



## Using Makaton at home

Makaton is a unique language programme that uses symbols, signs and speech to enable people to communicate. It supports the development of essential communication skills such as attention and listening, comprehension, memory, recall and organisation of language and expression.

**The following link shows a brief introduction to Makaton:**

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/joinin/something-special-what-is-makaton>

### Why use Makaton?

Research has shown that gestures/sign is easier to learn than spoken words. This makes sense as babies use gesture before they can speak to tell us what they want e.g. pointing at the biscuit tin/bottle to tell us they want a biscuit/drink. Makaton can help if a child has difficulty with understanding and speaking.

**The following link highlights the benefit of using Makaton at home:**

<https://youtu.be/tRiW0s7wWlc>

### Will using Makaton stop my child from speaking?

No. Research has shown that using signs and symbols actively encourages the development of speech and language skills. When using Makaton, we always speak while we sign or use symbols to make the link between the sign/ symbol and the spoken word. Many children then drop the signs or symbols naturally at their own pace, as they develop speech.

### Where do I start?

Start by introducing a few key signs matching important words in your child's language. This could for example be "juice" or "more". These signs help your child get their needs met throughout the day. Once these have been introduced you may begin to include more vocabulary signs.



The CBeebies television show 'Mr Tumble' uses Makaton signing. This is a great place to start for learning Makaton signs.

The following categories of sign may be beneficial for your child:

- Food: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1dZyWQWZ-Gk>
- Animals: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kW9OZwgQpWA>
- Vehicles: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IBD3BiVN9xI>

You might also use sign during different activities throughout the day. For example:

- Snack time: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=To2vQ4rB\\_ek](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=To2vQ4rB_ek)
- Play time: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Ps-IL1oMhQ&t=48s>
- Playing outside: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d4L0mVyykCA>
- Bedtime: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=elyByx09V08>





### Top tips!

- Using Makaton is fun!
- Use signs and symbols as much and as often as you can.
- Always speak as you sign.
- Offer lots of encouragement.
- Don't give up! It may take a while, but it is worth it in the end.

You can find more videos by clicking on the following links

**Makaton -** <https://www.youtube.com/user/makatoncharity/videos>

**Mr Tumble and Friends -**

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCynLtJ9E2c34bui4ON0ovGw>



Made by Ashely Marvell (Speech and Language Therapist)