Manga for kids under 10: the two we list, and why only two

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Manga for kids under 10: Yotsuba&! and Chi's Sweet Home, with whose age each is, which way each reads, and why cute art on a cover is no promise of a kids' book.

Two manga series are on Peabody's list for children under 10: Yotsuba&! by Kiyohiko Azuma, which we put at 6 to 12, and Chi's Sweet Home by Konami Kanata, which we put at 8 to 12. Both ages are our own estimates, said as such, because neither publisher prints a number for these books. That is a short list on purpose. Most manga that look cute on the cover were written for teenagers or adults, and every honest list of "kids' manga" warns about the same thing.

Parents type "manga for kids under 10" because a child has seen manga at school or online and wants in, and a grown-up has opened one in a shop and found something they didn't expect. Manga is a huge medium in Japan, written for every age, and the art style alone tells you little about who a book is for.

The two

Yotsuba&!

- By Kiyohiko Azuma; published in English by Yen Press.
- Books: sixteen volumes as of 30 October 2026; the sixteenth came out on 26 May 2026, and the series is still going.
- Ages: Yen Press labels volume 16 "All Ages" and prints no number. The 6 to 12 range is our own estimate.
- Reads: right to left, from what looks like the back cover. (Here's how.)
- What it is: Yotsuba is a small, loud five-year-old who is new to many everyday things, and she turns every ordinary day into a project: a trip to the shop, a try at fishing. Each chapter is a self-contained day, with the same family and neighbours. Expect mess, small fibs, a bit of mischief and kind neighbours who cope. Nothing frightening happens. The humour is gentle and often aimed at grown-ups who remember being small, so it reads well aloud together.

Yotsuba&! in order, with a checklist.

Chi's Sweet Home

- By Konami Kanata; published in English by Vertical (now Kodansha).
- Books: twelve volumes, from 2010 to 2015 in English. Finished. The same story was later gathered into four larger books, and a four-volume sequel of short gags, Chi's Sweet Adventures, followed from 2018 to 2019.
- Ages: Kodansha USA's pages refused our request, so we saw no publisher age; 8 to 12 is our own estimate, and Bookroo lists the first volumes as 7 to 10.
- Reads: left to right. The English volumes are flipped, so they open like an ordinary book.
- What it is: Chi is a kitten who gets lost, is found by a little boy and his parents, and learns what a home with a family is like. Mostly pictures, a few words in each bubble. Expect cat mischief and a few moments when Chi is scared or alone, then found. The family has to keep her secret from their landlord, because pets aren't allowed in their building. In Japan the manga was written for grown-up readers, and the humour is about family life and pet owners, but very little in it needs explaining to a child.

Chi's Sweet Home in order, with a checklist.

Why not more?

We add a manga to the list only when it suits young children all the way through, and we say whose age it is. Some of the most-searched kids' manga are built around game and toy characters; we have left those off for now, and they are easy enough to find. Others are labelled for older readers by their own publishers. And a few that look gentle have volumes that don't stay that way.

Our manga wing holds only manga series, with the right-to-left how-to at the top. It will grow when we can check a series' age at the publisher and read what is in the volumes.

Manga-style, but not manga

Berrybrook Middle School by Svetlana Chmakova is drawn in a manga style and published by JY, Yen Press's imprint for younger readers, but it reads left to right and we list it as a comic. JY labels its newest book 10 and up, so it is for a little later.

If they're under 6

Neither of the two is for a pre-reader on their own, but Yotsuba&! read aloud together, with the child "reading" the pictures, works well. For a first comic of any kind at five or six, Pizza and Taco is labelled 5 to 8 by its publisher.

Questions grown-ups ask

What is a good first manga for an 8-year-old?

Chi's Sweet Home, because it reads left to right like an ordinary book and tells its story mostly in pictures. A child who wants the real right-to-left experience can try Yotsuba&!.

Why does Yotsuba&! read backwards?

It isn't backwards; it is printed the way Japanese books are, with the spine on the right. Start at what looks like the back cover and read each page from the top right. It takes about five pages to get used to.

Is anime the same as manga?

Anime is animation; manga is the printed comic. Many anime began as manga, and some are for very different ages from the books they came from, so check the book itself.

Peabody (peabody.kids) is free through the end of 2026. Every series on the book series hub has its books in order with a checklist kept on your device, and our library has stories levelled for every reader.

Free at peabody.kids/blog/manga-for-kids-under-10