

# RECOMMENDED COLLABORATIVE GAMES

If playing games fills you with dread of competition, hurt feelings and pouting family members, try collaborative games. These do not have a single winner, but instead the entire family acts as a team against the game.

This is a list of games we personally played and loved in our household. There are many others. If you love my suggestions, please click on the link and it will take you to Amazon where I will get a “Thank You” for my recommendation.

RECOMMENDED GAMES



## Think, Fun, Roll 18 months and up

This is an action game that requires no reading skills. I love this game because it starts the concept of taking turns and shows parents and siblings being goofy, for example: “bark like a dog”. The objective of this game is simple fun interaction with you.



## Hoot Owl Hoot 4 - 8 years

Advance around the board according to color. As children learn strategy, they will figure out the best birds to move when they get certain colors. The objective is to get all of the baby birds back to the nest before the sun sets.

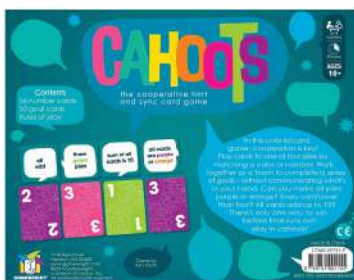


## My First Castle Panic 4 - 9 years

This is a game of team collaboration, monster slaying (although in the “first” version, the monsters just go to prison) and protecting your castle. It is surprisingly fun in how you strategize who will need which cards to send which animals to prison on which “ring” and who can help and trade those cards. The objective is to put all the monsters in prison without allowing them to take down your castle.

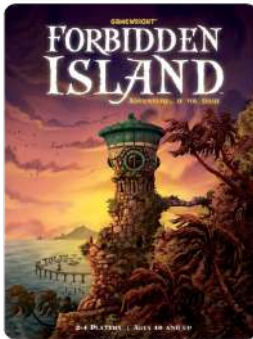
## Cahoots 10 - adult

I love this game! I actually play this by myself sometimes when I just need to stop my brain. You have four cards that have what you are looking for, ie. two adjacent pink cards. Then you have four cards that are colored and numbered. The objective is to run out of the cards that you are looking for before you run out of number/colored cards.



# RECOMMENDED COLLABORATIVE GAMES CONTINUED

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## Forbidden Island 10 - 16

My niece loves this game! She was 8 years old when I visited and she would have me play over and over. There are different roles you can play. These give you special abilities. As play continues parts of the island start to sink. The objective: as a team, you need to get all of the items of treasure before the island sinks and fly off the island.



## Castle Panic 10 - adult

This is not a serious game. It is not a hard game to win. Do you have those nights when you want to connect, but you do not want to think very hard or you have various personalities in your household that may be feeling a little out of sorts. Castle Panic is fabulous! If you have personalities that do not usually work well in teams and prefer a competitive environment, this game is perfect. The objective is to slay all of the monsters before any of them take down your castle.



## Pandemic 13 - adult

I loved this game best until I played the Pandemic campaign games. It just gets better and better. Forewarning: people who are used to competitive play have a difficult time adjusting to a collaborative game and Pandemic shows this clearly. As a team you are trying to prevent a pandemic from taking over the world. As a team, you are often faced with many ways to beat the disease. Do you go on the offense or defense? Depending on how people strategize, some people want to talk 3-5 moves ahead. Some people want to just go! This is a game that is incredibly fun, but you will need to navigate and teach team play. The objective is to stop the spread of the disease.

# RECOMMENDED COMPETITIVE GAMES

We had difficulty with personalities and hurt feelings in our family when we played games. We switched to the collaborative games. The members of the family that were causing the biggest problems learned subtlety that we would not play if people got upset. We now play these games again.

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## Think, Fun, Roll 18 months and up

I have this on the list for collaborative games as well. This is just my favorite "first" game. It is activity based. It also teaches the concept of taking turns.



## Baby Animals Matching Game 2 - 8

There are a ton of matching games out there. I love this one simply because it has "real" pictures and not cartoons. There is an even BETTER option, if you have time: My mom did this and the boys loved it. Get family pictures, two of each person. Put each one on an index card and laminate them. We had 16 cards (we only had 8 people in our family).. The objective is to turn over two cards of the same person on each turn and collect pairs.

## Left-Right-Center 5 - adult

I know, you thought this was a drinking game. It turns out this is the best game EVER for when you take the kids out to eat or you are waiting in a place where you are all sitting. The one I have linked here is simple to carry in your purse for whenever the occasion arises. The age range is listed as 6 - 50. The tokens keep changing hands as the L-R-C gets rolled. The objective is to end up all of the tokens at the end.



## Trouble 5 - adult

The bubble is so annoying. I get it. It drove me crazy. You can play SORRY instead. But my kids loved Trouble because of that annoyingly loud bubble that "shakes" the die. This is the first game they played where they learned the disappointment of not being able to go on their turn because they did not have a move or having someone else "bump" them and they would have to start all over again.. The objective is to get all of your game pieces home.



# RECOMMENDED COMPETITIVE GAMES

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### Guess Who 5 - 8

If I come from the perspective of an educator. This game is excellent for teaching deductive reasoning skills. When as a five year old can a child can learn to ask questions that eliminate other possibilities? This teaches them core strategic skills. The child simply thinks they are having a fun time figuring out “Who” you picked. The objective is to discover the person you chose by asking questions and eliminating people.



### Connect Four 6 - 12

This game takes Tic-Tac-Toe to a whole new level. As a child progresses in their strategy and development they learn to project two or three moves ahead and to try to guess what their opponent is planning. The beauty of Connect 4 is it is quick, tactile and easy to learn. The objective is to get four in a row before your opponent.



### Uno 7 - 11

True confessions, I have never liked this game. However, I love Skip-Bo and I feel it is easier to teach Skip-Bo if you have played Uno. Uno is also easy to take with you and kids love it. There are four colors, all numbered. In addition to these “normal” cards there are special play cards. The object is to be the first player with no cards.



### Skip - Bo 10 - adult

The ages on the game say 7 - 11. My mother in law always requests this game at family gatherings; it is her favorite. It has a strategy that may be difficult for younger children, if they are not used to game play. The cards are like Uno, four colors and numbers. Each player has an unknown stack. There are cards put in the middle by players that can be played upon in numerical order. Players can play on their own cards; they get four stacks. The objective is to play all of your unknowns before any other player.



### Farkle 8 - adult

This is excellent when you have a large age spread with the kids. It is also good to help the kids learn early math skills. A person rolls as many times as they get counters, chooses to keep their score or they “lose it all.” This game also travels well. We have played at airports, restaurants, doctor’s offices, etc.

The objective is to be the first person to an agreed upon amount of points like 10,000.

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## Ticket to Ride 8 - adult

This game has a beautiful board with lovely train track pieces. It also teaches geography very subtly! A player has to think carefully about their strategy as they have 3 route cards to lay and gain points from that will count against them if they do not connect their tracks. They also have to determine if they will gain enough points that way or want to figure out another way. The objective is to be the player with the most points when the player who lays their last track first goes out. One of my sons LOVED this game!



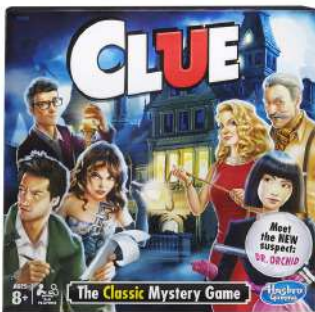
## Mastermind 8 - adult

\*\*I did NOT recommend the \$8.26 version because , if you look, there are only 8 chances to break the code. This is too difficult in my opinion. This is an old-fashioned game that teaches deductive reasoning and elimination. There are six different color pegs. One person chooses a four peg combination and the other person has ten tries to figure out what it is. They are given “right color, right place” and “right color, wrong place” hints along the way. They simply do not know what peg the hint refers to, they have to figure that out. The mastery is when your child has to be the person who gives the hints. The objective is to figure out the color combination by the tenth turn.



## Clue 8 - adult

This is also a great game at reasoning and deduction and my younger son liked this one much better! We live in Northern Arizona where it does not snow often, but when it does, we could get snowed in for three days. We would play Clue all day when the kids were 8 - 15. We all remember this time very fondly. The objective of the game is to find out “Who did it, with what, in which room.”



## Apples to Apples 12 - adult, there is a “Jr” version!

We love this game because there is no “right” answer. You have to know the person who is the “judge” that turn and how they will answer. Everyone gets cards. The person who is the judge turns over a green card and says the word. Everyone takes a card from their hand (red cards) that relates (if they can) to that word in a way they think the “judge” will identify with. Whoever’s red card the judge picks, the green card goes to that player. The objective is to gather the most green cards.



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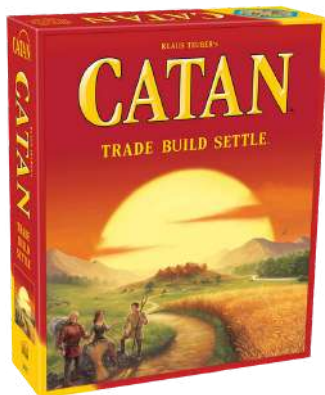
## Mancala 7 - adult



Each game lasts approximately 10 minutes. We played this a lot at the house while I was trying to get dinner on the table. I have two boys. We would start around 4:00. Only 2 can play. The winner would be “challenged” by the person not playing. It was lightening rounds. In the meantime, the person not playing would: empty the dishwasher, peel potatoes, feed the dogs, etc. The kids never even noticed chores getting done; they were just waiting for their turn to play. Plus, I was also rotating in doing the work.

It is a game of strategy and prediction. If chess had a VERY younger sibling, I imagine this would be it. The objective is to get all the colored stones in your base.

## The Settlers of Catan 10 - adult



Many relationships have been strained over this game! And yet...it remains a favorite in this household. We have limited play. There are so many different strategies that can be employed with Catan. It is a game of road building, card swapping and resource building. It can leave other players at a very low number early on while another player will clearly win, not always, but you can get the feeling you are playing on and on and have no chance, which is one reason I avoid Monopoly like the plague. However like I said, it is one of my favorites. The objective is to get 12 points.

\*\*Warning, the expansion set is cheaper, but cannot work without the set I have linked.

## Splendor 10 - adult



I am so delighted a friend recommended this game! This has taken and replaced much of our our Catan play; no one walks away upset. It is a game of cards and gathering jewels for points. While it starts slowly and you can think carefully about your strategy and what you are doing, it takes off towards the end and before you know it, if you have not been paying attention to others' points someone has won the game! This game is also unique because it is one of the few strategy board games I have found that is just as much fun to play with 2 players as with 3 or 4. The last visit from my son, he was home for three weeks, we did not get out Catan once, but played Cahoots and Splendor the entire time. The objective is to be the first player to get 15 jewel points.