

Parent Information Sheet

Improving Memory Skills



Sometimes children are good at listening but find it difficult to remember what is said to them. Try these games at home to help:

1. **Shopping Game** – The adult says “I went shopping and bought an apple...” and your child says “I went shopping and bought an apple and an orange...” etc.
2. **Holiday Game** – The shopping game can be played with a suitcase and objects/pictures saying, “I went on holiday and I packed...”
3. **Washing Game** – As above using a line and clothes/pictures “I washed ...”
4. **Birthday Game** – “Today is my birthday and I got...”
5. **Alphabet Game** – Pick a category e.g. fruit, furniture, animals. The first person thinks of something in the category beginning with ‘A’, your child adds an item beginning with ‘B’ and so on.
6. **Chinese Whispers** – You need a minimum of 3 people for this game. The first person starts a whisper of their choice e.g. “I went to the cinema and saw Toy Story”. They whisper the message to the next person who has to remember it and pass it on. You can make the messages more difficult by increasing the complexity of the sentence e.g. “I went to the cinema to watch Finding Nemo and I ate a bag of popcorn to myself” (It is a good idea to write more complicated messages down so that you can remember how it started!).
7. **Eye Spy** – Play traditionally or you can use this game to give descriptions of an object e.g. “I spy something you can eat, it’s hot, it’s round, it goes in a bun, it’s covered in ketchup. [Burger]. Tell the child that they can only guess the answer after they have heard 5 descriptions. Once they have guessed the answer, ask them to repeat back your descriptions.
8. **Tray Game** – Place a number of objects on a tray and get your child to name aloud all of the objects. Then place a cloth over them and remove one item without your child seeing it. Uncover the tray and get your child to tell you which object is missing. Start with only 1 object and then increase the

number of items removed. See how many objects you can play this game with and how many objects you can remove.

9. **Barrier Games** – A barrier is placed between you and your child, so that he/she must rely on verbal instructions to complete the tasks. Here are some ideas of games:

Map drawing – Provide identical maps to each player. These are simple drawings of what we might find in a town e.g. houses, trees, church, shop, walls, bridges. One map has a route drawn on it. The player with this map must give instructions to the other player to draw the same route e.g. walk past the church and then turn right over the bridge, to the middle tree etc.

Playing cards – Provide a grid to each player with 4,6 or 9 squares. Place a playing card or a picture card on one player's grid. The aim is for the other player to place the same card(s) in the same square(s), through giving instructions. You may need to restrict the number of cards to choose from. This game can also be played with coloured counters, objects etc.

Fuzzy felt/Sticker boards – Provide two identical boards and pictures. One player has pictures already on the board. Through giving instructions, the other player must place the pictures in the same position.

Pictures – Provide each player with a drawn outline (e.g. clown/house). One is coloured, the other is not. Through giving instructions, the players must finish with identical pictures. (e.g. colour the clown's nose red).

Drawing – One person has a pattern of shapes in front of them drawn on a piece of paper. The other person has a set of coloured pencils and a blank piece of paper. Through giving instructions, the players must end up with an identical picture.

Identical objects – Each player needs an identical set of objects; bricks, mug, pencil, etc. One player sets up a construction with these objects. Through giving instructions, the players must end up with an identical construction.

Drawing Pictures – One person draws a picture e.g. a house. They describe it to the other person e.g. I'm drawing a house it's a square house with a triangle for a roof, it's got 4 square windows, 2 upstairs, 2 downstairs and a door in the middle etc. This can be as simple or as hard as you like e.g.

Note: When playing Barrier Games with your child, it's important not to peek over and repeat instructions if you know they're doing it wrong, the child

needs to learn this once the barrier is removed, thus giving him immediate feedback about his performance i.e. how well he/she listened.

11. **Praise** - Don't forget to praise your child for their efforts.