



Categories

Take turns naming things that fit a category, without repeating an answer or hesitating too long.

Players 3–12 (best with 4–8)**Play time** 10–25 min**Materials** No materials**Movement** Seated

QUICK RULES

1. Someone names a category, such as "things in a toolbox".
2. Go round the circle; each player names one thing that fits.
3. No repeats, and no pauses longer than about five seconds.
4. Miss, repeat or stall and you lose a life. Last player with a life wins.

SET UP

1. Sit in a circle or around a table so the order of turns is obvious.
2. Give every player three "lives" — three fingers held up is the easiest way to track them.
3. Choose the first category-setter. Broad categories suit a first round — fruit, countries, things that are blue.
4. Agree on the pause limit. A slow count of five by the player who has just answered is fair and needs no timer.

HOW TO PLAY

1. The category-setter announces a category and gives the first answer.
2. Moving clockwise, each player gives one new answer that fits.
3. A player loses a life if they repeat an earlier answer, give something that does not fit, or fail to answer within the pause limit.
4. Any player may challenge an answer. The group decides quickly by show of hands; a tie favours the answer.
5. When a life is lost, the round ends. The player who lost it sets the next category and starts.
6. A player with no lives left is out but becomes a judge for challenges.
7. The last player with at least one life wins.

HOW THE GAME ENDS

The game ends when only one player has lives remaining. For a shorter game give everyone two lives, or drop elimination entirely and play ten categories, with the player who lost the fewest lives declared the winner.

PLAYING SEATED

Played seated by default. The optional clap rhythm uses hands only.

TIPS FOR THE HOST

- Narrow the categories as the game goes on — "animals" early, "animals with stripes" later.
- Be generous on challenges in mixed-age groups. The aim is momentum, not a courtroom.
- If elimination leaves people sitting out for too long, switch to the no-elimination scoring described above.
- Avoid categories that depend on knowing particular brands, shows or celebrities, which shut out some guests.

VARIATIONS

Letter lock. Every answer must begin with the same letter — "foods beginning with P". Much harder, and best saved for the final two or three players.

Clap rhythm. Keep a steady four-beat pattern — two taps on the table, two claps — and give each answer on the claps. The rhythm replaces the pause limit and adds pressure without needing a timer.

STARTER IDEAS: BROAD OPENERS

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| ■ things in a picnic basket | ■ things you take on holiday |
| ■ things you find in a toolbox | ■ foods you eat with your hands |
| ■ things that are round | ■ things in a kitchen drawer |
| ■ animals with four legs | ■ things that make a noise |

STARTER IDEAS: NARROWER CHALLENGES

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|------------------------------------|---|
| ■ things with wheels | ■ things that are both a colour and an object |
| ■ words that end in -ing | ■ musical instruments you blow |
| ■ things you can fold | ■ things you only do once a year |
| ■ vegetables that grow underground | ■ things that melt |

Times are editorial estimates, not test results. Editorially checked for clarity and consistency. We do not claim group playtesting for this page.