

Giving One to Each

One cookie for each plate.

One!

Give your child just enough napkins, forks, or food items, and let him give one to each person or place at the table.

Setting the table gives your child practical experience with matching one number to one item.





Why this is important

Children like helping with grown-up jobs. Setting the table provides an opportunity for children to practice one-to-one correspondence (one napkin for each plate). The one-to-one relationship is the basis of counting and other math skills.

What you do

- Ask your child to help you set the table.
- Show him how to put a napkin beside one plate.
- Give him just enough napkins and ask him to put one beside each plate.
- Describe what he is doing using the word one. *One for Daddy; one for Grandma; one for Michael.*
- If he no longer has enough napkins to put one at each plate, help him find the place where he put more than one. Explain what happened and offer encouragement. *There were two napkins by this plate. Can you put one at the last plate so each person has one napkin for dinner?*
- Thank your child for helping you set the table.

Ready to move on?

After you've done this activity several times with your child, try counting the napkins and places at the table before he starts. This will help him become familiar with the sounds of the number words. *One, two, three, four napkins. One, two, three, four plates. Can you put one napkin at each plate, please?*

Let's read together!

One Bear, One Dog
by Paul Stickland