

Introducing the Teen Numbers

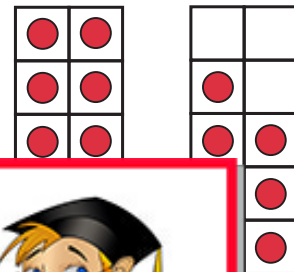
Teen numbers are tricky!

Compared to almost any other numbers, the numbers 11-19 are the most difficult for children to learn.

Therefore, teachers and parents should take extra care and time when introducing these numbers to children.

1. Teen numbers are named “backwards”:

Unlike virtually all other numbers, teen number names are read right to left:



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Teen num
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n

elev	
twelve	
thirteen	
fourteen	
15	fifteen
16	sixteen
17	seventeen
18	eighteen
19	nineteen

3. There are three teen numbers with “non-standard” ways to say the ones:

Some of the teen numbers tell you how many ones (even though it is said first): **fourteen**, **sixteen**, **seventeen**, **eighteen** and **nineteen**.

The rest are non-conformist: **twenty**, **thirty**, **fifty**. It would have been better to call them “twoty”, “threety” and “fivety”, but somehow they didn't get those names.

4. “Eleven” and “twelve”. Enough said.

Who thought up these names? Eleven and twelve belong in the same group as the numbers 13-19: each is a collection of ten and some ones. But their names don't give that away.

The bottom line: spend extra time carefully teaching the numbers 11 to 19, making sure that your student knows that each one is made up of ten plus ones.

Teaching Strategies - Numbers 11 to 20

Start with the numbers 14 and 16 to 19

These numbers use the single digit number names to tell us how many ones there are:

- four teen eight teen
- six teen nine teen
- seven teen

Note that there is some debate about which to introduce first, teen numbers or the numbers 20-99. Always follow your school's recommendation.

Explain to the student that these are all teen numbers, made up of a ten and some ones. The first part of the name states how many ones. The teen part means there is one ten. This is the first step in learning about place value. The "1" in "14" stands for 1 ten, which we call "teen".

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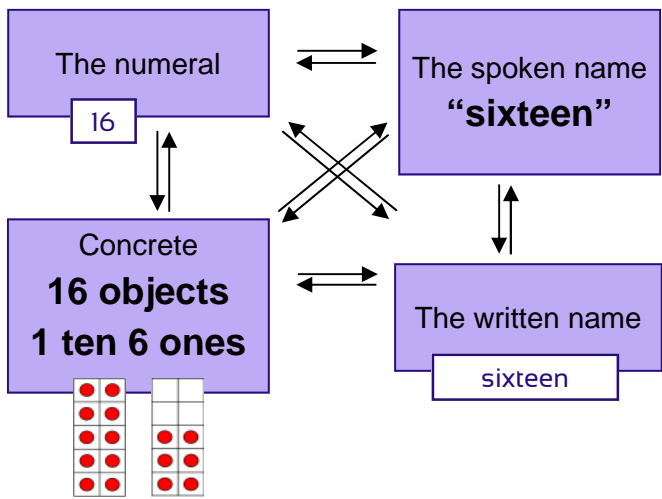
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Each number comes in different forms:

It is important that your student recognizes each teen number in each of these forms, and can move from one form to the others:



- The numeral 16 is written with digits 1 (ten) and 6 (ones)
- The spoken word "sixteen"
- Concrete objects or counters on ten frames (the first of which is full—one ten and six ones)
- The written word "sixteen"

Ten Frames

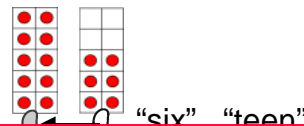
Prerequisite: Students should already be familiar with the numbers to 10 and have instant recognition of them on both horizontal and vertical ten frames (any direction really—the Ten Frame games of Dominoes and Cards are excellent for this).

Students should have instant recognition of a full ten frame as “ten”. The ten is shown vertically on the left at first (later, once the concept is fully established the ten frames can be shown in different ways—16 is always sixteen no matter how it is shown).

Show students a full ten frame and a second ten frame with 4, 6-9 on it.

Show students how to say this number

- Point to the ones first, say “six”, then the ten, say “teen”. “the one ten is called ‘teen’”



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of number. Help your students to recognize any number up to 20 without having to count at all.

Activities to help your student subitize the numbers to 20:

- Say the number “sixteen” and have your student show it on blank ten frames with counters. Use the double ten frame.
- Flash the card with a printed numeral and have your student show it on a blank ten frame with counters and then say and/or write the number.
- Flash a card with ten frames on it and ask the students to name the number, and/or write the number.
- Flash the card with the number name (written) and ask the students to show it on the double ten frame or to say it or write the number (numeral).