

Math Games with a Deck of Cards

Grades K–8

Table of Contents:

Kindergarten–Third Grade

Guess the number

Number Standoff (also called “War”)

Fourth–Sixth Grade

Multiplication Standoff

Multiplication Mind Meld

Sixth–Eighth Grade

Subtracting Fractions

Number Destination



Kindergarten–Third Grade

Guess the number

- Academic Skills: Number recognition, order, and sequencing
- Materials: Cards Ace through Ten, please remove all face cards
- Players needed: 2

Directions:

1. The first player draws a card, this will be the secret card.
2. The second player draws the next card.
3. The first player shares if the secret card is greater than or less than.
4. The second player guesses the secret card.
5. If the second player is correct, then the players will change roles. If the guess is incorrect, the second player gets to draw and guess 2 more times.

Number Standoff (also called “War”)

- Academic Skills: Number recognition, order, and sequencing
- Materials: Entire Deck (minus Jokers)
- Players needed: 2

Directions:

1. Players split a deck of cards.
2. Each player has their stack face down in front of them.
3. Players simultaneously flip over their top cards.
4. The player with the higher card wins and collects both cards (all face cards are worth 10).
5. If the cards have the same value, each player lays three cards face down, then a new card face-up. The card with the highest value wins all the cards from the round, including remaining face-down cards.
6. The player with the most cards at the end wins

Fourth–Sixth Grade

Multiplication Standoff

- Academic Skills: Number recognition and multiplication
- Materials: Entire Deck (minus Jokers)
- Players needed: 2

Directions

1. Players split a deck of cards.
2. Each player has their stack face down in front of them.
3. Players simultaneously flip over their top 2 cards and multiply them.
4. The player with the higher product wins and collects 4 cards. (all face cards are worth 10)
5. If the cards products have the same value, the cards are placed in a center pile. The next hand is played and the winner of the next multiplication number battle takes the center pile as well.
6. The player with the most cards at the end wins

Multiplication Mind Meld

- Academic Skills: Multiplication
- Materials: Entire Deck (minus Jokers)
- Players needed: 3

Directions:

1. In this game for three players, one student is the leader and the other two are the “mind melder”.
2. The mind melder each draw a card and, without looking at it, hold it up to their foreheads.
3. The leader announces the products of the two cards.
4. The mind melder must figure out and say aloud the card on their forehead.
5. When both mind melder have figured out their cards, then one of the mind melder becomes the next leader

Sixth–Eighth Grade

Subtracting Fractions

- Academic Skills: Subtracting fractions, multiplication, division, numerator, denominator
- Materials: Entire Deck (minus Jokers), paper, and pencil
- Players needed: 1–4

Directions:

1. Deal four cards and place them face up.
2. Use the four cards to create two fractions
3. Do not create improper fractions, but rather make the two largest cards the denominators.
4. Players find the common denominator of each fraction
5. Subtract the fractions
6. Reduce the answer to its simplest form.

Number Destination

- Academic Skills:
- Materials: Entire Deck (minus Jokers), paper, and pencil
- Players needed: 1–5

Directions (all face cards are worth 10):

1. Pick a number between 1–30, that will be your destination number
2. One of the players will turn five cards from the deck face up.
3. The object is for students to make a number sentence using all five cards with any operations to reach the target number.
4. The first player to find a winning combination keeps the cards and chooses the next destination number.
5. If no combination is found, flip over another card (6th card) and try to make a combination using six cards.