

Sorting Socks

As a parent, you most likely know all too well that orphaned socks seem to constantly appear and go missing when you least expect them to. Here's a way to put those singled-out socks to good use! Plus, you'll be helping your preschooler build his number recognition skills. If you've got a child who loves puzzles, this activity is a great fit. He'll learn to identify different numbers, match like numbers together, and develop his grouping and ordering skills along the way.

What You Need:

- 10 or more pairs of socks (The socks in each pair do not have to match exactly. Since you'll mostly be using orphaned socks, simply try to pair similar socks together.)
- Colored duct tape or electrical tape
- Bold permanent marker
- Laundry basket
- Optional: Clothesline and clothespins



Set-Up:

1. Help your child use the marker to write the numbers 1–10 on strips of colored tape. Make two for each number.
2. Cut the numbers apart if you haven't already.
3. Lay the pairs of socks flat on the table and attach each pair of numbers to a pair of socks. If you do not have an assortment of socks, you and your child can simply cut pairs of paper socks from colored construction paper and write a number on each.
4. Place the socks in a laundry basket.

What You Do:

1. Invite your child to dump out the basket of socks and make a mess of everything!
2. Challenge your child to match the socks by their numbers and place them together in pairs on the floor.
3. Ask your child to name the numbers on the socks and identify their color.
4. Have your child place the pairs of socks in order from 1–10. If you decided to use a clothesline, invite her to hang her pairs of socks, in order, along the clothesline.
5. Give her one of the numbered pairs of socks and hang the second partner sock on a clothesline. Can she match the socks she has to the correct hanging socks on the clothesline? Have her try rolling socks into balls and toss them around, unroll them, and then try to identify the numbers on each sock. Can she do it?

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