

# Family Fun in the Summer

---



## Family Game Night

Begin the tradition of an annual summer family game night. Invite another family over for a potluck or barbeque and pull out all of the old family favorites to play. Try Clue, Life, Aggravation, Pictionary, Yahtzee, card games or Scrabble.

## Nightly Stories—All Summer Long

Celebrate summer by reading a book aloud to the family. Try the *Chronicles of Narnia* by C. S. Lewis, *The Novels of Redwall* by Brian Jacques, *The Mitchell Family* series by Hilda van Stockum, the books of Madeleine d'Engle, or the *Lord of the Rings* by J.R. Tolkien. Also consider *Grimm's Fairy Tales* and other collections for children.

## Make Up A Story

This is a great activity for that long family car ride, plane trip, or just when we are lazing around in the backyard on a warm afternoon. Decide who starts and start telling a story one sentence (or one word) at a time. Each person says his or her sentence, and then the other person picks up the story, connecting as much as possible with the thought, characters, actions of the previous sentence.

This works best and is tons of fun if you don't put too much thought into it. Let whatever comes up, come out! You can pick some parameters in advance, such as topic area, number of characters or objects that the story involves. Sometimes setting some limitations gives people even more freedom to be creative. Remember, judgment is the worst enemy of creativity! Don't judge what each other says. And if small children ever get stuck, the word "and" will suffice as their contribution!

## Verb Travel Game

Here's a great travel game. The object is to point out actions or verbs in the immediate environment. For example, if the car is stopped at a stoplight—"I see a man crossing the street, a woman walking her dog, a man filling his car with gas, a girl rolling down her car window. . ." The first person to find ten actions or verbs wins.

Note that you may need to reduce the number of verbs for smaller children. When driving through various neighborhoods and types of terrain, watch how the actions change. In a rural area it may be "I see the grass growing, the leaves blowing in the wind, the sun setting . . ."

## A collage of various board game boxes. Visible titles include "Monopoly", "Clue", "Trivial Pursuit GENUS IV", "Operation", "Chutes and Ladders", "Boggle", "Sweet Revenge", "Zing", "Mystery Toy", "GAB", "Morry!", "Poly Jungs", "Ve Jr.", "Er's", and "General Knowledge". The boxes are arranged in a grid-like fashion, overlapping slightly.

**How to Play:** One player, the poser, goes around the corner of the house, while the other players agree on a pose they want him or her to adopt: standing on one foot, sitting with arms and legs crossed, and so on. The poser then comes back and begins moving his arms and legs in various positions. The other players either cheer and clap (if he's getting closer to the pose they want) or quiet down (if he's heading in the wrong direction.). Depending on the age and sportsmanship of the players, you might let fly some good-natured boos and jeers if the poser is way off. But when the poser gets the pose right, it's time for wild cheers and standing ovation.

**How to Play:** Choose a Wolf, a Sheep, and two Sheepdogs. The Sheep joins hands with the Sheepdogs, forming a three-person triangle. The Wolf, standing outside the group, tries to tag the Sheep, while the Sheepdogs (without breaking their circle of hands) spin around, trying to keep the Wolf at bay. When the Wolf tags the Sheep (easier said than done), the players change roles and give it another whirl.

**How to Play:** One player, the guesser, goes around the corner of the house while the remaining players sit in a circle and select a leader, quietly. The leader then initiates a series of motions—hand movements, claps, foot stomps and so on—which the other players copy. The guesser is then called back to watch the group. The leader must change the movements every five to twenty seconds. The followers try not to give away the leader with their eyes. The guesser gets three tries to identify the right person.