



PATTERNS AND SORTING



WHAT IS A PATTERN?

Something that repeats itself in a predictable way. Patterns can be made up of shapes, colors, sounds, designs, movements, numbers, and much more!

Simple patterns:

"ABAB" (red, blue, red, blue)

"ABC" (firetruck, police car, ambulance, firetruck, police car, ambulance).

Patterns help us make sense of the world around us.

HOW DO I TEACH PATTERNS TO MY CHILD?

Like any skill, recognizing and replicating patterns takes time to learn!

It's never too early to introduce patterns.

Young toddlers may only be ready to recognize simple patterns and to sort items based on one characteristic (like color or size).

Don't pressure your child to copy the patterns you create right away. Simply exposing your child to the language we use to describe patterns helps build their skills!

FINDING PATTERNS WITH YOUR CHILD(REN)

Sing songs and lullabies and read books with words and phrases that repeat in a predictable way.

Examples:

"If You're Happy and You Know It"

"Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?" by Bill Martin Jr.

"Goodnight Moon" by Margaret Wise Brown

Make patterns with stickers and/or stamps.

Use a wooden skewer and play dough to make color patterns. Simply roll balls in two or more different colors and slide them onto the skewer to form patterns.

Make sound patterns with instruments (bang, bang, tap, bang, bang, tap).

Tip: If you don't have any commercially-made instruments, you can easily make your own from items like oatmeal canisters, paper towel rolls, etc.

Point out patterns on clothing.

Example: "I love how your scarf has a blue stripe and then a yellow stripe, and then another blue stripe!"

Give your child an empty ice cube tray or egg carton and two different colors of buttons or other simple, small objects. Start a pattern (red, green, red, green, red . . .) and **then ask your child what they think might come next.**

Tip: Simple games like this also make great 'busy bag' items to take along for doctors' appointments, to restaurants, etc.

Make patterns from the movements of your bodies and create a fun, original dance in the process!

Example: "Let's try repeating this pattern -- step, clap, step, clap, step, clap . . ."

Use two different types of cereal or pasta (anything with a hole in the middle) and a piece of yarn to practice stringing a simple pattern together.

Example: Cheerio, elbow macaroni, cheerio, elbow macaroni.

Most of all, remember to HAVE FUN!