

Is your purse empty?

Learning opportunities

- * Matching and counting skills
- * Simple addition and subtraction
- * Understanding how to use money and plan spending within a budget

Links to the Early Learning Goals

- * Mathematics – Numbers, Shape, space and measures

Equipment and resources

Four shopping baskets (made out of the insides of household matchboxes, with handles stapled across them); a die; at least 30 counters/buttons per child; lots of pictures of shopping items cut out and glued onto cards (small enough to fit into the baskets).

Activity

Mark each picture with different numbers of dots, making each item have a value of between 1 and 6. For example, a watch might have 6 dots, but a tin of cat food only 1 dot. Playing with a maximum of four children at a time, divide the counters out equally. Each child, in turn, may throw the die and buy something that has a value equivalent to the number of dots shown, putting it into his shopping basket. As the game progresses, it increases in difficulty, as the children try to spend exactly the amount of money that they have left. The game ends when a child manages to spend his budget money exactly.

Extension

Include a rule that allows children to buy two items, instead of one, that equal the number on the die. For example, if a 6 is thrown, a child may choose an item with 4 dots and an item with 2 dots. Provide purses so that each child can keep their money in a purse.

Discussion

Talk about adding the prices of items together, the costs of shopping and the real costs of different things.

