

Everything you need to know about the Multiplication Tables Check

You may have heard rumours about the new Multiplication Tables Check (or MTC) - eek! But don't worry, by understanding what the MTC is, how it'll be assessed and how you can help your child prepare for it, it's not as scary as it sounds.

What's the purpose of the MTC?

The Check is designed to help ensure that children know their times tables up to 12 off by heart.

When will it be introduced, and who will take the MTC?

The MTC is currently available as a voluntary test and will become a statutory requirement in the academic year of 2019-2020.

The Check will be taken by pupils in Year 4 (meaning that current Year 3 pupils will take the Check).

It will take place in June over a three-week window, with no set day for the Check.

How will the MTC be delivered?

The MTC will be taken on computers or tablets.

From the time a question appears on screen, pupils will have six seconds to answer each question, using a keyboard to input their answer or pressing digits with a mouse or touchscreen. It will consist of 25 questions and will take less than five minutes!

The questions will be randomly selected by the testing programme from 121 different options, ranging from $2 \times 2 =$ up to 12×12 . The test's software has been programmed to show children more questions from the 6, 7, 8, 9 and 12 times tables, as these are trickier times tables focused on more in Years 3 and 4. (The 2s, 5s and 10s are more of a focus in Years 1 and 2.)

How will the MTC be assessed?

Parents will receive results from the Check after the three-week window.

There won't be a 'pass' or 'fail' threshold - it's just to see how each child is doing and if they need any extra support in their times tables. It will also help schools to see if they need to make any adjustments to the way they're teaching.

How can I help my child prepare for the MTC?

- Try not to learn times tables only by reciting them in order, as this can make them harder to recall when they are presented in a random order. Instead, once your child feels comfortable with a table, ask them questions and gradually add in other tables as they become more confident.
- Over learn a few times tables at a time - we often spend 2 weeks learning the first half of a times table so that we know it inside and out and at speed - no counting on fingers!