



Dice Games

“Knock Out” Dice Game for Kids

“Knock Out” is a very simple game, using just two dice. As soon as a child can recognize their written numbers, they can play this game.

Skills learned: Adding

Dice needed: 2

Object of the game: To avoid throwing certain scores and being knocked out of the game.

Directions for play:

1. Each player chooses a “knock out number” – either 6, 7, 8, or 9. More than one player can choose the same number.
2. Players take turns throwing both dice, once each turn. Add the number of both dice for the score.
3. If a player throws a 6, 7, or 8, they are knocked out of the game until the next round.

Decide before the game a score to be reached for a win.

“Beat That!” Dice Game

A good game for introducing your kids to the fun of dice games, this easy-to-learn game is one that is very popular with kids. It is sure to become a family favorite!

Skills learned: Number recognition, place value, and strategic thinking.

Dice needed: 2 for younger players and 7 for older players

Directions for play: Each player takes a turn rolling the dice and placing them in order to make the highest number possible. For example, if a player throws a two and a three, they have 23. A player who throws a six and a four would win the round as they have the higher number. After each throw, a player challenges the next player, “Beat that!” Play this game in rounds, assigning a winner to each round.

Variations:

- Try making the smallest number possible.
- Use three dice for play.
- Instead of playing in rounds, set a score, such as 500, players must reach to win the game.

“Catch Up” Dice Game

”Catch Up” is a great game for groups of children as you need at least four and up to eight kids to play. If you have more than eight kids, split them into groups of four to eight players. Large families and teachers will find this game effective. You will need counters or small toys for each child.

Skills learned: Playing patiently, rhythm and chanting

Dice needed: 2

Object of the game: To be the first player to win three counters.

Directions for play:

1. Players sit in a circle around a table or on the floor with the oldest and the youngest players across from one another.
2. Divide the dice so that these two players each have one. Put the counters in the middle of the circle.
3. The children without the dice create a rhythm by first slapping their knees (or the table) once and then clapping their hands once. Then the children begin chanting:

Note: The chant is marked with / showing every two beats.

Are you/ready? /Are you/ready?

If/ so, /let’s/go!

Roll now!/Slap clap!/What have you got?/Slap clap!

Must you pass?/Slap clap!/Hope not!/Slap clap!

4. The chant is repeated as play continues.
5. Begin the play with the command, “Roll now!”
6. The players roll the dice, hoping for anything but a six. If it is six, players must pass the die to the player on their left and take up the chant.

A child wins the round when he is still in possession of a die and receives another from the player on his right. The winner of the round collects a counter and the first to collect 3 counters wins.

Variations:

- For older children, increase the speed of the chant.
- For groups of 6 or 8 players, you may wish to increase the passing roll to two numbers – say a 5 and a 6, as this speeds the game up quite considerably.

“Going to Boston” Dice Game

A well-known and easy to learn dice game, “Going to Boston” gives children plenty of adding practice.

Skill learned: Adding

Dice needed: 3

Directions for play:

1. Roll the dice and keep the highest.
2. Roll the remaining dice and again set aside the highest.
3. Roll the last die, and add up your total. Write down your score.

If a player rolls the highest total for a round, they win the round. Keep score and the player who wins the most turns wins the game.

Suggested Variations:

- Keep totaling each player's score and the player who reaches 500 points first wins.
- Substitute specialty dice with higher numbers.
- Have older children multiply the dice to get their score.
- Use more than three dice.

“Run For It!” Dice Game

Here is a very simple game of sequences or runs.

Skills learned: Recognizing numbers and sequences, early strategic thinking, and counting by in five

Dice needed: 6

Directions for play:

Each player takes a turn rolling the dice and looking for runs starting with (1-2, 1-2-3, and so on). Each dice part of the run scores five points. A player can only have one run in each roll. The first who reaches 100 points is the winner.

Examples of play:

Hand 1:

Player throws six dice and gets the numbers 1, 4, 2, 1, 3, and 2. The following sequences can be scored: 1, 2 (10 points) or 1, 2, 3, 4 (20 points). The hand is worth 30 points.

Hand 2:

Player throws six dice and gets the numbers 1, 4, 6, 6, 3, 3. No sequences can be formed, so no score is recorded.

Variations:

- For older children, substitute specialty dice with higher numbers
- Have players multiply the dice to get their score.

“Stuck in the Mud!” Dice Game

The fun of this dice game is the unpredictability. Some turns end immediately and some seem to go on forever. Players can only score on a roll which does not include the numbers 2 and 5. Any dice, which show a 2 or a 5, become “Stuck in the mud!”

Skills learned: Addition – mental and scoring

Dice needed: 5

Object of the game: To achieve the highest score

Directions for play:

1. The first player rolls all five dice. If any 2s or 5s are rolled, no points are scored for this throw. If no 2s or 5s are rolled, add up the total of the dice and write it down.
2. The player sets aside any 2s and 5s, and throws the remaining dice. Again, if any 2s or 5s are thrown, no points are scored. If there are no 2's or 5s, add the total to the previous score.
3. Continue in this way until all the dice are “Stuck in the Mud.” After the score is totaled, play passes to the left.

Agree a number of rounds – five works well – and total up the score.

“Three or More” Dice Game

This dice game is simple and fun, which means it is popular.

Skill learned: Adding

Dice needed: 5

Object of the game: To get the highest score

Directions for play:

Players take turns rolling all five dice and scoring for three-of-a-kind or better. If a player only has two-of-a-kind, they may re-throw the remaining dice in an attempt to improve the matching dice values. If no matching numbers are rolled, a player scores 0.

Scoring:

- 3-of-a-kind: 3 points
- 4-of-a-kind: 6 points
- 5-of-a-kind: 12 points

Set the number of rounds for the game and the player with the highest total score at the end of a game is the winner.

Suggested Variations:

- Substitute specialty dice with higher numbers.
- For older children, have them try multiplying the dice together to get their score.

“Round the Clock” Dice Game

This easy game works well for young children as soon as they can recognize the number of spots on dice and count to twelve.

Skill learned: Addition

Dice needed: 2

Object of the game: To be the first player to throw all the numbers from 1 to 12 in order

Directions for play:

1. Choose the first player with a dice throw; the player with the lowest total going first.
2. The first player throws both dice, hoping to throw a 1. Players then take turns (in a clockwise direction) trying to throw a 1.
3. On the next round, those players who threw a 1 will try to throw a 2. Any player who did not throw a 1 in the first round will try again this round. Players can do so by throwing a 2 or two 1s.
4. Play continues round-by-round with players trying to throw all the numbers from 1 to 12 in sequence. Players may count the spots on just one die or on both dice added together. For example, throwing a 3 and a 6 could be counted as 3, 6, or 9.
5. The first player to go “Round the Clock” – throw all the numbers from 1 to 12 in order – wins the game.

Variation: A player can keep throwing the dice during their turn until they fail to get the number for which they are trying.

“Pig” Dice Game for Kids

Even though the directions make this game sound easy, unless you are good at throwing 1s, this game may be hard for to play. The game is called “Pig” because the first player “hogs” the dice in an effort to win the game.

Dice needed: 1

Object of the game: To score 100 points or more

Directions for play:

1. Have the players throw the die to determine order of play. The lowest roll goes first.
2. The first player rolls the die and adds up the numbers after each roll. They may stop rolling at any time and end the turn
3. The player loses all points for the turn when a 1 is rolled.
4. If the first player gets to 100 points on their first turn, the other player(s) may take their turn to try to achieve a better score.

Dice games provide fun for everyone, from very young children to the elderly. Additionally, some families enjoy collecting dice, which can be found in old table games at garage sales, at discount stores, and in educational supply catalogues. Try all of our dice games for kids and have fun!