

Spoken word games

BOTTICELLI (2+) The Thinker thinks of a person and says the first letter of their surname. Others take turns to ask a yes/no question where the asker has a person in mind for "yes" (who fits all confirmed information about the mystery person); the Thinker either says "No, I am not [name]", naming someone who fits but is not the mystery person, or concedes. If conceding, the asker reveals who they had in mind and may ask direct yes/no questions to the Thinker until they answer "no" to one. If the Thinker answers yes to "Are you [name]?", the guesser wins.

BREAKFAST COMBO (2+) The Server thinks of an object. Another player makes a guess as to what this object might be, and this automatically becomes the best guess so far. Other players then make guesses. For each guess: if it is closer than the current best guess, the Server announces that this is the new best guess; otherwise, the Server declines it but names something that the guess has in common with the object. (eg. "A wasp?" "No, a calculator is still the best guess, but like a wasp, my object has a sharp point.") A correct guess wins.

CONVERGENCE (2) Each player thinks of a four word key sentence. Each turn, a player announces a "test sentence", and their opponent tells them whether each word in that sentence is alphabetically before ("up") or after ("down") the corresponding word in the key sentence. (For example, if a player's key sentence was "HAVE A NICE DAY" and the other tested with "LET THERE BE LIGHT", the player would answer "down, down, up, down".) Repeat until a sentence is guessed. To shorten the game, announce when a word has reached the correct initial letter.

JOTTO (2) Each player secretly notes down a five-letter word. Players take turns to call out five-letter words, their opponent responding by saying how many times the called word's letters appear in their secret word (eg. a call of WORLD against a secret word of HELLO results in "3"). If the called word is the secret word, the caller wins. Players may note down an alphabet and cross out letters as they are eliminated, for reference.

KOLODNY'S GAME (2+) One player chooses a secret rule that any given sentence may or may not fit (eg. "ends with a vowel"). Other players ask yes/no questions, which the rule chooser answers with "yes" if the question sentence fits the rule and "no" if it does not. The first player to guess the rule wins.

NO MORE JOCKEYS (2+) Players take turns to name a person and then exclude a category that the person belongs to, such as "Buster Keaton: No more actors." Categories can be qualities of the person,

or of the words or letters of their name. Once a category is excluded, people it covers cannot be named. If a player can't think of a person, or has any player correctly challenge them for a move that breaks earlier exclusions, they are eliminated. (Upon excluding a category, a player may be asked to "name another" who also fits it; if they can't, they are eliminated.)

Card games

ABSTRAC (2) Remove 2s through 8s. Shuffle and deal the 24 cards as a face-up line, overlapping so that values are visible. Dealer chooses whether to play or pass. Players then take turns to claim one, two or three consecutive cards from the "top" end of the line, placing claimed cards in front of them. When the line's gone, total your score for claimed sets (3-of-a-kind = 3, 4-of-a-kind = 8) and sequences within a suit (3 scores 3, 4=4, 5=6, 6=12), then multiply it by the number of cards your opponent drew. If a single player scores nothing, swap scores.

ACES AND FACES (2) Lay all ace and face cards face-up on the table. Each has four relevant characteristics: red or black; rounded (club/heart) or pointed suit top; male or female (aces are female); ruler (king/queen) or follower. Take turns to select a face-up card and hand it to your opponent, who places it into an imaginary shared grid (which may never exceed a 4x4 square). If a player completes a line of four cards which share a characteristic, and notice this, they win. A player also wins if they spot an unnoticed completion before playing the next card.

BARTOK (2+) Deal five cards each, and one face-up to a discard pile. Take turns to either play an eligible card to the discards (one that shares a suit or value with the top card), or draw a card. Jokers can be played as any card. If a player breaks a rule, they take back their card and draw a penalty card. When a player has one card in hand, they must say "Bartok". With an empty hand, they win and openly invent an additional, unbiased rule for all future rounds, typically affecting eligible plays or adding effects for certain cards.

BUGAMI (3-7) Deal the deck out equally, set any leftovers aside. Players simultaneously choose and place a card face-up on the table as their "bug" suit, or face-down to play *misère*. Dealer starts; everyone plays a card, following suit if possible. Highest card of the starting suit wins the trick; winner takes the cards and leads the next trick. (Winner of the final trick also takes the leftovers.) Winning every trick scores 100; losing every trick scores 30, or 100 if

misère; otherwise score 10 per won trick, divided by the number of bug cards you took, doubled if you took none.

CHINESE TEN (2-4) Deal 24 cards between players, and four cards face-up to the table. On your turn, play one card to the table. If it captures a face-up card (if their values sum to 10, or if they are both the same value above 9), claim both cards face-down in front of you. Then, deal a new card face-up and claim a capture with it if possible. When the deck's empty, score claimed red cards only: 1-8 at face, 9+ at 10 and aces at 20. (With 3+ players, ace of spades is 30; with 4, ace of clubs is 40.)

DRACULA (2) Include jokers. Deal four cards each, and one face-up as the centre of a 3x3 grid. Take turns to add one card, orthogonally adjacent to an existing card. After eight plays, Player 1 scores the highest-scoring row, Player 2 scores the highest-scoring column: a line scores its total face value (Queens 10 horizontal but 0 vertical, Kings vice versa, Jacks always 0), x2 if it has two cards of one suit, x3 for three in one colour, x5 for three of one suit. A line with a joker ("vampire") scores zero. Play six rounds.

GOPS (2-3) Give one player the spade cards and the other clubs (if there's a third player, give them hearts). Shuffle the diamonds. Each round, deal one diamond card face-up to the table: each player secretly bids a card of their choice from their hand - the highest bid (if any) takes the diamond, and bid cards are discarded. In a tie, the diamond is discarded. Highest diamond total wins.

JAMES BOND (2-3) Deal six piles of four cards to each player (four piles for three players), and four cards face-up into a middle row. Play is simultaneous: players swap cards from their piles with cards from the middle row, but may only pick up one pile at a time, and swap one card at a time. If all of a player's piles contain four matching cards, they call "James Bond" and win.

LIAR! (2) Use the Jack, Queen and King from any three suits. Shuffle and deal four cards each, and one face-down to the table. Take turns to either: guess the face-down card (you win if you are right, you lose if wrong) or play a card from your hand face-up to the table and ask your opponent either how many cards they have of that suit, or how many of that rank. Players must answer truthfully, but may lie once per game. Suspected lies may be challenged; if correct, the challenger wins, if mistaken they lose.

MINI MAO (2+) Deal five cards per player. One player thinks up a secret rule regarding legal plays (eg. "cannot play a club onto a heart"). Players take turns to play one card into a middle pile; if you break a secret rule, the player who invented the rule informs you that you have

done this (without explaining the rule) and hands your card back, you draw one penalty card and your turn ends. First to empty their hand wins the round, and invents an additional secret rule for the next.

With two players, both create a rule in the first round.

OBSTACLE RACE (2-6) Discard 2s through 6s and deal out the remainder; put any leftovers into a discard pile and announce their total. Take turns to play a card to the discard pile and announce the new total of the pile. (Aces are worth 11, Kings 4, Queens plus or minus 3, Jacks 2 and other cards at face value.) The "obstacles" are 55, 66, 77, 88, 99 and 111: score 1 point for hitting an obstacle, lose 1 point for skipping over one in either direction. If the total exceeds 120, reset it to zero. Continue until all cards have been played.

OHIO (2-5) Each player has 1-10 and the Jack ("Ohio") of a single suit. The first player plays any card. Going clockwise, each player must either play a lower card, or retire from the round. Ohios are counted as 0.1 less than the previous played card. Repeat until all but one player has passed; that player wins the cards on the table and leads the next round, unless any player has no cards, in which case the game ends. Score total face value of won cards, minus face value of cards in hand; Ohios score -10 wherever they are.

PIT (3-4) Prepare a deck of the numbers 1 through 9 for as many suits as there are players. Shuffle and deal nine cards each, and allow players to sort their hands. Play is then simultaneous: any player may offer a trade of a specific number of cards ("Two! Two!"), and if an opponent accepts, both swap that number of cards, unseen. Cards handed over in a trade must all be of the same suit. If a player has nine cards of the same suit, they win. Optionally: add a king (a wildcard) and a joker (cannot win while held).

POKER MENTEUR (2+) Deal five cards to the starting player, who examines them privately and announces a poker hand, optionally naming specific cards (eg. "a pair" or "pair of nines and a six"). They may lie. The next player either challenges the call or takes the hand. If they challenge, reveal and discard the hand: the challenge loser takes a penalty point and starts a new round. If they take the hand, they may discard (face-down) and redraw up to four cards, then claim a higher poker hand for the next player to judge. Play to a pre-agreed penalty total.

**The Freeze-Dried
Games Pack
Crystal Edition**

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PUT (2) Aces are high; 2s and 3s are higher than aces. For each hand, deal 3 cards to each player. Over three rounds, players take turns to play one card; highest wins and starts the next round. Best of three rounds wins the hand, first to win 5 hands wins the game. Before playing a card, a player may call "I put": opponent must either throw in their cards (calling player wins the hand) or announce that they are "seeing", playing out the current hand with its winner winning the entire game (if drawn, continue play instead). **RUMMY** (2-6) Deal ten cards each (seven for 3/4 players, six for 5/6) and one face-up to the discard pile. On your turn: draw a card from the top of the deck or discard pile; optionally play one "meld" (3+ cards of a rank, or a consecutive run of 3+ in a suit) onto the table; optionally add cards from your hand to expand any melds; discard one card (but not one you drew from the discards this turn). When your hand's empty you win and score the total face value of cards in opponents' hands (face cards are worth 10).

SIX CARD GOLF (2-4) Deal each player a 3x2 grid of face-down cards, one face-up as the discards.

Players flip two of their cards face up and cannot examine the others. Take turns to: draw a card from deck or discards, then either place it face-up replacing one of your cards (discarding the replaced card), or discard it. Round ends when a player has six cards face-up. Score: king = 0, jack/queen = 10, 2 = -2, all other cards at face value. A pair of equal cards in a column are discarded without scoring. Lowest score after nine rounds wins.

SO LONG SUCKER (4) Players have open hands of seven cards of their own suit. On your turn: play one card as a new face-up stack, or onto an existing stack. If a stack has two consecutive same-suit cards, that suit's player discards any card from that stack, takes the rest, and takes the next turn; otherwise you choose someone with no cards in that stack (if it had all four, pick the lowest down) to play next. Players may discard or gift opponent-suit cards from their hand at any time. If you can't play you're eliminated, play returning to the previous player. **THIRTY ONE** (3-8) Each round, deal three cards to each player, and three face-up onto the table. Taking turns, each player may either pass, knock or draw a card from the table and replace it with one from their hand. If all players pass, the table cards are discarded and three replacements laid out. If a player knocks, all other players get one more turn and the round ends: each player picks a suit and totals the value of cards in their hand with that suit (three of a kind are instead worth 30½). Lowest scorer loses one of four lives. **UPTAKE** (2)

One player is hearts, the other clubs. Shuffle those suits together (minus the aces) and deal out into a 5x5 grid with a hole in the middle. Each turn, use one of your cards to remove an opponent's card with a higher value in the same row or column, your card replacing the removed one. When no further moves are possible, the highest card wins, scoring as many points as its face value. (If tied, player who made the last move wins.) Play to 30 points.

VERISH' NE VERISH' (2-6) For a 2/3 player game, remove 2s through 5s. Remove one random card from the deck. Deal the remainder out. Each turn, play one to three cards face-down and announce them (eg. "two sevens"). You may lie. The next player either accepts or challenges; if they accept, they take their turn, naming the same card rank; if they challenge, played cards are revealed, the loser draws the discard pile, may optionally discard a single four-of-a-kind, and play continues to the loser's left, naming any rank. Retire when your hand's empty; last player remaining loses.

Dice games

CATEGO (2-4) Draw a grid of eleven columns numbered 2-12, with a row for each player. Take turns to roll two dice and enter the total into any column on your row. When a column is full, the player with the highest score in that column (if any) scores the number of the column. Tally the scores as you go. The game ends when the grid is full.

CINQ-O (1-6) Take six dice, one of them a different colour as the "hi/lo" dice (1-3 = low, 4-6 = high). Roll any number of unbanked dice, then "bank" one or more. Repeat up to five times. If your hi/lo dice was low, score 14 minus the total of the other dice (minimum 1), multiplied by the hi/lo die. If it was high, score the total of the other dice minus 21 (minimum 1), multiplied by three less than the hi/lo die. A straight and five-of-a-kind always score 10 before being multiplied. First to 100 wins.

FARKLE (2+) Take turns to roll six dice. Whenever you roll, if you roll any scoring combinations (100 times the face value for a triple, 1000 for a triple 1, 100 for a 1 outside of a triple, 50 for a 5 outside a triple) set at least one combination aside and either reroll what's left, or end your turn, scoring the combinations you set aside. If you ever make a roll that scores zero, your turn ends immediately, scoring zero. If you set aside all six dice, remember those combinations' total and continue with six fresh dice. First to 10,000 wins.

GOLDEN SIXTEEN (2+) Put two chips per player in

the middle. Take turns to: roll three dice, then (optionally) reroll some of them, no more than twice, then score the total. If your dice total ever exceeds 15, you are eliminated and take a chip. After each round, the player(s) with the lowest score that round takes a chip, unless they are the only uneliminated player. When all chips are taken, phase two begins: continue without taking chips; instead, discard a chip if you alone have the highest score below 16 in a round. A player with no chips during phase two wins. **LIAR'S DICE** (2+) Each player rolls five dice in secret. The starting player predicts the minimum number of times a particular digit appears across all dice (eg. "eight 5s"). 1s are wild, always counting as the predicted digit. Going clockwise, a player may either raise the previous player's bid (either a higher quantity of the same digit, or any quantity of a higher digit) or challenge it. When challenged, all dice are revealed - the loser of the challenge discards one die and leads the next round. If you lose all your dice, you're eliminated.

(Also playable with banknote serial numbers, barcodes, etc.) **SHUT THE BOX** (1+) Lay out nine face-up playing cards numbered 1 through 9 (or note them on paper if you have no cards). On your turn, roll two dice and then "shut" (turn face-down) any group of un-shut numbers whose totals add up to the dice total. (So a roll of 6 may shut either 6, 5+1, 4+2 or 3+2+1.) If 7-9 are shut, you may choose to roll just one die. Repeat until you produce a roll which can shut no numbers, then score the total of unshut numbers. Each player takes five turns, lowest overall total wins. **SIX SIX SIX** (2+) Players take turns to roll three dice, concealing the roll beneath a cup or cover. They peek and call out the result in descending order ("5-3-1"), which must be higher than the previous player's call, and may be a lie. They then pass the dice, covered, to the next player, who either challenges the call as a lie (the loser of a challenge loses one of their three lives) or accepts it. After the first turn, a player can choose not to reroll some of the passed dice before calling. **TAKE-BACK-TOE** (2) Draw or imagine a 3x4 grid. Place 10 tokens in each of the four squares on the middle row; the other two rows are players' "home rows". On your turn, roll a six-sided die and move that many chips from a single space to an orthogonally adjacent space, or pass. (You can't undo your opponent's previous move.) If three spaces in your home row contain the same (non-zero) number of tokens, you win. **YAHTZEE** (2+) Categories are named: "1" through "6" (score = total of that number rolled), "3-of-a-kind" (score total on dice), "4-of-a-kind" (score total on dice),

"Full House (triple+pair)" (score 25), "Small Straight (sequence of four)" (30), "Large Straight (five)" (40), "Yahtzee (5-of-a-kind)" (50) and "Chance (any dice)" (score total on dice). Take turns to: roll five dice, then reroll any number of them, twice. Pick a category and score it for your final roll; each player can only score each category once. If you score a Yahtzee, further Yahtzees score 100. Scoring at least 63 in first six categories gives 35 bonus points.

Miscellaneous games

THE DICTIONARY GAME (4-6) The Reader selects an obscure word from the dictionary, reads the word aloud (checking that no player knows its meaning) and copies the definition onto a piece of paper. The other players write their own definitions on identical papers. The Reader collects the papers to read aloud in a random order. Going clockwise, other players vote aloud on which definition they believe to be correct. Then: score 1 for selecting the true definition and 1 for each player who selected your false definition. If nobody guessed correctly, the Reader scores as many points as players. Take turns to be Reader. **LYNX** (2) Take an empty crossword grid. Players take turns to write a word or crossword-suitable phrase into an empty clue space. First move must be into one of the shortest spaces, subsequent moves must cross at least one existing word. The first move scores 2 points per letter in the word or phrase; subsequent moves score 1 point per letter, multiplied by the number of words the move crosses. Continue until both players resign; the first to resign gets a 10 point bonus.

MAFIA (7+) Prepare as many cards as players: two "Mafia", one "Detective" and the rest "Citizens". A Moderator deals these out secretly then moderates repeating Night and Day phases. Night: Players close their eyes, the Moderator asks the Mafia to open theirs, silently nominate a player, and then close their eyes. Moderator asks Detective to open their eyes and indicate a player, and gives a thumbs-up if they are Mafia. Day: Everyone opens their eyes, the Mafia-targeted player is eliminated and players vote on one player to eliminate. Mafia lose if eliminated, and win if only two non-Mafia remain.

NOMIC (4+) Rule 1: Going clockwise, players take turns to roll a die and add the result to their score, then propose the enactment, repeal or amendment of any rule. Rule 2: When a proposal is made, every player must vote for or against it; if the vote is unanimously in favour, the proposed change takes immediate effect, otherwise the proposer loses 10 points. Rule 3: If players disagree about rule interpretation, the player to the left of the current player resolves the dispute. Their decision is binding. Rule 4: The first player to reach 100 points wins. **PENNYWISE (2)** Players start with identical pools of coins (standard is 4 pennies, 3 nickels, 2 dimes and 1 quarter). On your turn, play one coin from your pool to the middle and (if you can) take back change up to one penny less than the value of the coin you played. If your pool is empty at the end of your turn, you are eliminated. **ZENDO (3-6)** Pick any medium (coins, words, drawn shapes, etc) for constructing small, unambiguous "koans". The Master picks a secret rule (eg. "a circle surrounds a square"), and builds one koan that fits the rule and one that doesn't, marking which is which. Students take turns to: build a koan, and optionally call for all Students to privately guess whether it fits the rule. The Master marks whether the koan fits, correct guesses earn 1 point. On your turn, you may spend 1 point to guess the rule; if wrong, the Master builds a koan that disproves it; otherwise you win.

Pencil-and-paper games

ACROSTICALS (2+) Pick a ten letter word. Each player writes it vertically on a sheet of paper, then privately fills in ten words that can be assembled from the letters of the original word, one starting with each letter. For duplicate initials, different words must be chosen. When one player has finished, they call "stop" and the game ends: score 1 point per letter for each word. **ALPHACROSS (2-4)** Draw an 11x11 grid (or 13x13 for three players, 15x15 for four), and next to it a complete alphabet for each player. Take turns to add any word to the grid (connecting to at least one existing word, and forming no non-words) and cross out any letters in your alphabet which you added to the grid that turn. The first to use up their entire alphabet wins; if the game reaches a stalemate, the player who has used most letters wins. For scoring across games, the winner scores the number of letters the second-place player has not used. **BATTLESHIP: SALVO (2)** Each draw a private 10x10 "fleet" grid and a 10x10 "strike" grid. On your fleet grid, draw an Aircraft

Carrier (a line of 5 adjacent, non-diagonal squares), a Battleship (4), a Cruiser (3), a Submarine (3) and a Destroyer (2); ships cannot touch. Take turns to call as many grid-reference shots as you have unsunk ships: your opponent announces how many (but not which) shots were "hits", and marks them on their fleet grid. Make notes on your strike grid. If a ship is hit on every square, it is sunk and its identity announced. A sunk fleet loses. **BLOCK (2+)** Draw an 8x8 grid of squares. Take turns to claim a square by marking a personal symbol in it. When the grid is full, whoever has the largest orthogonally-connected group of squares is the winner. **BOGGLE (2+)** Generate a 4x4 grid of random letters (by, say, picking a random sentence and writing the first eight letters in a checkerboard pattern, and the next eight in the gaps). Each player privately lists words that can be made from a path of sequentially adjacent letters (including diagonals). A single word cannot use the same grid square twice. The game ends after three minutes; players reveal their words, strike out any which more than one player found, then score by word length (3/4 letters=1 point, 5=2, 6=3, 7=5, 8+=11). For a sharper game, disallow 3-letter words and S-plurals. **BRIGITTE (2)** Draw a 6x5 grid of black dots. At the centre of each grid square, draw a small empty circle (a "white dot") then draw five more white dots above and below the top and bottom rows, to produce two interlocking 5x6 grids of black and white dots. One player takes black, the other white; take turns to connect two horizontally or vertically adjacent dots of your colour, without crossing a line drawn by your opponent. The first player to connect the two shortest sides of their grid wins. **CANT (2+)** Each player draws five different tetrominoes (the shapes that can be made out of four squares, as in Tetris) and simultaneously writes the numbers 1 to 4 in each tetromino's squares, in any order. Take turns to cross out one of your tetrominos and copy it into the playing area; after the first move, added tetrominos must join onto existing ones. You may rotate tetrominoes but not mirror them. For each number in the added tetromino which is adjacent to the same number in another, score 1 point. The first two tetrominoes played score nothing. **CRYSTALS (2+)** Draw a 21x21 grid. Take turns to draw a personal symbol (a "seed") in any square, and optionally draw a "crystal", scoring 1 point for every square in that crystal. A crystal is an outline of a number of orthogonally connected squares which must: contain four or more seeds of your symbol, and no other seeds; be symmetrical about all four

horizontal, vertical and diagonal axes; have no jigsaw-style boundary sections (such that it could "interlock" with another crystal); not overlap with another crystal; and contain no holes. Play until no further crystals can be formed. **EX POST FACTO (2+)** Each player takes a piece of paper and writes any single sentence at the top, and then writes every other player's sentence beneath it. Players then have three minutes to privately discover as many "rules" as possible that fit all sentences (eg. "must end with a vowel", "must contain exactly three Gs"). Rules cannot include "or" clauses, "at least/most" or refer to absences. Score 2 points for each rule which is unique, 1 point if another player found the same rule. If one rule defines a more specific subset of another rule, the less specific rule scores nothing. **FREEDOM (2)** On a 10x10 or 8x8 grid, players take turns to draw a personal symbol (a "stone") in a square. Each move must be adjacent to the previous player's move; if this is not possible, the player has the "freedom" to place their stone in any square. When the board is full, score 1 point for each "live" stone you have; a stone is live if it is part of a horizontal, vertical or diagonal line of exactly 4 stones of the same colour. **GET THE MESSAGE (2)** Both players draw a 5x5 grid with grid references, and secretly fill in a well-known phrase along any path of orthogonally adjacent squares. Players take turns to take "shots" by calling out grid references, Battleships-style; their opponent tells them what letter (if any) the square contains. Instead of taking a shot you may guess your opponent's phrase. A correct guess wins. (For scoring across games: 1 point for hitting a blank, -1 point for a wrong guess, winner gets 1 point per unshot letter in the opponent's grid.) **GHOST (2+)** One player writes a letter, and players then take turns to add a single letter after it. The letters must always be building towards a proper word. If a player causes the letters to spell a complete word of three or more letters, they lose the game. If a player suspects that the letters cannot be built into a word, they may challenge the previous player; the loser of the challenge loses the game. (The Superghost variant allows letters to be played on either end of the fragment.) **GOMOKU (2)** On a 15x15 grid, players take turns to add their symbol (O or X) to an empty square. If a player forms a line of five or more in any direction, including diagonals, they win. (For a version of the more balanced "Renju", the player who moves first cannot add a symbol if it would make a line of six or more, or if it would simultaneously create two rows of three or two rows of four. The second player has no such restrictions.)

GRIP (2) Draw a 5x5 grid. Take turns to add your own symbol to an empty square. If by placing your symbol you have surrounded an opponent's symbol on two opposite sides (including diagonals), scribble out the opponent's symbol. Scribbled out symbols take no further part in the game. Play until one empty square remains; the player with the most surviving symbols wins. **GUGGENHEIM (2+)** Each player draws the same large 5x5 grid, each row labelled with a randomly chosen letter and each column titled with a category (eg. "cities", "colours", "mammals"). Players fill in the grid with answers that match the category and begin with the letter. When a player's grid is full, they call "done"; when only one player has yet to call, the game ends. Score 2 points for each unique answer, 1 point for each shared answer, 0 for an answer voted to be incorrect. **HACKENBUSH (2)** Draw a horizontal "ground" line, with any number of dots above it. Draw lines from one or more dots to the ground, and draw any pattern of lines between dots such that each dot has at least one route to the ground. Players take turns to "cut" a line by erasing or crossing it through; any line that now has no connecting route to the ground is also erased. If a player has no line to cut, they lose. Variant: draw lines in two or three colours, each player picks one colour and cannot cut lines of their opponent's colour. **HIPBONE GAMES (2)** Draw ten large circles, and join them with lines to make a symmetrical pattern, such that each circle has between two and seven connections. Players take turns to write a word or phrase into an empty circle: upon doing so, they score a point for each filled circle which is both connectedly adjacent to their move, and for which they can argue some logical connection between the circles' contents. The second turn of the game must be unadjacent to the first. **KROPKI (2+)** On a square grid of any size, players take turns to add a dot of their colour (or an identifying symbol) to an intersection. After placing a dot, you may connect a loop of your own adjacent dots (including diagonals) by drawing a line through them. This forms a "territory". If one territory encloses another, the enclosed one is no longer counted as a territory. At the end of the game, score one point for each dot of an opponent inside your territories. Alternate scoring: score the total size of your territories.

LAST WORD (2-4) On a 9x9 grid, fill the middle 3x3 with random letters. Take turns to: add any letter adjacent to two or more existing letters; for each row, column and diagonal containing that letter, you may claim one word you can anagram from a line of adjacent letters (including the new letter), and must claim at least two words. Multiply the length of claimed words for that turn's score. Game ends when all four edges of the board contain a letter.

LION'S DEN (2) Draw a 6x6 grid of dots and draw a "barrier" border connecting all of the dots on the edges. Take turns to: mark your symbol in a square, then draw a barrier line between any two (non-diagonally) adjacent dots on the grid. If a region of eight or fewer squares becomes surrounded by barriers, it is crossed out and scores nothing. When the largest area bounded by barriers is less than 12 squares in size, the game ends and the player with the most uncrossed symbols wins.

MIND NINJA (2) Draw any grid of hexes or squares. One player invents any target pattern for Red ("must form a path between two sides", "when the board is full, the shortest path between two Reds must be longer than the same for Blue") and a number of free moves, if any, that one specific colour will receive. The other player chooses which colour to play. Free moves are taken, then players take turns to colour one space, starting with Red. Red wins if they create their pattern, Blue wins if the grid becomes full with no pattern.

NYMPHABET (2) Write out the alphabet (optionally starting from any letter and looping back to A, or in an entirely random order). Take turns to think of a word that starts with the leftmost uncrossed letter and contains a number of those immediately following it, in the same order (eg. "ABC: ABaCk", but not "ABCD: ABduCt" because the D precedes the C), and cross out the ordered letters used. Whoever writes the final word loses.

ONE-CAPTURE GO (2) Draw a 10x10 grid. Players take turns to draw a stone of their colour into any square. After adding a stone, if any group of your opponent's stones is surrounded (ie. for the largest group that a stone belongs to, there are no empty squares adjacent to any stone in that group), you win the game.

ORDER AND CHAOS (2) On a 6x6 grid, players take turns to mark an "O" or "X" in any square - each player may add either mark. One player ("Order") wins if a line of five Xs or Os is formed in any direction; the other player ("Chaos") wins if the grid is filled without any such lines being formed.

POORMAN'S TRIVIA (4+) Each player has their own sheet of paper, and thinks up and writes down three trivia questions that they know the answer to, with spaces to write three answers to

each of the other players' questions. Going around the table, each player asks one of their questions and the other players write down an answer. When all questions have been asked, score the game: each question is worth 2^X points to its questioner and those who answered correctly, where X is the number of players who answered incorrectly (unless everyone answered incorrectly, in which case the questioner loses 2^X points).

QUOD (2) Draw an 11x11 grid and mark dots ("quasars") in the four corner squares. Each player has a pool of six quasars, noted beside the board. On your turn, add any number of your quasars to the grid, plus a single personal symbol ("quad") in any empty square. If four of a player's quads form a square (of any size and orientation), that player wins. If each player has played 20 quads, the game ends and the player with most unplayed quasars wins. (Alternatively: score 1 point per square and play 20 quads each.)

RAGAMAN (2-6) Draw a 5x5 grid. Write any vowel in the middle square. Take turns to add a letter adjacent to an existing letter, then score for the longest words you can make in each of four directions (vertical, horizontal and two diagonals). Letters of a claimed word must lie consecutively, and must include the added letter, but need not be in order. Add the lengths of the words together for your score that turn. (Scoring variants: multiply instead of adding; or score 2 for 2 letters, 6 for 3, 10 for 4, 15 for 5.) Play until the grid is full.

RUMBLE (2+) Players start with 100 Energy. Each player designs two game-modifying Superpowers with any effects (eg. "Regeneration: Gain 3 Energy after each round", "Lasers: Spend 20 to do 5 unblockable damage") and these are secretly bid upon; highest bid pays that much Energy and gets the power. Each round, each player secretly divides their Energy between Defence, Attacks against other players and (if relevant) their Superpowers; this is then revealed, and if a player sustains Attacks greater than their Defence, they lose the difference in Energy. Players are eliminated at zero Energy. Repeat combat rounds until one player survives.

RUSH (2) Prepare a 19x19 grid (or any odd-sized square). Take turns to add or mark a stone in any grid cell. You can't add a stone to a square where two or more orthogonally adjacent cells contain your own stones, unless an orthogonally adjacent cell also contains an opponent's stone - in which case, you get another turn. Play until the board is full, and the player with most stones on the board wins.

SAINT MARK'S (2+) Draw a 12x12 grid. One player writes a letter in any square. Players then take turns to add a letter

adjacent to an existing one, crossword-grid-style. If a player completes a word of three or more letters, they lose. Instead of their turn, a player may challenge the last move: if their opponent can show that every horizontal and vertical sequence of two or more letters can be extended to form a word, forming no illegal words in the process, the opponent wins. Otherwise the challenger wins.

SCOREWORDS (2-6) Each player draws their own 5x5 grid (6x6 for a game with five players, 7x7 for six). Players take turns to call out a letter; for each letter, every player must privately add it to a single square in their own grid. When only one square remains, each player fills it in with a letter of their choice, and the game ends. Score points equal to the length of each word in your grid which is not wholly inside another word; 3 for 3 letters, 4 for 4, 10 for 5 (12 for 6, 15 for 7).

SHANNON SWITCHING GAME (2) Draw an arbitrary network of small circles connected by lines. Emphasise any two circles as targets. Players are known as "Short" and "Cut", and take turns, starting with Cut. On Short's turn, he or she colours (or otherwise emphasises) a line. On Cut's turn, he or she erases (or crosses out) a non-coloured line. If a coloured path exists between the two target circles, Short wins; if no path exists between them, Cut wins.

SLIMETRAIL (2) Draw any rectangular grid of squares, and mark two "goal" squares in opposite corners, each owned by one player. A player marks a Slime in any square, and the other player chooses who will play first. Players take turns to add a Slime to an empty square adjacent (orthogonally or diagonally) to the most recently added Slime. If a player's goal square contains a Slime (irrespective of who marked it), that player wins.

SOS (2+) Draw any grid, at least 3x3 in size. Players take turns to add a letter to a square: either "S" or "O", as they choose. If doing so completes an "SOS" in any direction, draw a line through it and take another turn. When the grid is full, the player who completed the most SOSes wins. (Optionally have players mark completed SOSes in different ways, for ease of counting.)

SPROUTS (2) Draw a few thick dots on paper. Take turns to: draw a curved line between two dots (or from one dot back to itself) which crosses no other line, and add a new dot somewhere along that line. No dot may have more than three lines attached to it. Last person to draw a line wins.

SYMPLE (2) Prepare an odd-sized square grid and pick an even penalty score (P) above 3. White starts. Take turns to either: grow all of your groups on the board by one stone, or add a stone which connects to none of your others. (If a

growth connects multiple groups, it's considered to have grown all of them.) All connections are orthogonal. If neither player has yet grown, black may choose to grow and then add a non-touching stone. When the board is full: score one point for each of your stones, minus P for each of your groups.

TAJJI (2) Draw a 9x9 grid. On your turn, draw a "tajjitu" in any pair of empty, orthogonally adjacent squares: a tajjitu is a pair of symbols, your own symbol in one square and your opponent's in the other. Continue until no further moves can be made, then each player scores the total sizes of their two largest orthogonal groups of symbols. If tied, the player who went second wins.

TIC-TAC-TEN (2) Draw nine 3x3 grids, in a 3x3 formation. One player is "X", the other "O" - on your turn, add your symbol to any space in a small grid. Your opponent must play their next move in the grid whose position corresponds to that space in the small grid (unless that grid is full or has been won, in which case they may choose any grid). If a small grid contains three of a symbol in a row, the grid is marked as won by that player; if three grids in a row are won by a player, that player wins.

TWIXT (2) Prepare a 24x24 grid of dots but don't draw the dots in the four corners. Give each player a differently coloured pen, and mark the top and bottom edges of the grid in one colour, the two sides in the other. Take turns to: claim any unclaimed dot by marking it your colour, then draw any number of links between dots you have claimed which are exactly a knight's move apart. Your links may cross your own links, but not your opponent's. You may not claim dots on your opponent's board edges. First player to link their own two borders wins.

URBANIZATION (2) Draw a grid of 6x6 dots. Take turns to connect two adjacent dots (including diagonals), or a line of three adjacent dots (again, including diagonals). If you draw the final line that encloses an area, claim it with a symbol. Play until the grid is full; the player whose claimed areas have the largest total area is the winner.

VERBAL SPROUTS (2) Write a four-letter word across four circles connected by left-to-right arrows. Players take turns to: add a new circle anywhere on the paper containing a previously unused letter, draw any number of connecting arrows, then spell out any number of words from connecting paths of letters. Each word must use the new letter, and all added arrows must be used that turn. Score 1 point per letter for each word; if one is a substring of another, score only the longest. Maximum 4 arrows per circle, arrows may not overlap, and no double-arrows between a pair.