

Dyscalculia — The Maths Café

Take the orders • work out the costs • serve with confidence. You are running the café. Use the menu, pretend money, a calculator, fingers, drawings or written steps. There is no timer. The aim is to practise real-life number skills without turning them into a test.

THE MATHS CAFÉ MENU

Hot drinks	Price	Food	Price	Treats	Price
Tea	£1.80	Toast	£1.50	Muffin	£1.80
Hot chocolate	£2.50	Soup	£2.80	Cake slice	£2.20
Latte	£2.30	Sandwich	£3.20	Cookie	£1.50
Americano	£2.00	Jacket potato	£3.50	Fruit pot	£2.00
Herbal tea	£1.80	Salad	£3.00	Yoghurt	£1.50

ORDER 1 — Morning Customer

The customer orders **tea + toast**. Find both prices and work out the total.

Tea	£_____
Toast	£_____
TOTAL	£_____

They pay with £5. Change: £_____. Use pretend coins or count up from the total if subtraction feels harder.

ORDER 2 — Lunch Customer

The customer orders **soup + a sandwich**. Work out the cost. Then choose how they could pay.

Soup	£_____
Sandwich	£_____
TOTAL	£_____
Could they pay with £5?	■ Yes ■ No

ORDER 3 — Your Choice

Choose any drink, any food and any treat. Write them below and find your café total.

Drink	_____	£_____
Food	_____	£_____
Treat	_____	£_____
TOTAL		£_____

The Maths Café — Orders & Money

ORDER 4 — The £6 Challenge

Choose **two menu items** while keeping the total at £6 or less. Try to get as close to £6 as you can without going over.

Item 1	_____	£ _____
Item 2	_____	£ _____
Total		£ _____
Money left from £6		£ _____

ORDER 5 — Which Is Better Value?

Customer A buys toast + tea separately. Customer B is offered a café special: toast + tea for **£3.00**. Compare the totals.

Toast + tea separately	£ _____
Special offer	£3.00
Cheaper option	_____
Difference	£ _____

ORDER 6 — The Change Tray

A bill is **£6.50** and the customer pays with £10. Work out the change. Then show one way of making that change using pretend coins.

Change = £ _____ My coins: _____

ORDER 7 — Share the Bill

Two friends share a bill of **£8** equally. How much does each person pay? Now imagine three friends want to share a £9 bill equally.

£8 shared by 2	£ _____ each
£9 shared by 3	£ _____ each

You can use coins, counters or draw groups to make the sharing visible.

ORDER 8 — Estimate First

Before calculating, circle the amount you think is closest.

Latte £2.30 + cake £2.20	About £2	About £4.50	About £8
Soup £2.80 + tea £1.80	About £1	About £4.50	About £9
Sandwich £3.20 + fruit £2.00	About £3	About £5	About £10

The Maths Café — Become the Café Manager

ORDER 9 — Busy Table

A table orders: **2 teas, 1 sandwich and 2 cookies**. Break the order into small parts rather than trying to hold everything in your head.

Item	Quantity	Price each	Subtotal
Tea	2	£1.80	£_____
Sandwich	1	£3.20	£_____
Cookie	2	£1.50	£_____
		TOTAL	£_____

ORDER 10 — Design Your Own Café Order

Create an order for somebody else to solve. You can use the menu or invent one new café item and choose its price.

Item	Price
_____	£_____
_____	£_____
_____	£_____
My order total	£_____

CUT-OUT ORDER CARDS

ORDER A	ORDER B
Tea + muffin Total: £_____	Latte + cake slice Total: £_____
ORDER C	ORDER D
Soup + toast Total: £_____	Sandwich + fruit pot Total: £_____
ORDER E	ORDER F
Hot chocolate + cookie Total: £_____	Herbal tea + salad Total: £_____

CAFÉ TOOLKIT

■ Read prices aloud	■ Pointed to menu items
■ Used pretend money	■ Used a calculator
■ Counted up for change	■ Wrote one step at a time
■ Estimated first	■ Checked the total
■ Asked for support	■ Found my own method

A strategy that helped me today: _____

Maths Café — Answer & Support Guide

Suggested answers

Order 1: tea £1.80 + toast £1.50 = £3.30. Change from £5 = £1.70. **Order 2:** soup £2.80 + sandwich £3.20 = £6.00, so £5 is not enough. **Order 3:** depends on choices. **Order 4:** multiple valid answers. **Order 5:** toast £1.50 + tea £1.80 = £3.30; the £3 special is 30p cheaper.

Order 6: £10 - £6.50 = £3.50. **Order 7:** £4 each; £3 each. **Order 8:** approximately £4.50; approximately £4.50; approximately £5. **Order 9:** two teas £3.60 + sandwich £3.20 + two cookies £3.00 = £9.80. **Order 10:** open-ended. Order cards: A £3.60; B £4.50; C £4.30; D £5.20; E £4.00; F £4.80.

Turn the PDF into a real café game

Cut out the order cards and take turns being the customer and café worker. Use toy money or real coins where appropriate. One person can read the order while the other finds each item on the menu. The customer can deliberately choose a note larger than the total so the café worker can practise finding change. Swap roles frequently so the activity stays playful.

Make money visible

For somebody with dyscalculia, £3.50 can be easier to understand when it is physically represented as £3 plus 50p. Keep prices and money in view rather than expecting several amounts to be remembered. When working out change, counting upwards from the price to the amount paid may feel more accessible than formal subtraction.

Reduce the load without removing the learning

Cover unused parts of the menu if the number of prices feels overwhelming. Read prices aloud. Highlight the decimal point. Work with one item at a time and write subtotals down. A calculator can be used after estimating, before estimating, or throughout; it is a practical tool, not evidence that somebody has failed the activity.

Keep the café pressure-free

There is no need to introduce speed or mental-maths rules. Real cafés involve tills, calculators, written prices and checking. The goal here is to practise navigating numerical information in a realistic context while discovering which supports make it easier.

This game is for confidence, practical exploration and strategy-building. It is not a dyscalculia diagnostic or screening assessment.

Space to Breathe Therapy