



Multiplication Tables Check for Year 4

Here's what you need to know:

1. We love maths. It's an awesome subject to learn and to teach.
2. Maths is a big subject and we appreciate there's more to it than times tables - there's also more to times tables than learning them off by heart. However, a lot of the rich, interesting maths is all about the multiplicative relationships and these are hard to fully grasp without fluent recall of the tables. For that reason, learning the tables is fundamental – they are a key facilitator to the maths that sits on top. We've always believed that.
3. We're in favour of the checks because it's always good to sharpen practice across the education sector and this is a useful lever to get schools to do that. We're already in a good place with learning the tables and the expectations are in line with the National Curriculum so it's business as usual for us.
4. The checks are compulsory. They will be done at some point during the year, most likely within a three-week-long window towards the end of the year.
5. The results of the test are not published publicly, they're not going to end up on a league table and they're not to worry about. There's no pass or fail, there's just a score out of 25 marks. They're not to be used to compare children, they're for *us* to reflect on so that we make the most of our provision. We're actually looking forward to seeing how well we do.
6. The checks consist of 25 questions. The questions will only be multiplication and they will go up to 12×12 . There's nothing novel about the questions and they don't require problem solving so there's nothing to trip children up.
7. The checks are all about remembering the multiplication facts. That doesn't mean we'll forget all about the concepts, patterns, structures and relationships in multiplication. We're going to be learning those too, partly because they go hand in hand with excellent recall.
8. There are concerns shared in the public domain that this is "yet another test". The government has been careful to call it a "check" and that's important. It signals their intention to keep it low-stakes and we should remember that the data could prove useful to us.
9. Given that the questions are relatively simple, age appropriate and the length of the check, which is carried out on a computer, is under 5 minutes, we don't think the checks are too onerous.
10. Tests in themselves don't cause anxiety. It's the perceived cost of not doing well. For that reason, we will actively downplay the checks with the pupils. The only thing that will stress the children is if we repeatedly refer to the checks in class or at home, even casually in front of them when they're not supposed to be listening.
11. So we will not ever be saying "Remember you've got the multiplication checks next year." Or "We must practice because you've got the checks coming up." We just won't mention them. Please be supportive of that and refrain from referring to the checks at home too.
12. As far as they're concerned, when it comes to the day itself, they're going to have the computers or tablets out so it will just seem like the teachers have chosen to do something slightly different.



RUGBY FOOTBALL UNION

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13. You may notice us taking even more initiative when it comes to learning the tables with more options for home learning. If you are practising with your child, remember you're practising for the benefit of their wider maths education, not for them to get a high score on the tests. So please enjoy the opportunity to work with your child and remember to hold back on comments about the checks.
14. Please be supportive of our approach in parent-parent communication channels. It's important that we get behind the checks for the benefit of all our children.

Here at St. Stephen's C of E Primary School, we use a fantastic online way to develop knowledge of times tables and division facts for all pupils from Y1-Y6: Times Table Rock Stars.

When it comes to times tables, speed AND accuracy are important – the more facts your child remembers, the easier it is for them to do harder calculations. Times Table Rock Stars is a fun and challenging programme designed to help pupils master the times tables!

Your child's teacher will introduce them to how Times Tables Rock Stars works and the appropriate times tables to practice on a weekly basis will be allocated. This programme can be accessed online - your child has their own login and password. You may also download an App for the Iphone/Ipad or Android App through which your child may practice. When they first login, your child will choose their own rock star name and design their own avatar before starting to practise.

There are two single player modes to play:

Garage – This is the main mode the children should play. The questions will only come from the times tables the teacher has set for the week. As pupils start to answer questions, TT Rock Stars works out which facts they take longer on and will give them more of these questions to answer.

Studio - the questions in the Studio can be anything from 2x2 up to 12x12. TT Rock Stars calculates each the mean speed from their last 10 games in the Studio and translates into a Rock Status.

There are also multi-player modes:

Rock Arena - The Arena allows players to compete against all other members of their Band/Class (their Band mates would need to join the same game in order to compete together).

Rock Festival - The Rock Festival games are open to players from around the world. The questions are selected at random from 2x2 to 12x12.

It is recommended that that your child does a little bit of times table practice every night. Short bursts of practise on a daily basis are more effective than spending hours once a week.

To make a success of this programme and ensure that your child follows the programme of practising and remains motivated we need your help. Without your praise and your reminders, without you sitting down next to them or checking their work, practising times tables will not feel important to your child.

Thank you for your support and I am sure your hard work and theirs will have a direct impact and make them a Times Table Rock Star!

If you have a question or want to offer your thoughts on any of the above, please bring them to your child's teacher.