

LEVELED Book • J

Number  
Twelve



Written by Beverly Osborn



# Number Twelve



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## 🔊 Number Twelve Is Everywhere!

We use the number twelve  
to help us do things every day.  
It helps us to count things,  
**measure** length, and tell time.

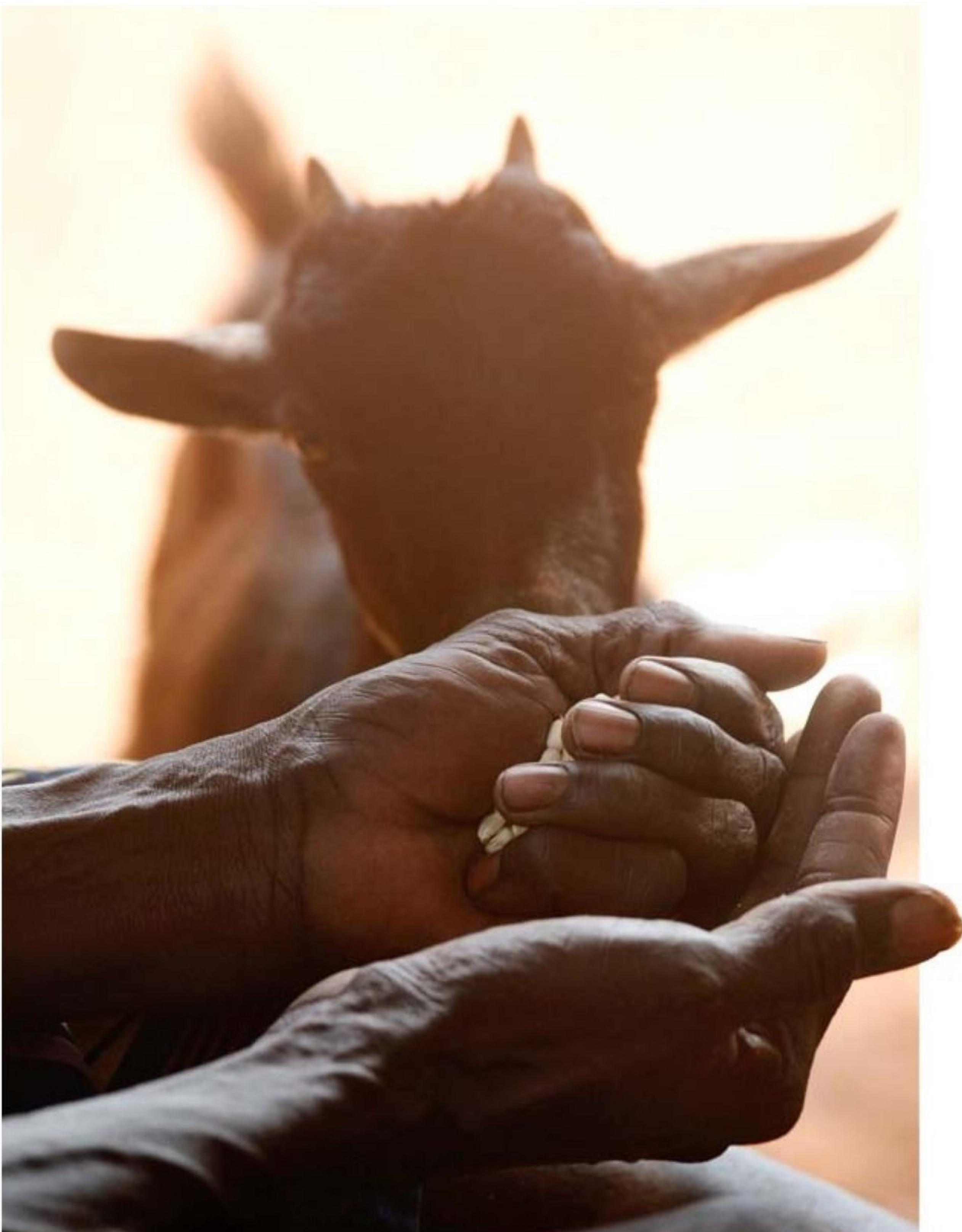


Did you ever wonder why  
a year has twelve months?  
A **ruler** has twelve inches?  
A clock has twelve hours?



## How We Learned to Count

Long ago, people needed  
an easy way to count things.  
How many goats did they have?  
How many bricks did they need?



They didn't have pencils, but  
they always had their fingers.  
How could their fingers  
help them count things?



Your hand has four fingers  
and one thumb.

Fingers **bend** into three parts.  
All of your finger parts  
add up to—twelve!



To learn how people counted,  
use the thumb of your other hand.  
Count the parts of each finger.  
One, two, three, four, five, six . . .





Using their fingers, people could count their farm animals.

They might count six chickens, three sheep, and three goats.

They had twelve animals! 🎉



When their animals had babies,  
it was easy to count them, too.  
Using both hands, people  
could count to twenty-four.  
Twenty-four is two twelves! 



## A Ruler Is Twelve Thumbs Long

Fingers, and the number twelve, were also used to find **length**.

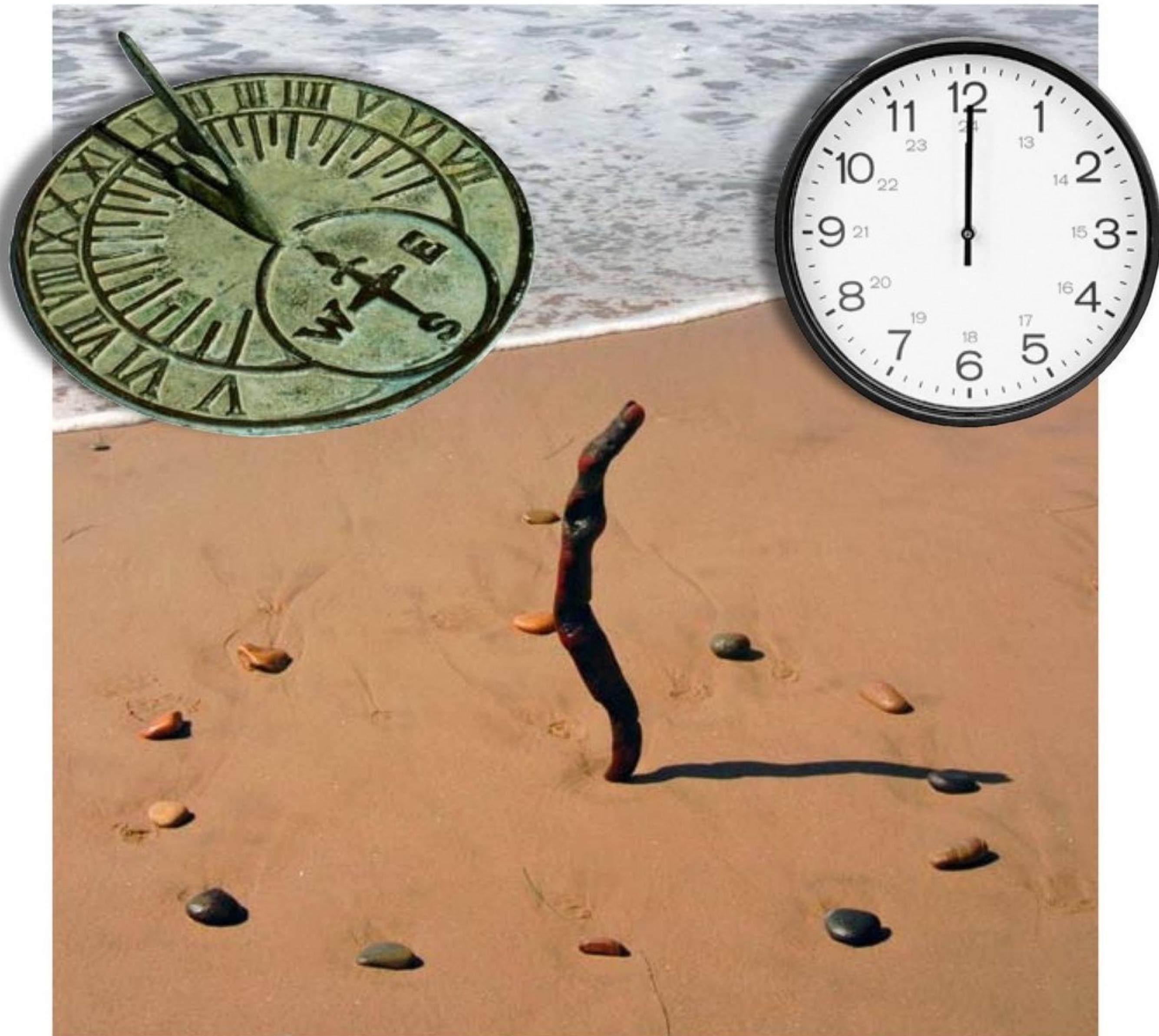
An *inch* was the **width**

of an adult man's thumb.

A *foot* was twelve thumbs long. 



Soon, people cut twelve marks  
for thumb widths on a stick.  
It was easy to carry the stick.  
That stick was the first kind  
of twelve-inch ruler! 



## Twelve Hours in a Day

People used the number twelve to divide their days into parts, or hours, that they could count.

In **daylight**, they watched the shadow of a stick or a **sundial** to know what hour it was. 



Twelve things are also called  
a dozen.

We buy a dozen pencils in a box.

We buy a dozen doughnuts  
or a dozen eggs.

The number twelve helps us to do a dozen things every day!

## Glossary

<b>bend</b> (v.)	to move something straight into a curve or an angle (p. 8)
<b>daylight</b> (n.)	the light of the Sun (p. 14)
<b>length</b> (n.)	the measurement of something from end to end (p. 12)
<b>measure</b> (v.)	to find the size or amount of something (p. 4)
<b>ruler</b> (n.)	a straight stick used to measure length in inches or centimeters (p. 5)
<b>sundial</b> (n.)	a kind of shadow clock that uses the rays of the Sun to tell time (p. 14)
<b>width</b> (n.)	a measurement from side to side, or across (p. 12)

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