



A Family Gathering

A mixed-age afternoon for eight to twenty-four people, with teams that put different generations side by side.

Players 8–24, in mixed-age teams

Play time About 80 minutes in total.

Who it is for: Relatives of several generations, some of whom see each other once a year.

BEFORE GUESTS ARRIVE

- ☐ Print the charades pack, or make sure one phone with host mode is charged.
- ☐ Set out paper, pens and something firm to lean on for Describe and Draw.
- ☐ Decide how you will form mixed-age teams — counting off round the room is quickest.
- ☐ Keep one clear walkway, and seats near the action for anyone who prefers to stay seated.

AGENDA

- 1 Shared Connections** · 15 minutes · As people arrive
Groups of three or four with at least two generations in each. Hear one connection per group.
- 2 Charades** · 30 minutes · Main game
Teams of four to six. Announce the category before each turn, and offer the seated-friendly prompts to anyone who wants them.
- 3 Describe and Draw** · 15 minutes · Sitting down again
Pair an adult with a younger relative. Use the "one describer" variation if the room is crowded.
- 4 One-Word Story** · 10 minutes · Round the table
Use the three-word variation with younger children. One story per table.
- 5 Would You Rather** · 10 minutes · Before people leave
The hands-up version for the whole room. Finish on a question from the multigenerational group.

HOST NOTES

- Children take part alongside the adults who brought them; no game here asks a child to play unsupervised.
- Offer every active game in its seated form without making anyone ask for it.
- Above twenty-four people, run charades as two separate games at opposite ends of the room.

SHARED CONNECTIONS — QUICK RULES

4–40 players · 10–20 min · No materials

1. Form groups of three or four, ideally with people you know least.
2. You have four minutes to find three things you all share.
3. Nothing visible counts — not clothes, not "we are all at this party".
4. Each group shares its most surprising connection with the room.

How the game ends: The game ends after the share-back. Two rounds with different groups are plenty — the purpose is to give people something to talk about for the rest of the event, so stop while the room is still noisy. There is no winner, though the host can ask for applause for the most unexpected connection.

CHARADES — QUICK RULES

4–20 players · 20–45 min · No materials

1. Split into two or more teams.
2. One player acts out a secret prompt with no words, sounds or mouthing.
3. Their team guesses before a 60–90 second timer ends.
4. One point per correct guess; teams alternate until everyone has acted.

How the game ends: Play until every player has acted the same number of times — usually two full rotations — then the team with more points wins. If the evening is running long, announce a "final round" before the last rotation starts rather than stopping mid-way.

DESCRIBE AND DRAW — QUICK RULES

2–16 players · 10–25 min · Paper and pen

1. Pair up. One person describes, the other draws.
2. The describer sees a simple picture; the drawer must not.
3. Describe using shapes, sizes and positions only — never say what the picture is.
4. After three minutes, compare the drawing with the original, then swap roles.

How the game ends: A full game is two rounds, so that everyone describes once and draws once. For a friendly finish, lay all the drawings out next to their originals and let the room choose the closest match and the most gloriously wrong one.

ONE-WORD STORY — QUICK RULES

3–12 players · 5–20 min · No materials

1. Pick a story title.
2. Going round the circle, each player adds exactly one word.
3. Keep sentences grammatical — small words like "the" and "and" count as a turn.
4. Anyone can end a sentence by saying "full stop". Finish the story within three trips round the circle.

How the game ends: Each story ends when the group lands a final sentence during the third trip round the circle. Play three or four stories and stop. There is no winner; the reward is the retelling. If a story is going nowhere after two trips, the host can declare "The End" and start a new title.

WOULD YOU RATHER — QUICK RULES

2–30 players · 10–30 min · No materials

1. The host reads a question with two alternatives.
2. Everyone picks one — there is no "both" or "neither".
3. Go around the table and give a one-sentence reason.
4. The person with the most unexpected reason reads the next question.

How the game ends: Stop after a set number of questions — eight to ten suits a dinner table — or when the main course arrives. Would You Rather has no natural winner, so announce "two more questions" to give the game a clear finish rather than letting it fade out.

Times are editorial estimates, not test results.