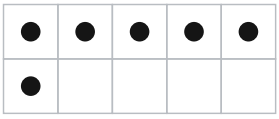
PARENT SCRIPT

Show one frame at a time and ask:
"How many do you see? How many more would make 10? How do you know?"

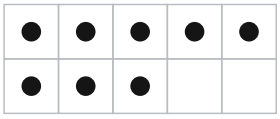
If your child counts the filled dots, that is useful information. Then draw attention to the *empty spaces*. The frame is designed to make the missing part visible.

PARENT NOTE

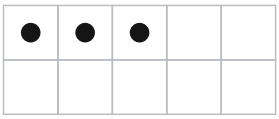
Do not rush the child to say the answer. The goal is to notice structure: a full row is 5, a full frame is 10, and the spaces tell us what is missing.



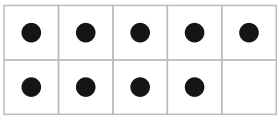
6 + _____ = 10



8 + _____ = 10



3 + _____ = 10



9 + _____ = 10

EFFICIENT STRATEGY TO NOTICE

A useful shift is from *counting all* to using the structure of 5 and 10. For example, a child may see 8 as "5 and 3," then notice that two spaces remain. Efficiency here means seeing relationships, not answering quickly.

TRY THIS

Cover the frame after a few seconds and ask, "What did you notice that helped you know the missing part?" Accept drawings, finger patterns, and explanations in the child's own words.

2. Build 10 many ways

The whole stays the same while the parts change.

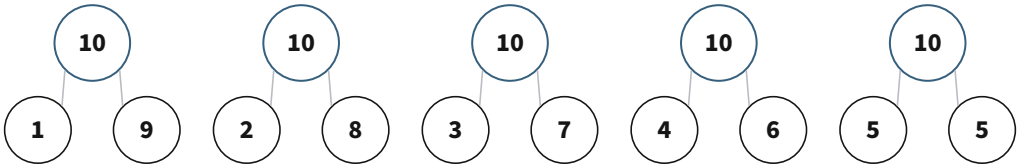
Use 10 objects in two colors. Ask your child to split the collection into two parts, record the pair, then make a different split.

SAY

"Can you make 10 a different way without changing the total?"

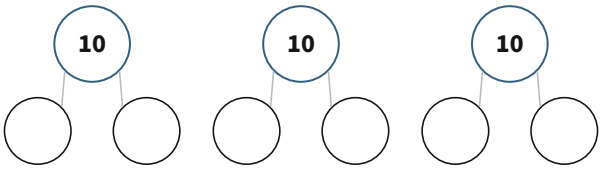
PARENT NOTE

The goal is not to chant a list. Let the child build, rearrange, compare, and explain. The physical action gives meaning to the equations.



$1 + 9 = 10$ $2 + 8 = 10$ $3 + 7 = 10$ $4 + 6 = 10$ $5 + 5 = 10$

NOW MAKE YOUR OWN



_____ + _____ = 10 _____ + _____ = 10 _____ + _____ = 10

WHY THIS MATTERS

When a child knows that 7 and 3 make 10, the same relationship can be used in both directions: $7 + 3 = 10$, $3 + 7 = 10$, $10 - 7 = 3$, and $10 - 3 = 7$. One relationship produces a family of useful facts.

3. Find the missing part

Think about the whole and the part you already know.

A missing-part problem asks a different question from ordinary addition. The whole is already known: 10. The child must reason about what part is needed to complete it.

PARENT NOTE

If your child restarts at 1 for every problem, return to the ten frame or objects. The visual model can help the missing part become something to *see*, not merely something to calculate.

COMPLETE EACH RELATIONSHIP

$6 + \square = 10$

$\square + 2 = 10$

$10 - 7 = \square$

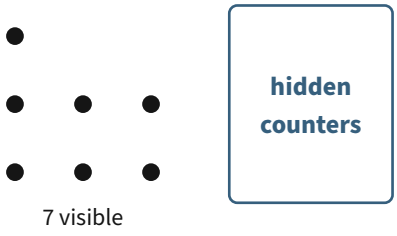
$10 - \square = 4$

$9 + \square = 10$

$10 - 5 = \square$

HIDE SOME

Place 10 counters on the table. Ask your child to close their eyes while you hide some under a cup or sheet of paper. Leave the rest visible.



There are 10 altogether. If 7 are visible, how many are hidden?

EFFICIENT STRATEGY TO NOTICE

Look for the child using a known complement: "7 needs 3 to make 10." That is more connected than recounting from 1. The same part-whole relationship supports subtraction and missing-addend thinking later.

4. Let 10 do some of the work

A friendly number can make an unfamiliar sum easier.

Once the pairs that make 10 are meaningful, children can use them inside larger sums. The idea is to move just enough from one addend to complete 10.

PARENT NOTE

Do not insist on the same method every time. Ask whether 10 is helpful for the numbers in front of the child. Flexible mathematics includes choosing a strategy that fits.

$$8 + 7 \rightarrow 8 + 2 + 5 \rightarrow 10 + 5 \rightarrow 15$$

TRY THESE

1. $9 + 6$ How could you make 10?

2. $7 + 6$ How could you make 10?

3. $8 + 5$ Show the break-apart step.

4. $6 + 8$ Which addend would you build to 10?

5. Which is easier for you: $8 + 7$ by making 10, or by using a near double such as $7 + 7 + 1$? Explain.

EFFICIENT STRATEGY TO NOTICE

A strong make-ten strategy does not depend on speed. The child sees what the first number needs to reach 10, decomposes the other addend, and recombines the parts. For $8 + 7$, the useful structure is $7 = 2 + 5$, so $8 + 7 = 8 + 2 + 5 = 10 + 5$.

5. Why 10 keeps showing up

A benchmark today becomes a strategy later.

Making 10 begins as a number-sense idea, but it does not stay there. The habit of using a friendly benchmark carries forward into addition, subtraction, place value, and multiplication.

FOUNDATION TO MULTIPLICATION

THE BIG IDEA

A number can be understood through its relationship to a friendly number.

NUMBER SENSE	ADDITION	LATER MULTIPLICATION
$7 + 3 = 10$ $10 - 7 = 3$	$8 + 7$ $= 10 + 5$	9×7 $= 10 \times 7 - 7$

WHY THIS MATTERS

The multiplication connection is not that a young child should calculate 9×7 now. It is that the same way of thinking is being built now: use a nearby friendly quantity, then adjust. That habit makes later strategies feel connected rather than invented from nowhere.

WHAT TO LISTEN FOR

The make-10 idea is becoming useful when your child can:

- recognize several pairs that make 10 without rebuilding every pair from scratch,
- explain a pair using a ten frame, objects, fingers, a number bond, or an equation,
- find a missing part such as $6 + \square = 10$,
- use 10 to reorganize a sum such as $8 + 7$, and
- explain why the rearrangement keeps the total the same.

> **PARENT NOTE**
>
> If some of these ideas are still developing, keep using objects and visual models. There is no need to hurry past a relationship that will be reused again and again.

A NATURAL NEXT STEP

Explore number bonds and addition strategies, or use the Multiplication Readiness Check at **MultiplicationFlip.com/readiness** to see how number sense connects with the other foundations for multiplication.

See the whole. Find the parts. Use the relationship.