Name _____ Date _____

Counting through zero

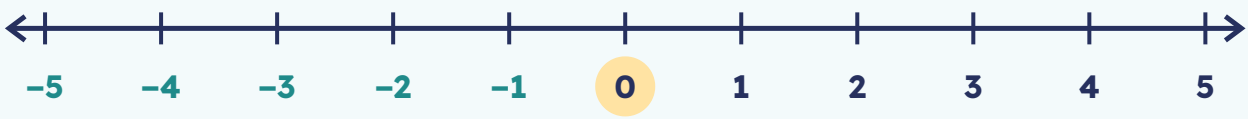
When you count back past 0, the numbers keep going: −1, −2, −3…

1 Learn

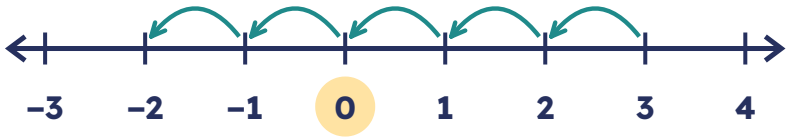


Counting back doesn't stop at zero! Numbers **less than zero** are called **negative numbers** (or minus numbers). We write them with a minus sign: **−1**, **−2**, **−3**.

← negative numbers: less than 0 — more than 0: positive numbers →



Start at 3 and count back 5.



1. Put your finger on 3. **2.** Hop back one at a time: 2, 1, **0**, −1, −2. **3.** 5 hops lands on **−2**.

Flip's tip: zero is a number, so it gets a hop too. And keep the minus sign: **−3** and **3** are different numbers!

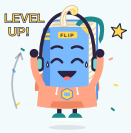
Warm up: keep counting back.

3, 2, 1, ☐, ☐, −2

Grown-ups: say the numbers aloud together: "two, one, zero, minus one, minus two". Children often jump from 1 straight to −1, so listen for the zero.

Name _____ Date _____

2 Try it together a child and a grown-up, about 10 minutes



Floor number line

You need: 11 sheets of paper (or paper plates), a thick pen and a bit of clear floor.

1. Write **−5, −4, −3, −2, −1, 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5**, one on each sheet. Lay them in a line on the floor, in order, with 0 in the middle.
2. The child stands on a number. The grown-up says "count back 4". The child steps back one sheet at a time, saying each number out loud.
3. Where did you land? Write it in the table. Then swap jobs.
4. Try starting on a negative number, like −1, and counting back 3.

Start on	Count back	Land on

Grown-ups: tape the sheets down or walk slowly so nobody slips. Keep the hops within −5 to 5.

3 Practise

A. Fill the gaps. Count back.

4, 3, 2, ☐, ☐, −1

1, 0, ☐, −2, ☐

−2, −3, ☐, ☐, −6

6, 4, 2, ☐, −2, ☐

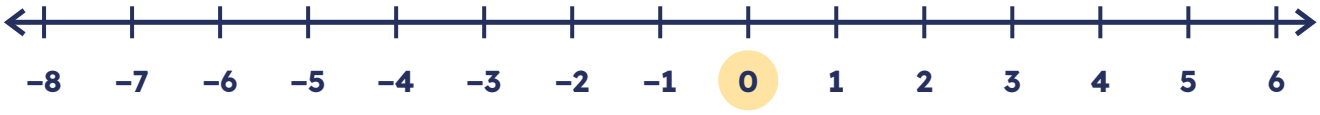
Counting through zero

Name _____ Date _____

B. Write the missing numbers on the number line.



C. Start on the first number and count back. Where do you land? Use the number line to help.



Start **2**, back **4**	Start **0**, back **3**	Start **5**, back **7**	Start **−1**, back **4**
→ ____	→ ____	→ ____	→ ____

D. Count back from **3** to **−3**. Write every number you say. How many numbers is that?

_____ numbers: ____

Challenge

Sam starts on **2** and counts back **4**. He says, "1, −1, −2, −3. I land on −3!" Is he right? What did he forget?

_____

_____

I can...

Tick when you can.

- [ ] count back through zero: 2, 1, 0, −1, −2
- [ ] find negative numbers on a number line
- [ ] write the minus sign on negative numbers