

Y4 Multiplication Tables Check

In June 2020, the new Year 4 multiplication tables check became statutory. Year 4 children take a short online test to make sure their times tables knowledge is at the expected level. The MTC will be delivered as an online, on-screen digital assessment and will take each pupil less than 5 minutes to complete.

The MTC is focused on the fluent recall of multiplication facts. This is included in the National Curriculum (2014) statutory programme of study for mathematics at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. The National Curriculum states, 'By the end of year 4, pupils should have memorised their multiplication tables up to and including the 12-multiplication table and show precision and fluency in their work'.

Why is the multiplication check happening?

First and foremost, the check is about finding out which children are struggling with their times tables so that they can get extra support. It is not a judgement on what your child can do, but a way for the school to know if children can rapidly recall their times tables and the teachers can offer further support where necessary. There will be no "pass mark" and no child will "fail" the test. In primary school, times-tables knowledge is vital for quick mental maths calculations and problem solving, as well as for many of the topics children learn in KS2 (division, fractions, percentages). In secondary school, good multiplication skills are a great help when starting to learn algebra, as well as chemistry, physics, biology and ICT, all of which depend heavily on maths knowledge.

"Leaving primary school with a fundamental grasp of basic numeracy is as important as leaving being able to read. And just as the phonics check has helped more children learn to read, this will ensure more pupils know their times tables."

Nick Gibb, schools minister

What does the multiplication check involve?

The multiplication tables check is an online test for pupils in Year 4. Pupils are asked to answer 25 questions on any of the times tables from 2 to 12. They are given six seconds per question, with three seconds rest between each question. The test should last less than five minutes.

How can your child be supported?

The best way to keep the test stress-free is to work some times tables practice into your daily routine. With regular practice, your child will get used to tackling their times tables with confidence. Ideas include:

1. Use times table wall charts

Wall charts show all the answers for a particular times table. For instance, you could put them over the sink so that your child will see them when they're brushing their teeth.

2. Make it real

Try to create opportunities for your child to use multiplication in problem solving. For example, ask them to scale up a recipe or calculate whether they have enough money to buy more of their favourite things (such as sweets or football cards). This will help your child see the value of their learning.

3. Practise on the computer

All children have access to Times Tables Rock Stars. The Gig and Garage sections provide the children with an opportunity to practise tables. They can also complete a mock multiplication check by visiting the Soundcheck section.

4. Encourage children to complete their homework

Often, the children will have a question in their maths homework that involves their knowledge of multiplication. At the end of each half term, they will also take home a multiplication practice booklet to complete.

5. Multiplication songs

In school, we are regularly singing along to times table songs found on You Tube. The children may want to have these on in the background whilst at home.

Many thanks for your continued support. If you would like any other support, please see your child's class teacher.