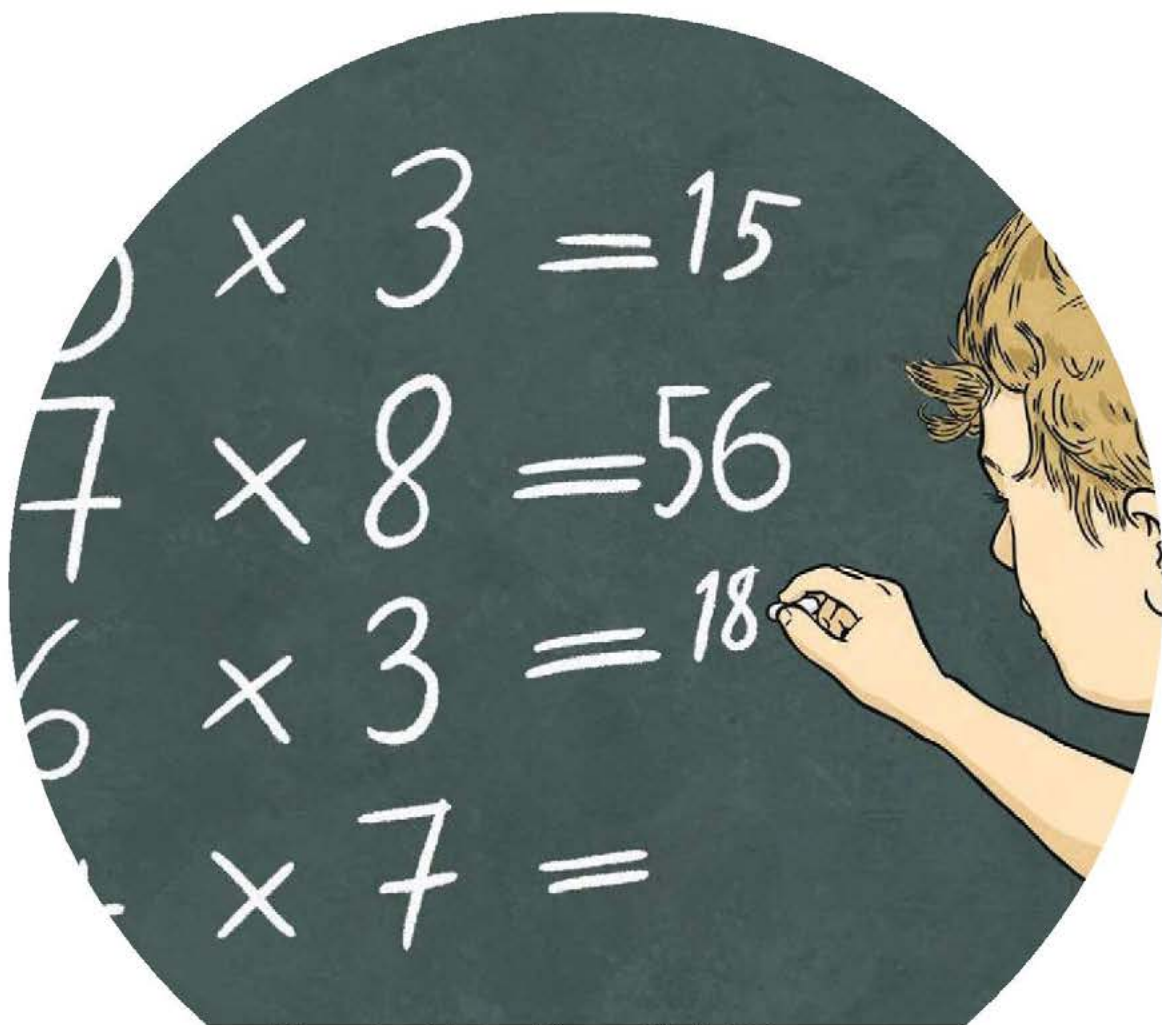


# A Grown Up's Guide to Times Tables



How to Help Your Child Become  
a Times Tables Master

# Introduction

Times tables have always been a fundamental part of the British educational system – from standing up and reciting them by rote, to writing them out over and over again – and continue to be today. Times tables are an essential part of mathematics, and underpin many other areas of the challenging KS2 maths curriculum such as working with fractions, decimals and percentages. It is important that your child has a strong knowledge of times tables which will help them in many other areas of the curriculum. Additionally, in the near future, Year 4 pupils will be expected to take a multiplication test based on their times tables knowledge.

## So What Are the Current Expectations?

In the current National Curriculum, by Year 4, children are expected to ‘recall multiplication and division facts for multiplication tables up to  $12 \times 12$ ’. This means that not only do they have to know all their times tables, but they also have to know the inverse division facts. For example, in addition to knowing times tables facts such as:

$$5 \times 7 = 35$$

and

$$7 \times 5 = 35$$

children have to use this knowledge to calculate inverse division facts such as:

$$35 \div 7 = 5$$

and

$$35 \div 5 = 7$$

## How Do I Help My Child?

All children have preferred ways to learn – just like we do as adults! Your child may like to write out times tables over and over again, or they may learn best when singing, dancing or playing a board game. There are many different ways to practise times tables. In this guide, you will find a variety of activities to help your child practise their times tables. Choose the activities which your child enjoys the most and helps them to learn best. That way, you’ll help your child to become a ‘Times Tables Master’.

## Times Tables Games and Activities

### 1. The Traditional Methods

It’s often said that the old ways are the best and certainly this can be the case when learning times tables, but they don’t always suit every child, so be mindful of which methods your child prefers the most.

**Recite the times table:** This is the simplest way to practise times tables as it can be done any time and in any place – walking to school, in the car, at bedtime – simply say the times table together.

**Write it out:** Again, simple, but it can be very effective. Simply write out the times table you are working on over and over again until your child knows it.

**Quick-fire questions:** Whether out walking, in the park or at home, ask your child mixed calculations from the times table you are learning and keep doing it until they can get them all right. Don’t forget to ask the inverse questions too (see introduction).



## 2. Sing Your Times Tables

Music and jingles really aid our memory and can help us learn a variety of things, including times tables. Have a quick search on the Internet and you will find a plethora of songs. There are also great apps out there with times table songs to learn. Make sure that you watch any videos first to check that they are suitable for your children.

Another option is to write your own song. This is a great activity as it will get your child's creative juices flowing. They can try to match the times tables facts to an existing song that they know, such as a nursery rhyme or their favourite pop song.

## 3. Use Building Bricks

Bringing a favourite toy into learning makes any activity fun. Ask your child to make an array that shows a times table question using building bricks. For example:

5

In the array above, each row has five dots and there are five columns. Therefore, when we multiply the length by the width, you get 25 dots in the square. Your child could try to create an array with bricks for all the calculations in a particular times table such as  $2 \times 2$ ,  $3 \times 2$ ,  $4 \times 2$  etc.

A great variation of this is to make arrays using sweets. The best thing about this is that when they have completed their times tables practice you can share the sweets at the end (see if you can divide them between people equally, to help learn division facts)!

## 4. Computer Games

Does your child love playing on a tablet, laptop or mobile phone? There are now a range of online games and apps that you can play to help you learn the times tables. A quick search in your app store or online will help you find many different variations of times tables games. One example is [Space Explorer: Times Tables Game](#). In this game, your child can practise multiplication facts for all times tables up to  $10 \times 10$  within a time limit.

## 5. Dance Mat

This is a fun activity if your child likes moving around. On sheets of paper, write out some answers to the multiplications you want your child to practise, for example the  $3 \times$  table. Place them in a circle on the floor and ask your child to stand in the middle. Say a question, for example  $3 \times 3$ , and your child has to tap the answer with their foot. Try to get faster at this so that it becomes a dance.

This activity can be varied by jumping from answer to answer, using chalk on the ground outside. Watch it wash away the next time it rains without leaving any mess!



## 6. Splat!

A similar concept to the previous game but this involves placing all the number cards on a table and asking your child times table questions such as  $5 \times 3$ . Your child has to then splat the right answer. This can be done by hand or using an object like a fly swat. To make this game more competitive, play it with two players. The first to splat the correct answer is the winner.

## 7. Board Games

In this pack, and on the Twinkl website, you will find a range of board games which can be used to help your child practise their times tables, such as [3 to 12 Times Table Multiplication and Division Board Games Pack](#). You will also find a range of worksheets and activities, such as [Times Tables Fortune Tellers](#).

## 8. Times Tables Tennis

You need a pair of rackets or bats (tennis, ping pong) to play this game and two players. Each person takes a racket and you begin to say a times table as you hit a ball (real or imaginary) to each other. Keep counting until somebody gets it wrong, and then start again. This is a great way to learn the times tables in order.

## 9. Times Table Flowers

If your child enjoys art and crafts, this is a fun way to reinforce knowledge of a times table. It can be drawn or made using coloured paper for the petals which are glued around the outside of the flower. Simply draw a flower and in the middle, write the number of the times table you are learning. Around the flower, on the petals, write all the multiples of that number up to  $12 \times$  the number. This is great to use as a memory aid when recalling times tables.



These are just a few suggestions to help you get started. There are many ways to practise times tables, but remember to have fun while doing it and to do it little and often – this is the best way to help your child retain their times tables knowledge.

