

## Hands-On Measurement!

Even if your child doesn't know the difference between an inch and a yard, she'll probably be quite interested at taking a look at a ruler or measuring stick. And she'll likely get a kick out of the fact that the "foot" on a ruler is believed to have originated from an actual foot on a man. (Some say King Henry I, although it's much more likely it came from someone in Mesopotamia or Egypt, long before Henry was born.)

Use this fun foot fact to your advantage with this easy activity that uses another body part, your child's hand, as a measuring stick.

### What You Need:

- Scissors
- Paper
- Child's hand
- Pencil or crayon



### What You Do:

1. Trace your child's hand and explain that you're going to use it as a homemade ruler.
2. Pick a room in the house, or head outside. Ask your child to take a good look at her hand and tell her she's going to compare its length to things you find on a measurement hunt. Before she lines her "ruler" up with anything, ask her to make a few guesses: which items does she think might be longer than her hand? Now give her a bag, set her loose, and ask her to find five items that fit the bill.
3. Once she's collected the longer items, ask her to find five items that are shorter than her hand, five that are bigger than her hand, and five that are smaller than her hand. Along the way, explain the difference between shorter and smaller, or bigger and taller.
4. Take the bag to a table and empty its contents. This is a great excuse for your child to practice her new vocabulary. Ask her to line up the items in order of size. Then send her around the house to find some other things to line up by size: your pets, your silverware, toys, or even family members!

It doesn't take a ruler to introduce measurement. And besides, now your child will know she's got her own tools with her whenever she needs them—she just needs to raise her hands.

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