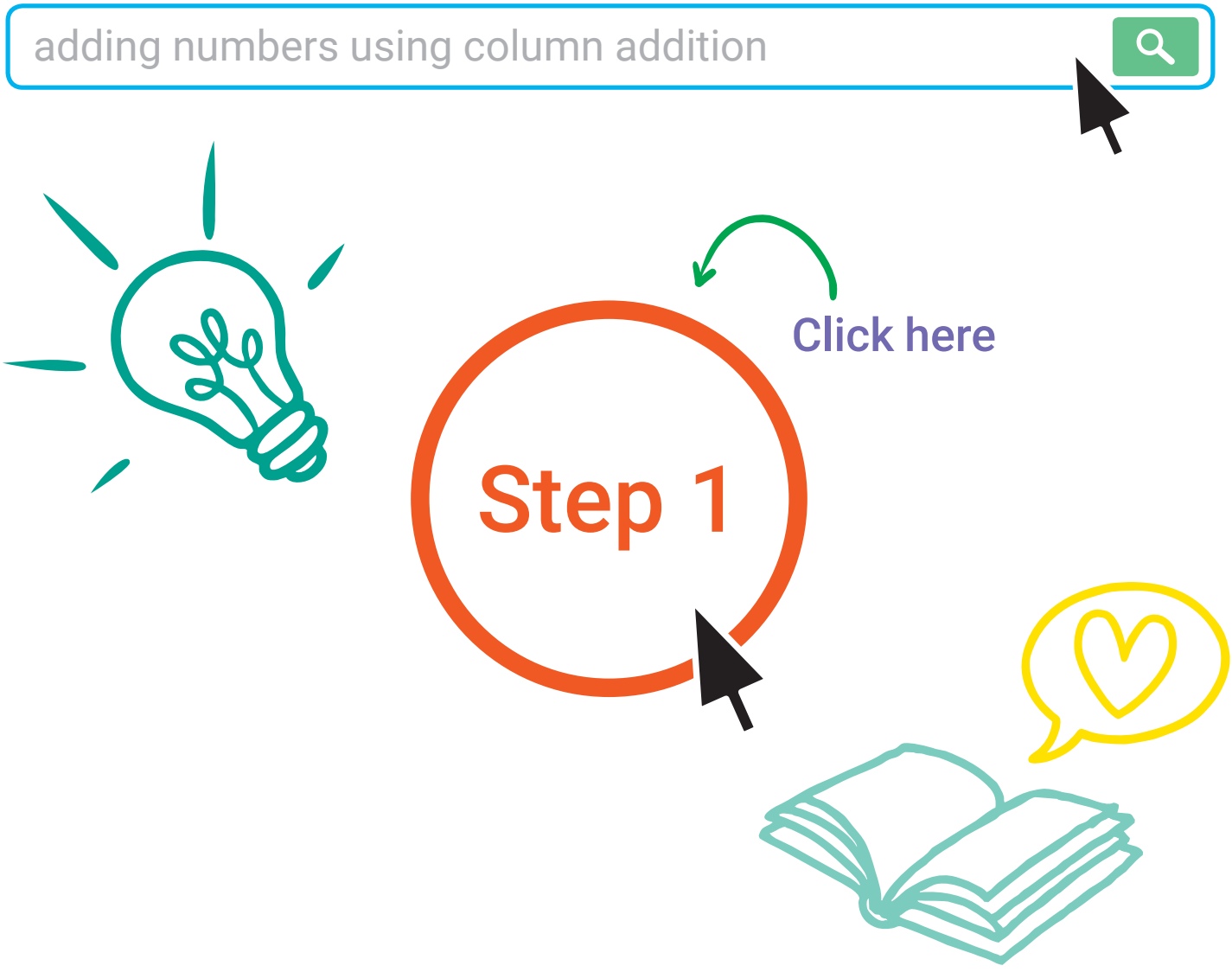
Year 3 Addition and Subtraction: A Step-by-Step Guide for Parents

This step-by-step explanation to year 3 addition and subtraction can help you support your child's learning at home. The subject is broken down into manageable chunks, providing you with a simple guide to follow when learning about year 3 addition and subtraction, either to support your child's homework or if you decide to give your child some extra support. In this guide, you will find a step that matches your child's level of understanding and then have suggested activities which can be used to support that step.

Within **this area of the website**, you will find a selection of resources intended to help your child learn about each step of this guide. Each step also contains a keyword or phrase that you can use to search the Twinkl site for more resources and activities, designed to support your child in achieving that stage. Simply type the keyword or phrase into the search bar and press enter to explore together.



We hope you find the information on our website and resources useful. The contents of this resource are for general, informational purposes only. This guide is intended to offer parents general guidance on what subject areas tend to be covered in their child's year group and where they could support their children at home. However, please be aware that every child is different and information can quickly become out of date. There are some subject areas that we have intentionally not covered due to the nature of how they are taught or because a trained professional needs to teach these areas. We try to ensure that the information in our resources is correct but every school teaches the national curriculum in its own way. If you would like further guidance or are unsure in any way, we recommend that you speak to your child's teacher or another suitably qualified professional.

Addition and Subtraction

What Are Children Taught about Addition and Subtraction in Year 3?

In year 3, children are taught to:

- add and subtract numbers mentally, which includes adding ones, tens and hundreds to a three-digit number;
- add numbers up to three-digits using column addition;
- subtract numbers up to three-digits using column method;
- estimate answers and use the inverse operation to check answers.

This guide can help you support the learning of year 3 addition and subtraction at home. Each step contains an explanation to that stage and a link to an appropriate resource which can be used at home to support your child's learning.

As well as using the resources in this category and the keyword searches to help your child with addition and subtraction, below are a few ideas for games and activities to help your child practise adding and subtracting at home.

Random Numbers

Write a selection of three-digit numbers on pieces of paper, fold them up and place in a bag. On a dice, add a plain sticker to each face and write the following to each face: + 1, + 10, + 100, - 1, - 10, - 100 (or you could use this **editable dice net**). Take it in turns to select a number and roll the dice before completing the calculation. If the player is correct, they keep the numbered piece of paper. The winner is the player with the most numbers at the end.

Counting

Choose a three-digit number and count forwards or backwards together in steps of ones, tens or hundreds. You can also make this into a turn-taking activity where you say one number then your child says the next in the sequence and so forth.

Shopping

There are lots of opportunities when out shopping for your child to practise their addition and subtraction skills. For example, you could ask your child to: check the receipt by adding up the cost of items; calculate the change; calculate the price of two or three items you are buying. This gives addition and subtraction a purposeful and real-life context.

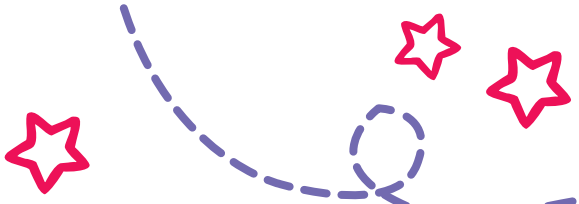
Let's Play Inverse

This is a fun activity for practising doing the inverse (the opposite calculation) with your child. Give them a simple calculation, such as 4 + 5 = 9, and ask them to think of an inverse calculation, such as 9 – 5 = 4. They can then challenge you to do one and check if you are correct. This can help your child understand the inverse operation.

Step 1

Add and Subtract Numbers Mentally (Including Adding Ones, Tens and Hundreds to a Three-Digit Number)

In year 3, most children are taught to recognise and read numbers up to 1000. They also build on their year 2 knowledge of mental calculation by learning to add and subtract ones, tens and hundreds to any three-digit number (for example, 356 + 1, 356 + 10 or 356 + 100). In school, children will often use a range of visual and physical apparatus to help them practise this. You can support your child at home by using **these addition and subtraction games** to help them practise their mental calculation skills in a fun way.



Add Numbers up to Three-Digits Using Column Addition

Step 2

In year 3, children are formally introduced to using the column method to add three-digit numbers. At first, children will often complete calculations where there is no exchange (carrying over) and then build up to calculations where there is an exchange (a carry over). To help your child at home, try using **this worksheet** to help your child practise using column addition. You can also use this **poster** to help revise how to use the column method for addition. It may be useful to discuss with your child (or their class teacher) how the method is taught in school to make sure you are consistent at home.

Step 3

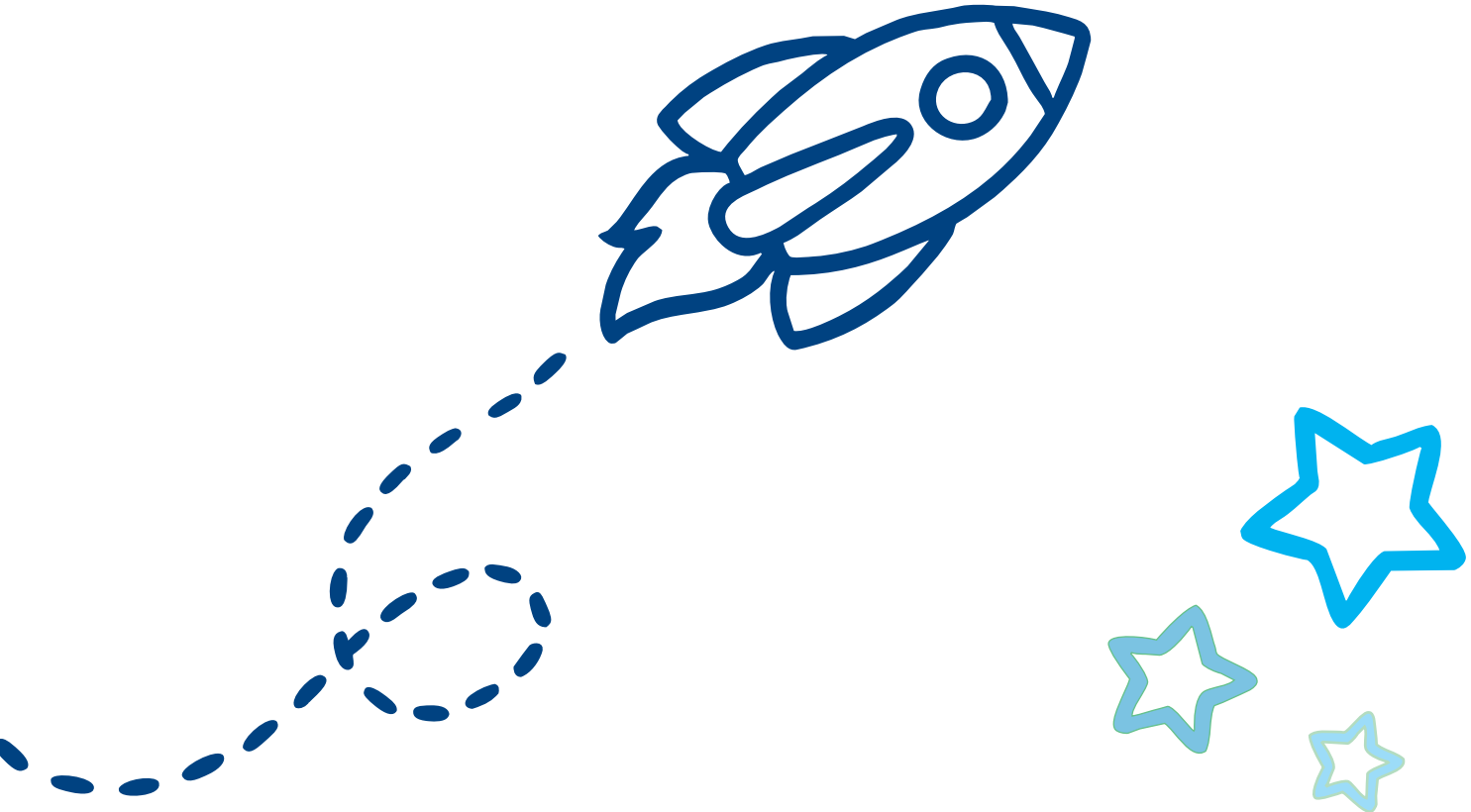
Subtract Numbers up to Three-Digits Using Column Method

Like addition, children begin to use formal column subtraction in year 3 (you can use this **poster** as a reminder for how to do column subtraction). Children will begin by completing calculations without exchanging (what you may have learn as 'borrowing' at school) and then they move onto completing calculations with exchanges. Often, visual images are used (such as place value charts with counters) to help children understand where the exchange comes from. At home, you can try **this booklet** which includes column subtraction activity sheets with and without exchanges.

Step 4

Estimate Answers and Use the Inverse Operation to Check Answers

The inverse operation just means the opposite operation. For example, addition and subtraction are the inverse of each other and, multiplication and division are inverse operations. In year 3, children are taught to use the inverse to check the answers to calculations. For example, in the calculation 356 + 147 = 503, you can use an inverse calculation to check that the answer is correct. In this case, there are two inverse calculations you could do, 503 - 147 = 356 or 503 - 356 = 147. Children are often encouraged to use the column method to complete inverse calculations. At home, your child could try completing **this activity booklet** to practise addition and subtraction.



Explore and Discover More

Twinkl Go! is a digital platform, hosting interactive content such as videos, games, audiobooks and more. Twinkl Go! enables digital content to be streamed to your computer or mobile device.

Twinkl Book Club is our book subscription service. Enjoy our original works of fiction in beautiful printed form, delivered to you each half-term and yours to keep!

Twinkl Boost is a range of intervention resources, created to support and lift learning with children at every level. These include our easy-to-use SATs and Phonics Screening resources.

Imagine resources are designed to help your children to think creatively, question and imagine. Every week, a new topic consisting of five photos, each with related activities, is created.

Twinkl Originals are engaging stories written to inspire children from EYFS to KS2. Designed to encourage a love of reading and help curriculum-wide learning through accompanying resources.

Twinkl Kids' TV is our wonderful YouTube channel dedicated to fun and informative video-style resources full of new and creative activities you can try at home!