



Shaping Up

Take heart...

Recognizing and drawing hearts and other shapes help children learn to write.

- ♥ Circles, and the lines and angles found in triangles and squares are also necessary elements of alphabet letters. For instance, familiarity with shapes can make learning to print "b" and "v" easier.
- ♥ Alphabet letters and shapes are both symbols. Letters represent sounds. Shapes often represent objects or ideas. On Valentine's Day we are especially reminded of this when we draw a heart to convey love. We help children understand that print has meaning when we teach them about shapes as well as about letters.



Just like regular exercise, learning to recognize shapes takes practice.

How can you help?

With your child:

1. Look for shapes in the doorways, windows, dinner plates or slices of pizza.
2. Play "I Spy" for objects that are in the shape of a square, circle, rectangle or triangle.
3. Ask children if they'd like their toast or sandwich cut in triangles, rectangles or squares, or if they like their breakfast served as a circle (English muffin or bagel).



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Rhymes about Shapes

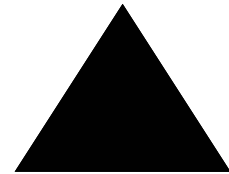
A Square Is Its Name

Here's a shape that you should know.
A square is its name.
It has four corners and four sides.



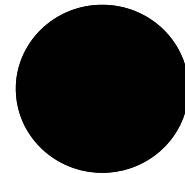
The Triangle

(Form triangle with fingers.)
The triangle is a simple shape
I think you will agree.
Count its sides and corners,
And you will find just three.



The Circle

(Form circle with fingers.)
The circle is a shape
That's easy to be found.
It has no corners on it
And is completely round.



A Rectangle

This shape is called a rectangle.
It's found most everywhere.
It has four corners and four sides,
Sort of like a square.
But if you call this shape a square,
You would be very wrong
Since two of its sides are short,
And two of them are long.

