



Kindergarten: Is Your Child Ready?

Key Considerations

Child development experts agree that no perfect formula determines when children are truly ready for kindergarten.

According to the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), commitment to promoting universal school readiness requires supporting children's individual differences and establishing reasonable and appropriate expectations for what children should be able to do when they enter school.

"Enthusiasm and excitement can be big indicators of readiness," says Molly O'Hara Dowley, director of K-5 at K¹². "If your child is excited about school, they may very well be ready to enter kindergarten. It's the role of teachers to meet children where they are and assist them in developing from there."

While individual [state age requirements](#) and some basic academic benchmarks are considered readiness

indicators, it's also important to consider the following as you regarding your particular child:

- Children enter kindergarten at different levels of preparedness and with various levels of skills and knowledge.
- Good educators meet children where they are developmentally and help them to discover, learn, and grow.
- Parents know their child best.
- Kindergarten is a time of tremendous growth, as are the months leading up to starting kindergarten. Perhaps a child can't count to 10 today, but may be able to do so tomorrow.
- Can your child focus on an activity for 15–20 minutes?

Basic Benchmarks

These tasks are examples of what children may have either mastered or come close to accomplishing by the time they start kindergarten:

Math

- Counts in sequence 1–10
- Identifies shapes
- Identifies numerals 1–10
- Sorts and classifies
- Patterning

Language Arts and Writing

- Identifies some letters
- Rhymes words
- Experiments with sounds
- Begins to write letters and numerals
- Enjoys being read to
- Speaks in sentences using five to six words
- Looks at pictures and tells stories about them

Other Skills

- Traces on the line
- Enjoys cutting with scissors
- Balances on one foot
- Bounces a ball
- Hops and skips

How To Prepare Your Child

- Help your child write their name
- Explore shapes and colors
- Learn letters and their sounds
- Enjoy numbers, including counting together (count stairs, birds, etc.)
- Discover words that rhyme
- Read, read, read to your child—read books to your child and read the words that are part of their everyday world (signs on buildings, boxes, etc.)
- Sort similar objects by color, size, and shape
- Talk about the days of the week
- Draw, cut, and run
- Play games