

Wild Shapes

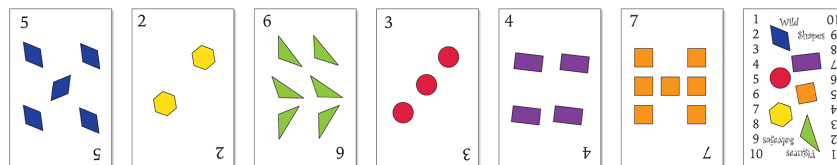
Players 2–5 Ages 5+ 5–10 min

GOAL

Be the first player to have no cards left. This game follows rules similar to *Crazy 8s* and *Uno*.

CARDS TO USE

Deck of Shape Cards with the 4 Wild Shape Cards

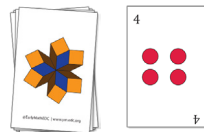


HOW TO PLAY

1. Shuffle the cards.

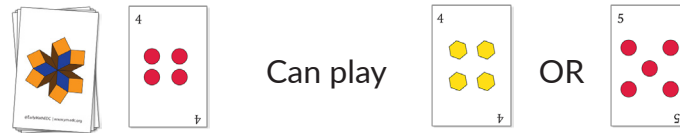


2. Deal 5 cards face down to each player. Place remaining cards face down to form a draw pile. Turn over the top card of the draw pile to begin a discard pile.



3. Players look at their cards. When it's their turn, players try to match the top card on the discard pile—by **shape** or **number**—with a card in their hand.

If a match can be made, the player puts the card on the top of the discard pile face up and says what the match is—that is, “4” or “hexagons.” That card becomes the new top card, and it’s the next player’s turn.



4. However, if a player cannot make a match, but has a Wild Card in their hand, they can play that card and name which shape (i.e. blue rhombus) and a number (i.e. four) the next player has to play from.
5. If players can't make a match and don't have a Wild Card, they have to draw from the deck until they can make a match.
6. Players say “One card!” when they only have one card left in their hand.
7. Keep playing until a player has no more cards. If you run out of cards in the deck, reshuffle the discard pile.

TIPS FOR PLAYING

- For the first few games, you can play with the cards face up and talk aloud about your possible moves. Support each child in turn by having children talk through their options.
- It can be very challenging for young children to hold cards in their hand so others can't see them. You can use a shoebox or other small box where they can put their cards face up without having to hold them.
- If a player cannot make a match and does not have a Wild Card, instead of having players draw from the deck until they get a card they can play, have them just draw one card and then the play moves on to the next person.
- If you need to end the game early, you can call it a draw and have a rematch another day.

WHAT CHILDREN ARE LEARNING

- In this game, children are practicing their numeral and shape recognition, but their brains are working on a lot more than that. They have to pay attention to the cards in their hand and to the rule shifting. Sometimes they will want to match on number, and sometimes they will want to match on shape, depending on the cards in their hand and the top card in the discard pile. What the “best” move will be is constantly changing, and they have to pay attention to their game play as well as to the other players’ game play.
- As they get more experienced, they will start paying attention to strategy—which card will be easier or harder to get rid of? When should I play the Wild Card?
- Children are practicing skills like taking turns, finding pairs or matches, and keeping track of and counting up cards. These skills are important in and of themselves, and they allow children to access other opportunities for card games, such as *Crazy 8s*, *Uno*, *Go Fish*, and *Top It!*.

MATH TOPICS

Shapes and Geometry

Sorting and Attributes

VIDEO



Watch Game Video

View the QR code in your smartphone’s camera app or QR code reader to watch a video that shows how to play *Wild Shapes*.