

Math Games with a Deck of Cards

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In all games the face cards should be removed from the deck. For advanced play, a jack can stand for the number 11, a queen stands for the number 12, and a king stands for the number 13.



Twisted Favorites:

War:

- Play regular war to compare numbers. (Pre-K – 1)
- Turn over two cards and add or multiply to practice facts. (K – 5)
- Turn over two cards and subtract to practice negative numbers. (4+)

Go Fish

- Play regular game and say doubles or square fact before putting cards down. Opponent can take match if player forgets to say fact: 3×2 or $3 + 3$ (K – 5)
- Match two numbers that make 10. (K – 2)

21 Black Jack

- Called “Close to 20” in the classroom. Play the regular game without the face cards. Players decide when they stop getting dealt cards to be close to 20. Player closest to 20 without going over wins. (1 – 5)



Spoons: **Need plastic spoons** (Pre-K – 1)

- The object of this game is to get four of a kind. (Identifying numbers)
- Start with spoons in the middle of the table. The number should be one less than the number of players. (Example: 4 players = 3 spoons)
- The dealer gives everyone 4 cards.
- The dealer begins the game by taking a card from the deck. He decides whether he wants to pass it on or trade it for one of his own cards. Then he passes it to the next person. The card continues through all the players in the same manner. The last player puts the unwanted cards in the discard pile.
- When a player gets 4 of a kind, he takes a spoon.
- Once one spoon is gone, any player may take a spoon no matter his cards.
- The player left without a spoon is out.
- A new round starts with one less spoon.
- The winner makes it through all the rounds till he is the only one left.



Facts Salute: (1 – 5)

- To play this game students are in groups of 3: Player A, B and C.
- Each group has one deck of playing cards with the face cards removed.
- The deck is divided between players A and B.
- Player A takes the top card off of their deck and without looking at it, places it on their forehead so Players B and C can see it.
- Player B does the same so that Players A and C can see the card.
- Player C adds or multiplies the cards and gives the sum or product to players A and B.
- Players A and B have to correctly guess their own card before the other player. The player who does it the quickest gets the point for the round.
- After each round the cards rotate so each player gets a turn in every role.

Close to 100: (2 – 5)

- The object of this game is to create two addends that make a sum close to 100. The player closest to 100 wins the round. The player with the most cards at the end wins.
- Players shuffle the cards and place them in the middle of the table.
- Players take turns selecting 1 card at a time until each player has 5 cards.
- The players must use four of the cards to make two addends that are close to 100. The extra card is kept to the next round.
- The winner of the round has the sum closest to 100.
- This game can be adapted to use 7 cards and get close to 1,000 or three cards and get close to 10.

Comparing Numbers: *Place value mats are helpful* (1 – 5)

- The object of this game is to create the largest number.
- Players shuffle the cards and place them in the middle of the table.
- Players take turns selecting 1 card at a time and placing it in either the hundreds, tens, or ones place.
- Once players have filled all three place value spots, the person with the highest numbers gets the cards.
- The winner has the most cards at the end of the game.
- This game can be adapted to use just tens and ones for lower grades or up to millions for higher grades.

Addition - Multiplication Over Under (1 – 5)

- Deal all the cards out to two players.
- One player is the Under (10 for addition, 30 for multiplication) player and the other is the Over (10 for addition, 30 for multiplication) player.
- Each player turns over a card.
- If the sum or product of the two cards is Over 10 or 30, that player takes the cards. If the product is under 10 or 30, that player takes the cards.
- When all the cards have been played, the player with the most cards wins.



First to Fifty (K – 3)

- Players take turns to deal two cards to each person.
- Players add the two cards to get a sum.
- The player with the highest sum keeps his cards. Everyone else puts their cards back into the deck.
- The players total the values of their cards until one person reaches 50.

First to One Thousand (4+)

- Same game as First to Fifty except players multiply instead of add.
- The players total the values of their cards until one person reaches 1000.

Mix and Match Variations:

- All games start with 4 rows of 5 cards turned right side up on the table. Cards are replenished as the game continues. Face cards can be wilds.
- Make 10 (K – 2)
 - o Players take turns picking two cards to make 10.
 - o Players can play a second round with cards turned face down.
- Make 20 (1 – 3)
 - o Players take turns picking four cards to make 20.
 - o Players can play a second round with cards turned face down.
- Creating Inequalities (K – 5)
 - o Player A chooses a sign =, <, or >.
 - o Player B must pick two cards to make the inequality true.
 - o If Player A agrees with Player B, then Player B keeps the cards.
 - o The players switch roles and playing continues.
 - o The winner has the most cards when the deck is gone.

Number Family Rummy (2 – 5)

- The object of this game is to make families of three cards that are related by addition or subtraction. (For example: 3,6, and 9 are related because $3+6=9$ or $9-3=6$)
- Shuffle the deck and deal 6 cards to each player.
- Put the rest of the cards face down in a pile.
- On a turn, players can put down families of cards. If they don't have any families a player can draw a card and discard.
- The first player to get rid of all 6 cards is the winner.