

## Easy Games to Teach Children to Follow Instructions

### Games for Younger Children

"Simon Says" is a classic children's game that also serves as an effective way to teach children how to follow simple instructions.

The Command Card game, used in Montessori schools to help teach young learners how to follow simple instructions, is another easy and entertaining game for fostering recollection skills. To play this game, write simple action verbs, such as "giggle" and "sit," onto individual index cards. Have children take turns choosing a card and acting out the commands. Be sure to read the cards aloud and show them to the children to reinforce recollection and memory skills.

### Games for Older Children

Scavenger hunts are exciting for older children, and they're effective for teaching kids how to follow a sequence of instructions. To play, hide an object or prize somewhere in a room. Then, determine places children will go explore to receive further instructions for finding the item. Leave note cards directing the players to the next location at each spot.

Another easy, but effective, game for teaching older children the importance of following directions consists of a worksheet filled with different directions, the first one being to read through all of the instructions before beginning. Populate the worksheet with different instructions, such as "draw a circle on the back of the paper." End the worksheet with a final instruction that says, "Skip all the other instructions except for number 1."

### Games With a Purpose

Make a game out of chores and other tasks by adding a competitive element. Leave an instruction sheet for each child, and award a prize to the child who finishes the fastest without skipping any of the instructions.

Turn bedtime routines into a game by instructing children to get into pyjamas, brush teeth, put dirty clothes away and get into bed. Leave a little prize or treat on the night table to award children for following your instructions.

### Games to Improve Listening Skills

The Mystery Sounds game requires children to listen closely to different sounds and try to identify the objects making those sounds. This task fosters and reinforces careful listening skills -- a requirement for following instructions accurately. Have children close their eyes and ask them to listen carefully to the sound you're about to make. Then, take a simple, ordinary object -- such as a pair of keys or a box of mints -- and shake or rattle the items to create a sound. Ask children to listen carefully for cues and take turns guessing what the sound could be.

Another easy game for reinforcing listening skills is to play "I'll Bring ...". To play this game, the first player states what he will bring to a picnic. The second player repeats what the first player will bring and then adds her own item. The game continues on down the line, with each player repeating what the others will bring and then adding another item.