



USE MANIPULATIVES

A manipulative is a tool that students can use for support when solving a math problem. Simply put, manipulatives are real objects that students can see and touch. Using manipulatives gives students a chance to see what is happening within a problem. These tools also support students when they're explaining their thinking to others.

A manipulative can be any of a wide variety of objects:

- Counters—Any items that are small and easy to count, such as macaroni noodles, beans, buttons, washers, or pom poms can be used.
- Counting Cubes—Both the linking kind and the centimeter size work well.
- Dominoes
- Muffin Pans—These help students count objects and organize their work.

How You Can Help Your Child with This Strategy at Home

1. When working on math with your child, have a few manipulatives available for them to use. Model for your child how you can use this tool to help you *see* the problem and how it helps you *show* your thinking to others.
2. After modeling for your child, ask them to use manipulatives to solve a different problem. Ask them, "How does this tool help me *see* the problem?"
3. Remind your child that using these tools helps us see what is happening in the problem. Also, remind them that a variety of tools can help us and that it is important to select one we know how to use.