

Simple Board Game Guide

Want to play a board game, but have no idea where to start?

Start here! I want to give you a set of easy wins with your children, so we've compiled a list of tried and tested games. These have been vetted by middle schoolers (the toughest crowd around), nieces and nephews of all ages (there's 17 of them, after all), and have passed the rigorous standards set by our three humans as well.

Any of these will get you started on the right path for quick and easy board game fun!

Want to start with an easy winner? Try a **Sutherland Family Favorites**:

1. [Taco Cat Goat Cheese Pizza](#): It's quick, silly, and fun. Parents, get prepared for a seven year old to destroy you.
2. [Flip 7](#): Press your luck and try to get the most points without busting.
3. [Dixit](#): Get players to guess your one-word or phrase "story" based on a fantastical picture.

Honorable Mentions

- [A Little Wordy](#): Guess the word you opponent played before they guess yours.
- [Banagrams](#): Fast paced word play where you compete to build the best words.
- [Code Names](#): Work as a team to find all the spies before your opponents find yours! Code Names Duo is two player and great for coffee dates.

Ages 3-4:

1. [Animal Upon Animal](#): Stacking fun for everyone. Like Jenga, with delightful little wooden critters.
2. [Unicorn Glitterluck](#): In Hadley's own words: "Dad, we don't have a game with unicorns!" 🥺🦄💖
3. [Busytown: Eye Found it](#): A mix of a luck and "eye spy" in a fun-to-play floor addition. A beautiful addition to the [Richard Scarry books](#).

Honorable mentions:

- [Zingo](#): Word and number matching bingo.
- [Pet the Cat: Meow Match](#): As Henry calls it — Meowmery. It's memory. Prepare to get destroyed by young minds. Why are they so good at this?!
- [Hoot Owl, Hoot](#): A great start for learning to take turns. Get your owl back home before day.

Ages 5-6:

1. [Sleeping Queens](#): Wake your queens. Created by six year old Miranda, it's a hit with young children.
2. [Outfoxed](#): A fox is on the loose. Work together to discover who-done-it before he gets away!
3. [Spot It](#): A fast and fun game of eye-spy. Lay a card down in the middle and try to match symbols to the card from your deck. Works on hand-eye coordination, shape recognition, focus, and staying calm under pressure.

Honorable mentions:

- [Uno](#): A classic card game focused on matching colors and numbers. Newer versions, like "[Uno: Show 'em No Mercy](#)" add powerful bonus and punishment cards.
- [Labyrinth](#): Get your character through the maze first! (our kiddos love the Pokemon version)
- [Blokus](#): Multiplayer, analog Tetris.

Ages 7-8:

4. [Downforce](#): An accessible, fun, and easy-to-learn F-1 racing game. Players race and place "guesses" as to who will win. 🤖
5. [Ticket to Ride](#): Collect multi-colored tickets to be the player to travel the most high-value tracks on the map.
6. [Sushi Go](#): Put together the most valuable, and delicious, sushi combinations.

Honorable Mention:

- [Azul](#): Build murals out of colorful tiles.
- [Hive](#): Surround your opponents Queen Bee to win.
- [Flashpoint](#): Cooperative firefighting with plenty of challenges to keep the game fun. The "Legacy of Flame" update with a storyline to complete.

Ages 9-10:

1. [Carcassonne](#): A competitive puzzle-building game. Easy to learn. Hard to win.
2. [Clank!](#): Compete to gain the best treasure from the dragon horde. Just remember, the more you take, the angrier the dragon gets.
3. [Dice Throne](#): Combat Yahtzee. Also comes in [Marvel](#) and [X-Men](#) themed characters.

Honorable Mentions:

- [7 Wonders](#): Develop your civilization through three quick rounds of card-laying.
- [Trekking the World](#): Take a tour of the most incredible locations around the world. A fun way to learn about some of the most famous locations on the planet.

Ages 11-12:

1. [Dixit](#): Get players to guess your one-word or phrase “story” based on a fantastical picture.
2. [Super Fight - The Mythology Deck](#): Decide which heroic combos would win from the fictional past, and duke it out in the arena of popular opinion.
3. [Code Names](#): Work as a team to find all the spies before your opponents find yours!

Honorable Mentions:

- [Pandemic](#): Cooperative player battle against global sickness.
- [Mad Gab](#): Get your team to guess the zany, mixed-up phrases.
- [Kingsburg](#): Players work to earn favor with the king in order to be selected as the next ruler of Kingsburg. Note: One of the enemy phases includes demons. We simply removed them.

Ages 13+:

1. [Wingspan](#): Build the best bird sanctuary. Beautiful artwork on 200+ bird cards.
2. [Imperial Assault](#): Rich enough gameplay to have an ongoing adventure, but not so rich that you’ll be stuck in the rule book forever. This game has all the Star Wars fighting adventure you’d want without the overstimulation or incessant grinding of a video game (looking at you Battle Front).
3. [Risk: Legacy](#): It’s Risk, with new units and a campaign story. Play sessions are shorter, the game progresses based on your choices and success.

Want Even More?

- [Star Wars: Edge of the Empire](#): A choose-your-own adventure using just a pencil, paper, and narrative dice. It’s D&D, but without the magic, demons, or moral philandering.
- [Battle Tech: A Game of Armored Combat](#): Stompy mechs, laser battles. It’s space knights who solve their problems by punching each other. C’mon!
- [Lord of the Rings: Living Card Game](#): A cooperative deck builder where you defeat enemies and progress through the Lord of the Rings storyline. This gets extra kudos because purchasing the game gets you all the cards you need to play the game.
- [Star Wars: Legion](#): A Star Wars themed tabletop combat game. You pick a side, customize your army, assemble and paint your units, and then do battle to claim victory in a number of combat scenarios. The kind of game you can keep getting every Christmas, forever.