



# The Cat in the Hat Knows a Lot About That!

## ACTIVITY

### EXPLORING MEASUREMENT



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## Overview

Does your child enjoy measuring his height to find out how much he has grown? Or perhaps he likes to stand back to back with a sibling or friend to see who is taller? These are great early experiences with measurement. You can help your child learn more about measurement by measuring things around the house, or comparing two objects to see which is taller, shorter, or wider.

## The Math Idea

Before kids learn to use standard tools, such as a ruler, to measure length and height, it is helpful to introduce them to nonstandard measuring tools. These can be anything from their own feet and hands to pencils, pennies, or a length of string. You can measure with anything as long as you use the same unit of measure. Kids quickly learn the value of standard measuring tools when they see that when you measure with nonstandard tools the results are not always the same.

**Skills:** Measurement: Length and Width  
**Ages:** 3–6

## What to Do

- [Go on a Length Hunt](#)
- [Take It Further](#)

## Getting Ready

Walk around your home, and talk with your child about how things come in different sizes. For example, point to a book and ask your child questions such as *Can you find another book that is smaller than this one? Can you find one that is bigger?; How about the same size?* You can do this activity with other items as well, such as pieces of furniture, cups, boxes of cereal, canned goods, etc.



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## Go on a Length Hunt

### What You Need

- Yarn, string, ribbon, or strips of paper
- Scissors
- Things around the house to measure

### How to Do It

1. Cut a piece of string into five different lengths, none longer than a foot. You can also use yarn, ribbon, or strips of paper.
2. Put the pieces of string into a paper bag or other container.
3. First show your child how to do the activity by reaching into the bag and choosing one of the pieces of string.
4. Ask your child to help you look around the house and find something that is about the same size as the string. When you find something, hold the piece of string up to it. Ask your child, “Is it the same size as the string?” If it isn’t, ask him, “Is it shorter or longer than the piece of string?”
5. Once your child understands how to do the activity, let him choose a piece of string and identify an object to measure. When he measures the object, be sure he places one end of the string exactly at the end of the object before extending it to the other side of the object.

## Take It Further

Get three of the items that your child just measured with the string, and put them next to each other on a table. Ask your child to put them in order from smallest to biggest. Which item is biggest? Which is smallest?



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## More Ways to Discover and Learn

### Look in a Book

*Big Dog . . . Little Dog* by P. D. Eastman; illustrated by Peter Anthony Eastman  
*Inch by Inch* by Leo Leoni

### Related Game

Play the Welcome to Beaver City game on PBS KIDS  
(<http://pbskids.org/catinthehat/games/beaver-city.html>)