

LISTEN & LEARN

Great pupils are great listeners. School involves a lot of listening – to their teacher and other adults – so practising good listening skills before your child starts school will help them get off to a great start.

If your child attends a childcare or preschool setting, they're probably already used to listening to and taking instruction from other adults. Other good opportunities include attending a sports or dance class or story sessions at your local library.



GET STARTED



GOOD LISTENERS

Encourage listening skills by being a good listener yourself – so give your child plenty of opportunity to talk to you. Chat about their play or their day and ask for their views.

ON THE SAME LEVEL

When you are talking to your child – make eye contact. Get down to their level whenever possible.

ATTENTION PLEASE

Minimise distractions by turning off TVs and stereos and ignoring phones and computers – especially during meals, stories, baths and bedtime.

LISTENING SKILLS

DO YOU RECALL?

When you finish reading a book or watching a TV programme together, ask your child if they can recall the storyline.

WHAT HAPPENED NEXT?

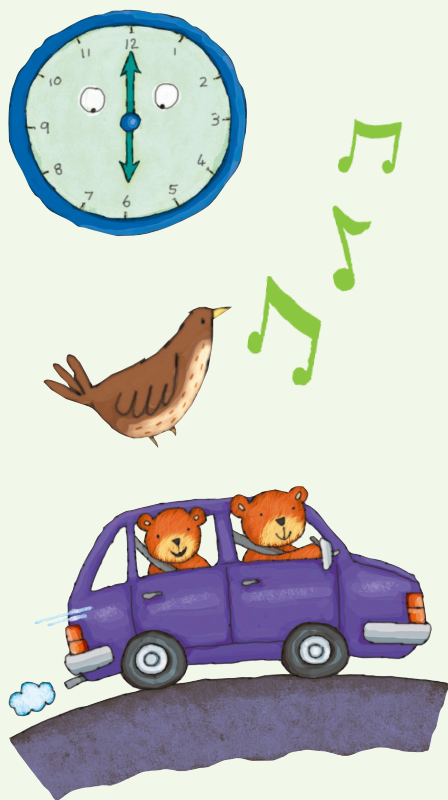
Make up a joint story, where you say one sentence, your child gives the next, and you keep alternating.

MEMORY GAMES

Play games such as 'I Spy' or 'I Went to the Shops and I Bought...' to boost memory as well as listening skills.



LISTENING GAMES



SIMON SAYS

Play 'Simon Says' – try replacing 'Simon' with your child's favourite toy or character.

WHAT CAN YOU HEAR?

Ask your child to close their eyes for one minute and list everything they can hear: a clock ticking, birdsong, cars...

TRAFFIC LIGHTS

In the game 'Traffic Lights', you say a colour and children do an action. Once they've mastered red for stop and green for go, introduce new colours and actions, such as orange for turn around and blue for touch the ground.

DELIBERATE MISTAKES

Get nursery rhymes deliberately wrong – "Humpty Dumpty sat on the sofa" or "Jack and Jill went up the escalator". Children love to spot the mistake and put it right.

TOP TIPS



LISTENING TRAINING

Sometimes your child may seem not to hear you – probably because they're completely absorbed in what they're doing and don't want it to end. If this often happens with your child, call them by name and give them a five-minute countdown to playtime ending. If they get angry or frustrated, discuss their feelings with them. It's all good practice for having to stick to an adult-led routine at school.

SHARING CONCERNS

If you suspect there may be a genuine issue with your child's hearing, have a chat with their childcare worker, preschool teacher or health visitor. If they share your concerns, go and see your GP so the issue can be investigated before they start school.

PACEY IS THE PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR CHILDCARE AND EARLY YEARS

We promote best practice and support childcare professionals to deliver high standards of care and learning. We have around 35,000 members – childminders, nannies and nursery workers – working around England and Wales. Every day they demonstrate their commitment to the highest standards of care and help children get the best start in life.