



Two-Word Clues

Help your team guess a secret word by giving clues that are exactly two words long — no more, no fewer.

Players 4–16 (best with 6–10)**Play time** 15–30 min**Materials** No materials**Movement** Seated

QUICK RULES

1. Two teams. One player per turn is the clue-giver.
2. The clue-giver sees a secret word and gives a two-word clue.
3. Teammates get one guess per clue.
4. Score a point for each word guessed within 90 seconds. Fewer clues, more words.

SET UP

1. Split into two or more teams and seat teammates where they can hear each other.
2. Decide how target words will be delivered — the host view on a phone passed to the clue-giver, or an opponent whispering a word.
3. Set a 90-second timer for the turn.
4. Explain what is forbidden: no part of the target word, no rhyming hints, no gestures, and no 'sounds like'.

HOW TO PLAY

1. The first team's clue-giver looks at a target word, keeping it hidden from their team.
2. They give a clue of exactly two words — for example, "morning drink" for the word "coffee".
3. The team confers briefly and gives one guess.
4. If the guess is wrong, the clue-giver offers a new two-word clue for the same word. Earlier clues cannot be repeated.
5. If the guess is right, the team scores a point and the clue-giver takes a new word at once.
6. The clue-giver may pass on a word. A passed word is read out afterwards and scores nothing.
7. If a clue breaks a rule — one word, three words, or part of the target — the other team calls it and the word is thrown out.
8. When the timer ends, play passes to the next team, with a new clue-giver.

HOW THE GAME ENDS

Play until everyone has been the clue-giver once, then compare totals. If teams have different numbers of players, give each team the same number of turns and let someone on the smaller team give clues twice.

PLAYING SEATED

Played seated by default. Clue-givers stay in their seats; no step requires standing.

TIPS FOR THE HOST

- Hyphenated words count as one word only if the whole group agrees beforehand. Decide before the first turn.
- Encourage teams to guess quickly. A wrong guess costs only seconds, while silence costs more.
- If a clue-giver is struggling, remind them that passing is free and that some words are simply harder.
- With mixed ages, let the younger clue-givers use three-word clues. Nobody minds.

VARIATIONS

One-word clues. Clues shrink to a single word, and the team gets up to three guesses per word. It is harder and quieter — a good second half once everyone understands the rhythm.

Shared word. Both teams' clue-givers see the same word and take turns giving one two-word clue each, with their own team guessing after each clue. The team that guesses first scores. Each clue helps both teams, which makes giving a good clue a risk.

STARTER IDEAS: STRAIGHTFORWARD

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|--------------|-------------|
| ▪ coffee | ▪ birthday |
| ▪ pillow | ▪ umbrella |
| ▪ lighthouse | ▪ library |
| ▪ queue | ▪ breakfast |

STARTER IDEAS: TRICKIER

- | | |
|---------------|-------------|
| ▪ thermometer | ▪ nostalgia |
| ▪ echo | ▪ horizon |
| ▪ shadow | ▪ appetite |
| ▪ compromise | ▪ souvenir |

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