

Parent Guide >> READ FIRST <<

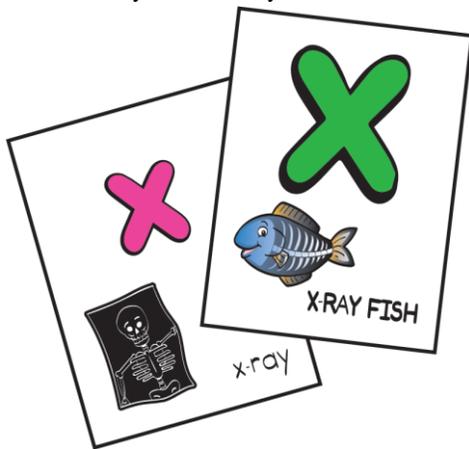
better letter Alphabet Go Fish™ was developed to help reinforce alphabet learning in younger children. Review each card with your child to ensure they can identify the images, the letters themselves, or the sound each letter makes, depending on the skill you're targeting. Your child should also be able to identify the top and bottom of the letters (the picture is at the bottom of each letter).

The name of the picture on each card is a reference for your convenience. The sound a letter makes is identical to the first sound you hear when you pronounce this word.

These game cards are designed to be narrower than standard poker-sized playing cards. Narrower cards are easier for little hands to hold. If your child is having difficulties holding cards, consider purchasing a childrens' playing card holder from your favorite store.

The letter X problem

Finding words that begin with the letter **X** and produce the common **X** sound is difficult. The letter **X** commonly makes the last sound heard when saying the words fox, box, and ax. In this game, the letter **X** is represented by the words "x-ray" and "x-ray fish," which we deemed to be better options than the words "xylophone" and "xenon."



Go Fish for Letters

How to win: Collect the most pairs of uppercase and lowercase letter cards by the end of the game.

Variation for easier play: The game is faster and easier when playing with only **half** the matching letters (Aa thru Mm or Nn thru Zz).

How to play: Shuffle the deck thoroughly. Deal five cards face down to each player. Place the rest of the deck face down, creating a draw pile within easy reach of all players. Players can look at and arrange the cards in their hand but must not show them to other players.

The player to the left of the dealer begins the game and asks any other player for a specific letter card. (Example: "Do you have the letter **B**?"). The **asking** player must be holding at least one of the requested card already. By asking others for specific cards, players collect pairs (a set of two matching cards) with the same letter. (Example: Uppercase **B** is matched to lowercase **b** to make a pair.)

If the player who was asked **does** have the requested card, they must give the card to the asking player. The asking player then gets another turn. If the player who was asked **does not** have the requested card, they say, "Go Fish." The asking player then draws a single card from the top of the draw pile. **If they draw the requested letter card, they get another turn.** If not, the turn passes to the player on their left.

As soon as a player collects a pair of matching cards, they must place those cards face up in front of them. If at any point during the game a player is without cards, they must immediately take a single card from the top of the draw pile. If it is their turn, the player should ask other players for that specific card. If there are no cards left in the draw pile, they can no longer ask other players for cards.

Alphabet Flash Cards

Work with either uppercase or lowercase letters. Flip cards face up in front of your child and have them identify the letter on the card and make the sound the letter makes. (Be sure the letter card is facing your child.) For example, the **B** card with the **butterfly** picture has a beginning **B** sound of "buh." The name of the picture on each card is a reference for your convenience. The sound a letter makes is identical to the first sound you hear when you pronounce this word.

If your child does not know the answer, have them trace the letter's shape with a finger and say aloud the picture name on the card. Ask, "What letter makes this sound?" For example, the **b** card with the **butterfly** picture has a beginning **B** sound of "buh." Now ask your child, "Which letter makes the 'buh' sound?" If they still don't know the answer, have them repeat after you the letter name and sound the letter makes.

To make learning letters easier, teach only a few at a time. Focus on teaching either lowercase or uppercase letters first.

Up and Down the ABC Ladder

Work with either uppercase or lowercase letters. Have your child arrange the cards in alphabetical order (A thru Z) or in reverse (Z thru A). To make things easier, work with small sets of letters (such as A thru F) until your child is ready to master the full alphabet.

Find the Missing Letter

Work with either uppercase or lowercase letters. Arrange the cards face up in small sets of letters (such as A thru F). Remove one card from this set and have your child identify the missing letter. To make things easier, place the missing letter in a pile with two other letters. Then let your child choose the missing letter from these three letters.

Find My Letter Match

How to win: Collect the most matched pairs by the end of the game.

Variation: Try playing with all the cards spread face up instead of face down. To make the game faster and easier, use only half the letter pairs in a game (**Aa** thru **Mm** or **Nn** thru **Zz**).

How to play: Shuffle the deck thoroughly. Spread all the cards out, face down, until they fill the playing area. Be sure that no cards touch or overlap.

The first player turns over two cards, **saying each letter aloud**. If the overturned cards are a matching pair (**Aa**, **Bb**, etc.), the player removes the cards from the playing area and places them face down in a pile in front of them.

A player's turn continues until the two flipped cards don't match. In this case, the two cards are turned back over (in the same spots), and the turn passes to the next player on the left.

Play continues until all cards are removed from play area.

Learn Alphabetical Order

Work with either uppercase or lowercase letters. Have your child arrange the cards in alphabetical order with the help of the Alphabet Song (lyrics are on the backside of this card). To make things easier, place letters in four groups so each letter is visible and each card grouping corresponds to the Alphabet Song's lyrics: **A-G**, **H-P**, **Q-V**, and **W-Z**.

Slowly sing the Alphabet Song with your child. As you sing each letter, have your child find the matching letter card and place it faceup in a new pile in front of them. For example, when you sing, "**A**," your child finds the letter **A** card and places it faceup in front of them. Then you sing, "**B**," and the **B** card is placed on or next to the **A** card. Continue to the end of the alphabet. As your child masters more letters, you can reduce the number of letter groups. Eventually, make only one large pile for your child to find the letters from.

Alphabet Song

The Alphabet Song is used to teach children the alphabet and letter order. Practice this song with your child aloud until they can sing it without your help.

A, B, C, D, E, F, G,
H, I, J, K, L, M, N, O, P,
Q, R, S, T, U, V,
W, X, Y, and Z.

Now I know my ABCs.

Next time, won't you sing with me?

Shapes & Colors Go Fish

How to win: Collect the most pairs of matching shapes and color cards by the end of the game.

Variation for easier play: The game is faster and easier when playing to collect a matching pair of shapes regardless of a shape's color or by collecting pairs of colors and ignoring the shape a color is in.

How to play: Shuffle the deck thoroughly. Deal five cards face down to each player. Place the rest of the deck face down, creating a draw pile within easy reach of all players. Players can look at and arrange the cards in their hand but must not show them to other players.

The player to the left of the dealer begins the game and asks any other player for a specific shape & color card. (Example: "Do you have a **blue circle**?"). The **asking** player must be holding at least one of the requested card already. By asking others for specific cards, players collect pairs of two cards with the same shape and color. (Example: **blue circle** is matched to **blue circle** to make a pair.)

If the player who was asked **does** have the requested card, they must give the card to the asking player. The asking player then gets another turn. If the player who was asked **does not** have the requested card, they say, "Go Fish." The asking player then draws a single card from the top of the draw pile. **If they draw the requested card, they get another turn.** If not, the turn passes to the player on their left.

As soon as a player collects a pair of matching cards, they must place those cards face up in front of them. If at any point during the game a player is without cards, they must immediately take a single card from the top of the draw pile. If it is their turn, the player should ask other players for that specific card. If there are no cards left in the draw pile, they can no longer ask other players for cards.

Shapes & Colors Flash Cards

Flip cards face up in front of your child and have them identify the shape and color on the card.

If your child does not know the answer, have them trace the shape's outline with a finger and say aloud the shape's name. If they do not know the shape's color, have them say the color aloud and point to something in the room which has the same color.

To make learning easier, teach only a few shapes and colors at a time. Focus on teaching either shapes or colors first.

Shapes & Color Match

How to win: Collect the most matched pairs by the end of the game.

Variation: Try playing with all the cards spread face up instead of face down. To make the game faster and easier, use only half the matched shape pairs supplied with the game. Try matching by shape, color, or shape **AND** color.

How to play: Shuffle the deck thoroughly. Spread all the cards out, face down, until they fill the playing area. Be sure that no cards touch or overlap.

The first player turns over two cards, saying each card's shape and color aloud. If the overturned cards are a matching pair, the player removes the cards from the playing area and places them face down in a pile in front of them.

A player's turn continues until the two flipped cards don't match. In this case, the two cards are turned back over (in the same spots), and the turn passes to the next player on the left.

Play continues until all cards are removed from play area.

Guess the Missing Shape or Color

Focus on teaching either shapes **or** colors first. Place three or four different shape cards faceup in front of your child. Say the shape or color names aloud (depending on the skill you are targeting). Have your child repeat these names. (You may also want your child to trace shapes with their finger.) Then have your child close their eyes. Turn one of the cards facedown. Have your child open their eyes and identify the facedown card. To make learning shapes and colors easier, teach only a few at a time.

Draw and Color Me

Get a few sheets of white paper and some crayons, markers, or colored pencils. Shuffle the shape cards. Place one card faceup in front of your child. Say aloud the shape name and color. Then have your child repeat these to you. Have your child draw the shape on the paper and color the shape with the matching color. Repeat this process with the next card. To make learning shapes and colors easier, teach only a few at a time.

Go Fish for Numbers 0-10

How to win: Collect the most matched pairs of number cards by the end of the game.

How to play: Shuffle the deck thoroughly. Deal five cards face down to each player. Place the rest of the deck face down, creating a draw pile within easy reach of all players. Players can look at and arrange the cards in their hand but must not show them to other players.

The player to the left of the dealer begins the game and asks any other player for a specific number card. (Example: "Do you have the number **9**?"). The **asking** player must be holding at least one of the requested card already. By asking others for specific cards, players collect pairs (a set of two matching cards) with the same number. (Example: **Number 9** is matched to **number 9** to make a pair.)

If the player who was asked **does** have the requested card, they must give the card to the asking player. The asking player then gets another turn. If the player who was asked **does not** have the requested card, they say, "Go Fish." The asking player then draws a single card from the top of the draw pile. **If they draw the requested number card, they get another turn.** If not, the turn passes to the player on their left.

As soon as a player collects a pair of matching cards, they must place those cards face up in front of them. If at any point during the game a player is without cards, they must immediately take a single card from the top of the draw pile. If it is their turn, the player should ask other players for that specific card. If there are no cards left in the draw pile, they can no longer ask other players for cards.

Number Flash Cards

To make learning numbers easier, teach only a few numbers at a time, or number sets 0-4 or 5-10. Flip cards face up in front of your child and have them identify the number on the card. (Be sure the number card is facing your child properly and not upside-down.)

If your child does not know the answer, have them trace the number's shape with a finger and count the dots in the ten-frame box.

Number War

How to Win: Capture all the cards.

How to Play: Choose a dealer. The dealer will shuffle the deck thoroughly and deal all cards, facedown, as equally as possible between all players until cards are gone. Players do not look at their cards.

All players turn over the top card of their piles at the same time. The player with the highest numbered card wins the battle, captures all opponents' played cards, and adds these captured cards, facedown, to the bottom of their pile. Play continues in this way.

If the revealed cards are the same number, it is war. Both players place an additional three cards, facedown, and one card, face up in front of them. The player with the highest face up numbered card captures all of the cards. If these new face up cards are the same, war ensues again. The game ends when one player has captured all the cards.