

Building the number line to 120 introduction

If you cannot run this as a full-class floor activity, the pictorial mat and cards in the demonstration resource work as a backup — but the floor version is still the best way to teach this.

1 Extend the floor line you have already built — do not start again

Recall the number line already built on the classroom floor with masking tape, up to 100.

“Remember the number line we built on the floor, all the way to one hundred? We are not starting over — we are extending it.”

Pose the challenge: the line needs to reach 120 now. Where do the new numbers go?

“Now our line needs to reach one hundred and twenty. Where should the new numbers go?”

Show extending the tape further in the same direction, continuing the same spacing: 110, then 120.

“We can add more tape, continuing the same spacing as before: one hundred and ten, one hundred and twenty.”

Show the alternative, for when there is no more floor space to extend into: keep the same overall length, but squeeze every gap a little smaller so 120 still fits.

“If we do not have more floor space, we could make every gap a little smaller, so zero to one hundred and twenty still fits in the same length.”

Compare the two approaches side by side.

“Extending the tape keeps the same spacing but takes up more floor. Squeezing the gaps keeps the same length but makes each gap smaller. Which one fits our space?”

Show a common mistake: adding the new numbers with uneven gaps instead of adjusting every gap by the same amount. Check it: are all the gaps still the same size as each other?

“I added one hundred and ten and one hundred and twenty, but squeezed them in unevenly. Are all the gaps still the same size? A fair number line needs even gaps all the way along.”

Blank number line strip – demonstration



Tick and label cards — demonstration

