

Some Suggestions When Teaching Your Child How To Play Card Games

1. Use vocabulary your child will understand.

Saying, "Deal the cards," or "Put the cards in order," might be difficult to understand. Instead, maybe say, "What comes after one?" If she answers correctly, then ask, "What comes after two?" This will show her what "putting the cards in order mean."

2. Teach the terms associated with the game

Make sure the child knows all the name of all the suits: hearts, diamonds, spades, and clubs. Also teach words like "shuffle," "deal the cards," "suit," etc.. Knowing these terms will make it easier when explaining how to play the games.

3. Make sure they have the perquisite skills

They have to know their numbers at least up to 10 and as well as the letters J, Q, and K. Knowing how to match numbers, colors, and symbols (e.g. heart to heart) is a required skill in many card games.

Being able to understand instructions about what to do once he picks a certain card is important. For example, the child will need to know where to put the number 3 card? Depending on the game, sometimes the 3 card is placed on top of the 4 card. Sometimes the 3 card is placed on top of the 2 card. Knowing where to put the card is a key to winning a game.

4. Break the card game into a series of "rules."

In the Classic Solitaire game, one rule is what card can you put on an empty space? The answer is only a King. Another rule in the game is what is the maximum number of columns you can have during the game? The answer is seven columns. Break the game up into these various rules and then teach each rule separately.

Using the Classic Solitaire game as an example, first, directly ask the child the rule, "How many columns can you have?" Once he responds correctly on a consistent basis, use the cards to set up a specific scenario in which he has to demonstrate to you he knows the rule.

To illustrate, create six columns of cards. Then give him a King card to see if he will create another column. If he does create another column, that is a correct response. Next create seven columns of cards and then give him a King card to see if he will create an eighth column. If he does, then that would be incorrect because you can only create a maximum of seven columns in the game. Teach the child this rule about the columns until he has mastered it. Keep teaching the child to master all the rules of the game, and he will eventually know how to play it.

5. Teach how to set up the game

For Classic solitaire, teach how to put out all the cards in the seven columns. If it is a multiplayer game, make sure she knows how many cards each person is supposed to have.

Shuffling the cards is also very important; otherwise, she will have a very difficult time winning. If it is difficult for her to hold all the cards, teach her to put all the cards on the table and then moving them around in a circle.

6. Modify the rules

Sometimes a rule might make the game too difficult for the child to play. If possible, modify that one rule to allow her to enjoy the game more. This is true in cases in which the game is too challenging and the child rarely wins. For example, a rule might say the cards can only be placed together if they are of different color (e.g. black on red or red on black). To make it easier, allow the child to place the cards together even if they are the same color (e.g. black on black, red on red).

Modify the rules only for one player games. If you change the rules for multiplayer games for when you are playing with the child, she may be confused when playing with other children who are used to play with the original rules.