

Shape Dance

Players 1+ Ages 3+ 5-10 min

GOAL

Children practice shape names and attributes by finding, and standing on, the shape that is being described.

MATERIALS

Chalk or tape



Music



VOCABULARY



Circle



Triangle



Rectangle



Square



Trapezoid



Rhombus



Pentagon



Hexagon



Octagon

QUESTIONS

How did you know it was a square?

How many corners or vertices does that shape have?*

How many sides does that shape have?

How did you know that it wasn't a circle?

HOW TO PLAY

1. Outline some shapes on the floor with tape. Or, if you are outside, outline them with sidewalk chalk. Make sure your outlines are big enough for children to stand on. You can start by making outlines of 3 shapes, and add more shape outlines as children are ready.

2. Begin by saying, "I'm going to play some music. You can move and dance all around our shapes. When the music stops, stand on a shape with 4 sides."
3. Play music while children walk or dance around the shapes.
4. Stop the music and repeat the direction. Wait for everyone to find a shape that fits the clue of having 4 sides.
5. Ask, "Are you on a shape with 4 sides? How do you know? Are there any other shapes with 4 sides?"
6. Play again.

Suggested Clues

- Stand on a shape that is a rectangle (hint: a square is a special kind of rectangle).
- Stand on a shape with three sides.
- Stand on a shape that is a circle OR a triangle.
- Stand on a shape that is a rhombus (hint: a square is a special kind of rhombus).
- Stand on a shape with no vertices or corners.
- Stand on a shape with only 4 vertices or corners.
- Stand on a shape with at least 3 vertices or corners.
- Stand on a shape that is a square.
- Stand on a shape that is NOT a square.









TIPS FOR PLAYING

- If you are in a small space, you can use shape blocks or shape cutouts to play this game. Spread the shapes out on a table or the floor and have children pick up the shape that matches your clue.

WHAT CHILDREN ARE LEARNING

- Knowing about a shape is more than just knowing the shape's name. This game helps children pay attention to the attributes, or characteristics, that define a shape mathematically.
- Children may be at different levels with their knowledge of shapes. You can adjust the shapes you use and the clues you give to make it more or less challenging.
- Children need to listen carefully to your clues and remember them to find the correct shape. These are important skills to help them get ready for school.

SHAPE ATTRIBUTES

	Circle	No vertices or corners, the curve is always the same distance from a center point
	Triangle	Exactly 3 straight sides
	Rectangle	Exactly 4 straight sides, 4 right angles (like the corner of a piece of paper)
	Square	Exactly 4 straight equal sides and 4 right angles
	Trapezoid	Exactly 4 straight sides, one pair of opposite sides is parallel (like train tracks)
	Rhombus	Exactly 4 straight equal sides, both pairs of opposite sides are parallel (like train tracks)
	Pentagon	Exactly 5 straight sides
	Hexagon	Exactly 6 straight sides



Octagon

Exactly 8 straight sides

* A note about the vocabulary: A vertex (plural vertices (vur·tuh·seez)) 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.

MATH TOPICS

Shapes and Geometry

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 Shape Dance.