

# Kindergarten Readiness Checklist

While there's no perfect formula for determining when children are truly ready for kindergarten, you can use this guide to see how well your child is doing in acquiring the skills found on most kindergarten checklists. Check the skills your child has mastered. Recheck each month to see what additional skills your child can accomplish easily. Young children change so fast. Remember that if your child can't do something this week, she may be able to do it a few weeks later!

- Listen to stories without interrupting
- Recognize rhyming sounds
- Pay attention for short periods of time to adult-directed tasks
- Understand that actions have both causes and effects
- Show understanding of general times of day
- Cut with scissors
- Trace basic shapes
- Begin to share with others
- Start to follow rules
- Be able to recognize authority
- Manage bathroom needs
- Button shirts, pants, and coats, and zip up zippers
- Separate from parents without being upset
- Speak understandably
- Talk in complete sentences of five to six words
- Look at pictures and then tell stories
- Identify rhyming words
- Identify the beginning sound of some words
- Identify some alphabet letters
- Recognize some common sight words like "stop"
- Sort similar objects by color, size, and shape
- Recognize groups of one, two, three, four, and five objects
- Count to ten
- Bounce a ball

If your child has acquired most of the skills on this checklist and will be at least five years old at the start of the summer before kindergarten, he or she is probably ready for kindergarten. What teachers want to see on the first day of school are children who are healthy, mature, capable, and eager to learn.

## Voyager School ~ Home Responsibilities in Building School Readiness

1. Assign appropriate chores for your child (making bed, picking up toys, help cleaning dinner dishes) and follow through with consequences if they do not get done.
2. Require your child to sit while eating.
3. Encourage their independence: at 5 years old they should be feeding themselves, sleeping in their own bed, getting dressed by themselves, helping with simple home tasks, and picking up after play.
4. Toys should *always* be put away and treated with care.
5. Parents must be consistent in following through with consequences for unacceptable behavior. Never let a child speak disrespectfully or be physically aggressive with others without a consequence.
6. Help your child learn to control his/her body. You can make a game of it by putting soft music on and having them practice lying still for periods of time. Challenge them to sit in the same spot for 5 minutes (extending the time as they get better). Ballet, hula, meditation, yoga, or martial arts are helpful for learning these skills!
7. Talk to your child about “thinking before they act” and have high (but realistic) expectations. The acronym STAR sometimes helps them remember (stop, think, act, respect).
8. Limit video games, TV, or movies (especially right before bed). Avoid any violent media.
9. Emphasize that there is a **time and a place for everything** (wrestling with daddy at home is okay but not in other settings with other people).
10. Establish routines at home (morning and bedtime). The more predictable and structured the routine, the more quickly your child will learn to go with and participate in the flow.
11. Frame your child’s behavior in terms of choices. If your child is misbehaving offer some other choices of behavior and give them an opportunity to make another choice. If they do not make a better choice, follow through with consequences.
12. Do not threaten. As adults we often use too many words. Actions speak louder than words...particularly with children.
13. Consequences should relate to the offense whenever possible, should be delivered as quickly as possible after the event, and should be time-limited so that your child remembers what he/she is being punished for. At the end of the consequence period, debrief with your child. Why were you on time-out? What would have been a better behavior choice? What will you do next time? Do you need to make it right with anyone?

## Kindergarten Readiness Checklist

This list is a resource to help parents track the skills necessary for success in school. Practice at home can help boost skills so that your child can get the most of their early school experience. Please remember that children develop at different rates...what they cannot do today may be something that comes relatively easy in the next month or so!

MY CHILD CAN	YES	NO	COMMENTS
Tell first and last name			
Give address			
Give telephone number			
Hold a book and turn pages one at a time			
Use scissors to cut paper			
Draw and color pictures that are recognizable			
Listen and follow directions			
Concentrate quietly on an assigned task for at least ten minutes (e.g., cleaning up room)			
Retell a story after listening to it			
Pay attention to a short story when it is read and answer simple questions about it			
Speak in sentences of more than four words			
Make an effort to solve problems before seeking help from others			
Continue an activity without constant attention and encouragement			
Identify likeness and differences in pictures, objects, and forms			
Classify objects by groups, such as food or clothing			
Copy a circle, square, and triangle so that it is recognizable			
Compare objects according to size			
Count objects up to five			
Count to ten or beyond			
Take care of toilet needs			
Tell simple word means (e.g., tree, shoe, water, horse)			
Put together a puzzle of at least (10) pieces			
Dress, zip, and/or button clothing			
Recognize basic colors (e.g. blue, green, red, yellow, orange, brown, black)			
Recognize some letters of the alphabet			
Attempt to read and write			
Attempt new tasks			
Play well with others			
Adjust well to new situations			

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