

Is My Five-Year-Old Ready for Kindergarten?

Kindergarten should be an exciting and rewarding experience for both children and their parents. While there is no perfect checklist to determine when your child is truly ready for kindergarten, the following list will give you an idea of the necessary skills a child should have mastered in order to receive the greatest benefit from their kindergarten experience. Remember, age is only one factor in determining kindergarten readiness. Social, emotional, cognitive and physical development should also be taken into account.

Your kindergarten-ready child should be able to:

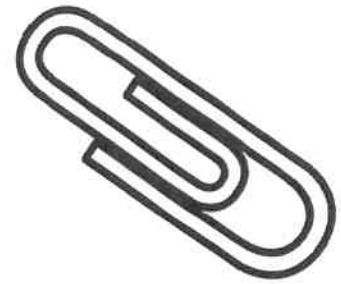


Social and Emotional Development

- Use words instead of being physical when angry or frustrated
- Listen to stories without interrupting
- Follow two-step directions
- Ask for help when necessary
- Pay attention for short periods of time to adult-directed tasks
- Stay with an activity to completion
- Initiate and sustain appropriate play with other children
- Begin to share with others and understand taking turns
- Comply with rules, limits, and routines
- Be able to recognize authority
- Interact appropriately with adults
- Respect the rights, property, and feelings of others
- Begin to control themselves
- Dress themselves (button shirts, pants, coats, and zip up zippers)
- Manage bathroom needs independently
- Separate from parents for extended period of time without being upset
- Attempt new tasks knowing it's okay to make mistakes

Motor Skills

- Hold scissors correctly
- Holds a pencil, crayon or marker properly
- Put together a 10-12 piece puzzle
- Ride a tricycle
- Run, jump, and skip
- Walk backwards
- Try to write, scribble, or draw



Language

- Speak in complete sentences of 5-6 words
- Use descriptive language
- Sing and/or recite nursery rhymes
- Pretend, create, and make-up songs and stories
- Talk about everyday experiences
- Tell or retell stories
- Enjoy having books read to him/her
- Ask questions
- Verbally and appropriately respond to a topic
- Express her/his ideas so others can understand her/him

Academic

- Look at pictures and then tell stories
- Identify some alphabet letters
- Count to 10
- Correctly count at least 3 objects
- Identify own first name in writing
- Attempt to print own first name
- Recognize and identify 5 colors
- Understand concepts such as in/out, under/on, on/off, front/back
- Participate in art and music activities
- Know her/his body parts (head, shoulder, knees, etc.)
- Draw a picture of her/himself including head, body, arms, and leg
- Use words like bigger, smaller or heaviest to show comparison



THINGS CHILDREN SHOULD KNOW BEFORE THEY START KINDERGARTEN

PERSONAL INFORMATION

1. Know their own first and last name.
2. Know their own age.
3. Know their phone number and address.
4. Know the names and relations of family members including mother, father, brothers, sisters, and grandparents.
5. Name or identify parts of their own body.
6. Know the names of their clothing.

PRESCHOOL KNOWLEDGE

1. Understand that books and other forms of print have words written down that tell us things. Reading to a child will teach this concept.
2. Identify some letters and numbers.
3. Know how to count 10 objects.
4. Know the names of things around the house.
5. Know the names of eight basic colors.
6. Name four basic shapes.
7. Know the names of common animals.
8. Understand basic safety rules.
9. Know about places in the community. (stores, hospital, fire station, doctor's office, etc.)
10. Know how to properly hold scissors and cut.
11. Know how to hold a pencil or crayon correctly with their thumb and two fingers.

COMMUNICATION SKILLS

1. Understand simple questions and give simple answers.
2. Follow simple directions like where to sit or where to put a book.
3. Follow directions that have two parts.
4. Tell someone how they are feeling.

SELF-HELP SKILLS

1. Know how to take off and put on their shoes and jackets by themselves.
2. Do buttons, snaps, and zippers on the front of their clothes.
3. Take themselves to the restroom, without help, and remember to wash their hands and flush the toilet after going to the restroom.
4. Blow their noses by themselves.
5. Wash and dry their hands and face by themselves.
6. Feed themselves neatly using a spoon and fork.
7. Know how to open a door by turning the knob and how to turn a water faucet on and off.

SOCIAL SKILLS

1. Understand that at school, children are expected to do what their teachers ask.
2. Be comfortable away from their parents or caregiver, and with new adults and children.
3. Know how to wait to take turns in games or to give an answer.
4. Understand that other people have rights and feelings, just as they do.
5. Know when to say "please" and "thank you."
6. Respect other people's property.
7. Manage, at least some of the time, to share the use of toys, work together with other children on a task, and resist touching things when asked not to touch.
8. Sit quietly for a while, listen to a story and concentrate on a task.
9. Play with other children without a lot of difficulty.

HOW TO GET YOUR CHILD OFF TO A GOOD START IN KINDERGARTEN

A note from your child's teacher...

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

The following list is included to help you give your child a good start before Kindergarten begins in the fall. If your child can accomplish the tasks on this list before Kindergarten, we will be on the right track!

Kindergartners should come to school able to:

1. **NAME:** Your child needs to know how to *write* their first name properly before school begins. (Please consult the attached sheet which will show you how to correctly teach this. Note that your child should not write with all capitals, but rather make the first letter a capital followed by lower case letters.) Your child should also *know* their first and last name.
2. **COUNTING:** Your child should practice counting by rote as high as he or she can. The children should at the very least be able to count to 10 before Kindergarten, but preferably up to 30.
3. **NUMBERS:** Be able to identify at least the numbers 1-10.
4. **COLORS:** Your child needs to know the 8 basic colors.
5. **SHAPES:** A student entering Kindergarten should know the basic shapes: circle, square, triangle, heart, oval, and rectangle.
6. **RHYMING:** Research tells us that children who have mastered the ability to rhyme will have greater success with reading. Please, parents, practice rhyming with your child. Even making up nonsense words is fine. Use the old Nursery Rhymes that you grew up with. It's fun!

7. ALPHABET: Be able to say the alphabet letter names in proper sequence. Be able to sing the alphabet song. Your child will also have an advantage if they are able to visually identify the letters of the alphabet, *upper and lower* (not the sounds).
8. CUTTING: Your child should know how to use a scissors. Show him / her the proper way to hold and use the scissors. Then let your child cut. It will eliminate much frustration at school.
9. GET ACTIVE: Encourage your child to be physically active. This means running, jumping, hopping, skipping, catching, and throwing. Their large motor skills continue to be developed. Don't let them spend too much time in front of screens! Get active.
10. BATHROOM: Your child needs to be able to use the bathroom independently before Kindergarten. This means being capable of handling buttons, belts, etc... and good hand-washing.
11. SPEAKING: Encourage your child to speak clearly and in complete sentences. Correct mispronunciations and don't allow *baby talk*.
12. WRITING: Give your child ample opportunity to use a pencil and crayons! It's important for developing and strengthening small muscle coordination, which will make your child's work at school less tedious.
13. READ: Please read to your child everyday! Reading books with your child is valuable to them in a multitude of ways.

I greatly look forward to working with you and your child next year! Feel free to contact me with any questions.

Kind Regards,

FIVE YEAR OLDS: READY OR NOT?

1. What is meant by “readiness”?

The term “readiness” refers to a child’s ability to cope in a school environment and learn at the same time.

This means that a child’s physical, social, and emotional growth, along with intelligence, are “in sync” with one another at that same time. If a child’s emotional, social, and physical maturity is operating at a developmental level that is younger than his/her own true age, the child may have difficulty meeting the expectations of the corresponding grade level.

Readiness is a stage at which a child can succeed in school.

Each child is ready for something. Each has her/her own “time clock” - rate of growth - that is right for him/her. It can’t be changed or rushed and it shouldn’t be ignored. It’s important to note that “sooner and faster” does not equal “better”.

2. My child will be five by August 1st. Doesn’t that mean he/she is ready for kindergarten?

A child’s chronological age does not determine school readiness.

Because a child turns five years of age before entering kindergarten does not automatically mean that he/she is ready to do the work of that grade. Again, while some children are chronologically old enough to enter kindergarten, they may not be developmentally ready to cope with the expectations of that grade.

3. But my child is smart! Surely that means he/she is ready, right?

Having a high IQ does not guarantee a child’s success in kindergarten, nor does it ensure that he/she will feel comfortable in school.

Again, remember that a child’s emotional, social, and physical maturity all have an impact on how the child is able to use his/her academic abilities. Immaturity in one or more of these three areas hinders the child from using her/her academic abilities positively and productively.

Paying attention to a child’s developmental level can help him/her from being wrongly placed in school.

Early determination of a child’s developmental level being appropriate for his/her grade level gives better chances for the child to be successful in school.

How to Print Letters

A B C D E F G

H I J K L M

N O P Q R S T

U V W X Y Z

a b c d e f g h i

j k l m n o p q r

s t u v w x y z

? | " " ,

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10