What age should a kid start learning magic?

Peabody blog · Games · updated 2026-10-30

What Peabody's Magic Shop is written for, age by age: it starts at five, with twenty-two tricks that work the first try, and how many tricks fit each age up to twelve.

The Peabody Magic Shop starts at five: its youngest tricks are written for Kindergarten, and there are twenty-two of them, every one an Apprentice trick that works the first try. From there the shelf widens fast. Sixty tricks fit a seven-year-old and sixty-five fit an eight-year-old, the most at any age, before the list narrows again as the easy tricks are outgrown.

I want to be plain about what kind of answer that is. It isn't a claim about child development, and I am not citing anybody's study. It is what the eighty tricks in the Magic Shop are written for. Every trick carries the range of school grades it fits, and the shop turns those into ages by a simple rule: the youngest grade plus five, to the oldest grade plus six. So a trick written for Kindergarten to 3rd grade says "ages 5 to 9". Count the tricks that fit each age and you get the table below. You know your own child better than any table does.

How many tricks fit each age

- Age: 5 · Tricks that fit: 22 · Apprentice: 22 · Conjurer: 0 · Wizard: 0 · Where to start: The Rubber Pencil, 1 minute
- Age: 6 · Tricks that fit: 44 · Apprentice: 38 · Conjurer: 6 · Wizard: 0 · Where to start: The Rubber Pencil, 1 minute
- Age: 7 · Tricks that fit: 65 · Apprentice: 44 · Conjurer: 20 · Wizard: 1 · Where to start: The Hole in Your Hand, 1 minute
- Age: 8 · Tricks that fit: 74 · Apprentice: 43 · Conjurer: 26 · Wizard: 5 · Where to start: The Forehead Coin, 2 minutes
- Age: 9 · Tricks that fit: 66 · Apprentice: 34 · Conjurer: 27 · Wizard: 5 · Where to start: The Forehead Coin, 2 minutes
- Age: 10 · Tricks that fit: 57 · Apprentice: 21 · Conjurer: 29 · Wizard: 7 · Where to start: The Answer Is Always 3, 2 minutes
- Age: 11 · Tricks that fit: 32 · Apprentice: 3 · Conjurer: 22 · Wizard: 7 · Where to start: The Grey Elephant Prediction, 3 minutes
- Age: 12 · Tricks that fit: 16 · Apprentice: 0 · Conjurer: 10 · Wizard: 6 · Where to start: The Birthday Mind Reader, 10 minutes

Each age links to its own page in the shop. A trick "fits" an age when that age's school grade is inside the trick's range, which is the same rule those pages use. The "where to start" trick is one of the three each page suggests first.

Why five

No trick in the shop is written below Kindergarten. Twenty-two start there, twenty-two start in 1st grade, twenty-one in 2nd, ten in 3rd, one in 4th and four in 5th. That is a choice about what the tricks ask for: following a few steps, keeping a secret, and saying some words to an audience at the right moment. Some of the props matter too. Tricks with coins, dice, paperclips, pom-poms or toothpicks carry a choking note for brothers and sisters under four, and none of those tricks is offered below Kindergarten.

At five, everything that fits is an Apprentice trick, the shop's easiest level: it works the first try and takes ten minutes or less to learn. The Rubber Pencil takes one minute. Thumb Off takes five. Pepper Scatter takes two and happens in a bowl of water.

If there is a younger child in the house who wants to join in, the guide to magic with a little brother or sister in the room is about exactly that: which tricks use nothing small enough to need the choking note.

What changes at each level

The levels are where age shows up most.

Apprentice tricks can start no later than 2nd grade, and the shop's code checks that. They are most of what fits a five- or six-year-old.

Conjurer tricks need a bit of setting up or ten to twenty minutes of practice. The first ones fit at six: there are six of them on the six-year-olds page, among them the Spelling Bee, at fifteen minutes the longest to learn on that page.

Wizard tricks need days. The first fits at seven, Easy Cups and Balls, three to five days of practice. By ten there are seven, the whole Wizard shelf.

The table's shape follows from that. The middle ages have the most tricks because both the easiest and the harder ones fit them. At eleven the list drops to twenty-five, because most of the Apprentice tricks are written for younger children and the eleven-year-olds page leaves them out. At twelve only ten tricks still fit, and the shop says on that page that twelve is its top shelf.

So when should a kid start?

By the shop's own reckoning: at five, with a one-minute trick, if they want to. Every age from five to twelve has a page and a short list to start from, and the tricks for an older age are not better magic, just more practice.

What I would watch for is not the birthday but the asking. A child who has seen a trick and wants to know how it was done is ready for the Apprentice shelf at any age the shop covers. A child who has performed three easy tricks for somebody is ready for a Conjurer one; that is the shop's own ladder, in the guide From Apprentice to Wizard.

The easiest way in is Pick me a trick. Flick, the rabbit who runs the shop, asks "First, how old are you?" with three boxes, 5 or 6, 7, 8 or 9, and 10, 11 or 12, then three more questions, and hands over one trick.

Questions grown-ups ask

My child is four. Is there anything for them?

Not written for them, no. The shop's youngest tricks are written for Kindergarten. A four-year-old can be the best audience in the house, though, and the no-choking-note tricks are the ones to perform for them.

My child is older than the shop. Is it too easy?

At twelve, ten tricks still fit: four Conjurer and six Wizard. The twelve-year-olds page says the most useful thing at that age is a show of four tricks performed until it is smooth, or teaching a younger child. Magic School has seven short lessons on performing, which matter at any age.

Can a younger child try a trick written for older children?

Yes. A trick written for older children still shows in the shop; once a child has told the shop their grade, it simply lists the tricks that fit first and the stretches after them. The ages tell you where a trick fits best, not who is allowed to try it.

Peabody (peabody.kids) is free through the end of 2026, and the Magic Shop needs no sign-up. What a child learns stays on their own device; the only thing sent is an anonymous count when a trick is marked as shown to somebody. For a five-year-old who would rather be read to, the library has stories by level.

Free at peabody.kids/blog/what-age-should-a-kid-start-learning-magic