

The Exact Match

Players 2-6 Ages 3+ 10-15 min

GOAL

Children observe the attributes of a shape and identify its exact match from a pile of shapes.

MATERIALS

Any pattern blocks or pattern block shape cutouts (3-5 of each shape)



Square



Rhombus
(diamond)



Triangle



Trapezoid



Hexagon

VOCABULARY

Vertex*

Side

Square

Trapezoid

Angle*

Triangle

Rhombus

Hexagon

QUESTIONS

What do you notice about these shapes?

About their sides?

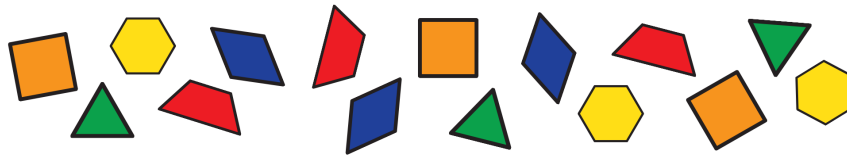
About their vertices?*

About their angles?*

HOW TO PLAY

1. Shuffle the pattern block shapes and lay them down on a table or on the floor.

* A note about the vocabulary: A vertex (plural vertices) is where two sides meet. An angle is the space between where two lines meet. Angles are usually measured in degrees. For example, a square has four vertices and four 90° angles.



2. Choose one shape from the pile (e.g., a rhombus), hold it up, and describe it. Say, “I have a rhombus. A rhombus is shaped like a diamond. It has four sides and four vertices.”



“Look at all of our shapes here on the table. Can you find the exact match of my rhombus? Find a shape that is exactly the same as my rhombus.” Wait for the child to look through the shapes and select a matching rhombus.



3. Once the child finds the match, have them explain how they know it’s an exact match.

Note: At first, children may match based on color. That’s okay! Ask attribute questions to help them notice and talk about the sides, vertices, and angles of the shapes.

4. “Is your shape an exact match of my shape? How do you know?”
“How many sides does your shape have? Can you point to each side?”
“How many vertices? Can you point to each vertex?”
“How is the rhombus different from a square? How is it different from a triangle?”
5. Add the shape back to the pile and continue finding the exact matches of the other shapes.

WHAT CHILDREN ARE LEARNING

- Exact matching is an important beginner sorting skill! Exact match activities help children recognize the attributes of objects. With practice, children can use their knowledge of attributes to sort and compare sets of objects and to create patterns.
- Exact match activities can use all different items! Have children find the exact matches of socks in the laundry or treats in a trail mix. Make sure children explain their match using attribute words; “the chocolate chips match because they are *small* and *pointy on top* and the peanuts match because they are *ovals*.”