

When children understand what is being said, it helps them make sense of the world around them. Just as with all aspects of language development, children's ability to understand language develops gradually. An ability to follow instructions helps children to know what's happening at home and in early years settings as they play and learn.

"Let's go shopping"

Getting ready

Gather together items to go into a 'shop', a bag to put them in and maybe some real or pretend money to make it more fun. Place the children into groups of 'shoppers'.



How to play

- Put the items out in the 'shop'. (The shop could be a table or in the role play area, or just on the floor.) To make it more exciting you could use real food such as raisins or apples.
- Talk about what the items are as you put them out. Then tell the children it's time to go shopping. Give them an instruction and let the children take turns to collect items you ask for.

"Andre, we need to buy a pen, a car and some bricks". If needed, help by saying the sentence a couple of times. Encourage the child to collect the items in the order that you asked for them. This helps to develop their memory for words which is vital for following longer instructions.

- Congratulate the child when they find the right one "Yes, here's the pen, we needed a pen". Repeating the words, will help the child to know they have got it right.

Play it a different way

Make it easier: Start off with one item. If they are enjoying it and find it easy, ask for two, then three and so on.

Make it trickier: Give the children clues about what you want rather than the name. For example say, "Karina, we need something to play with and something to eat".