

# Mastering the X Tables – TOP TIPS for parents

Your child needs to know all the x tables (up to  $12 \times 12 = 144$ ) by the end of year 4. Here are some tips so that you can help at home.

- ❖ Learning the times tables is a rite of passage for school children - a kind of club membership that transforms their confidence once they join.
- ❖ Tables seem easy when you've learned them, but the prospect of having to learn them can drive fear into some children - and this in turn has a negative effect on learning.
- ❖ And then there's "learning" and "mastering" - how well should they know them?
- ❖ Here we will look into learning times tables and provide some useful tips on how parents can help at home.

## What order should we learn times tables in?

### FIRST LEARN....

- ❖ 10x
- ❖ 2x
- ❖ 5x times tables.

### SECOND LEARN....

- ❖ 3x
- ❖ 6x
- ❖ 4x
- ❖ 8x

### THIRD LEARN....

- ❖ 7x
- ❖ 9x – there is an easy method to learning these!
- ❖ 12x
- ❖ 11x – these are a doddle!!

## Language and times tables

There are many different ways to say the tables and they're all correct - but it helps if you're consistent and if you adopt the language your child already uses at school. For example we have:

- ❖ three times eight is ...
- ❖ three multiplied by eight is ...
- ❖ three eights are ...
- ❖ three lots of eight are ...

## What are the methods for learning tables?

- ❖ Stick to learning one times table at a time.
- ❖ Start with chanting and writing them out slowly in order.
- ❖ Then move on to completing the answers quickly in order - on paper or verbally with your child.
- ❖ Finally, move on to completing the answers in any order
- ❖ Keep reminding your child that  $3 \times 4$  is the same as  $4 \times 3$  - this effectively halves the number of tables facts.
- ❖ Each times table has a square number  $3 \times 3$ ,  $7 \times 7$  - these are special "hand or foot holds" that can act as memory hooks - emphasize them!
- ❖ Talk about the numbers as you encounter them "5 x 8 = 40 that's mummy's age" , "3 x 6 = 18 that's our house number" . . . this makes more memory hooks.
- ❖ When you're trying to speed up recalling tables introduce some games.
- ❖ Games in the car usually work – your child can't escape!!

## What are the tips and tricks for learning each times table?

- ❖ The 2s, 4s and 8 times tables are doubles of each other - with many common answers -  $2 \times 8 = 16$ ,  $4 \times 4 = 16$ ,  $8 \times 2 = 16$ .
- ❖ The nine times tables can use the ten times tables and work back or compensate - so for  $5 \times 9$ , think  $(5 \times 10) = 50$  then  $- 5 = 45$ , also note that the digits in the answer always add to 9.
- ❖ The 3 and 6 times table are tricky. Do the 3s first then the 6s - expect these to be more difficult and make an allowance in time.
- ❖ The 7 times tables are hard but if you've done the other tables first you'll find you've encountered most of the 7s already elsewhere - such as  $7 \times 4 = 28$ ,  $7 \times 3 = 21$
- ❖  $7 \times 8 = 56$  is the hardest times table! - **but tell this to your child and make a big deal about it and they'll never forget it!**

## Mastering the times tables

- ❖ You can know all the times tables without really going on to master them. So once your child has learned the times tables individually the next stage involves recalling them quickly in any random order.
- ❖ The practice can be verbal or written but either way you're looking for accurate answers within 3 seconds.

<u>How well do you know your x table?</u>	
<b>Bronze level</b>	I can say my x table correctly in order: $1 \times 4 = 4$ , $2 \times 4 = 8$ , $3 \times 4 = 12$ , $4 \times 4 = 16$ , $5 \times 4 = 20$ and so on.....
<b>Silver level</b>	I can answer in any order in less than 3 seconds: $4 \times 4 = 16$ , $9 \times 4 = 36$ , $2 \times 4 = 8$ , $7 \times 4 = 28$ and so on .....
<b>GOLD level</b>	I can use my knowledge of x tables to answer division questions: $32 \div 4 = 8$ , $16 \div 4 = 4$ , $12 \div 4 = 3$ , $20 \div 4 = 5$ and so on.....