

## The 5 principles of counting

	The one-to-one principle.	The stable order principle.	The cardinal principle.	The abstract principle.	The order irrelevance principle.
What does it mean?	Each item is counted once and once only	The order of numbers names always stays the same. Eg. One, two, three, four, five	The number given to the last object counted gives the answer to the question how many...?	Anything can be counted.	A set of objects counted in any order or arrangements results in the same total.
A child who understands this can:	Able to keep track of what objects/items have been counted and which ones still need to be counted. This may be done through touching the items or moving them to one side or placing them in a pot once counted.	Able to count a set of objects using the number names eg. One, two, three, four.	Able to state that there are eg. Three pieces of fruit after counting one, two, three. Able to count out a number of objects from a larger set (knowing when to stop).	Able to count a set consisting of different objects.	Able to state that the total remains the same when the same set of objects are counted in a different order or when the objects are rearranged.
A child who cannot yet understand this will:	May lose track of the items, possibly counting them more than once or omitting items from the count.	May recite numbers but in the wrong order. Eg. One, two, three, four, two.	May recount the piece of fruit when asked how many...? When asked to count out a given quantity from a larger set, may not know when to stop counting.	May count the apples and the oranges separately but may not recognise them as a group of fruit. May not be able to count things like claps or head taps or noises.	May need to recount a set of objects they have already counted when the objects are rearranged (no object is added or removed). May need to recount a set of objects if they do so in a different order.