

LET'S COUNT!

A homemade abacus-inspired craft is great for practicing math skills, fine motor skills and color recognition. See step-by-step instructions below.

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A HOMEMADE ABACUS-INSPIRED CRAFT

SUPPLIES:

- 10 pipe cleaners
- 55, 1-inch wood beads
- 2, 12-inch wood dowel rods 1/8" diameter (if yours are longer, you can cut them to the right length)
- Paint
- Foam brush

STEPS:

1. Paint the wood dowels and beads and let dry.
2. Take the wood dowels and lay them so they are parallel.
3. Wrap one end of each pipe cleaner to the wood dowel; space evenly.
4. Cut paper or fabric covering any openings and tape flaps behind.
5. "Thread" 10 beads onto the first or last pipe cleaner. Wrap the end around the second dowel rod.
6. Repeat this step with the other beads in numerical order.

TIPS + NOTES:

The pipe cleaners provide enough friction with the beads that it's easy for young kids to set up their math problem without the beads sliding around. The abacus is a great tool to visually teach your child about addition, subtraction, multiplication, division and even place value.

