

Domino odd and even

This is a simple game to teach odd and even up to 12. It has the unusual feature that you can 'cheat in reverse' – that is, you can let the child win without them noticing. This can be useful in boosting the child's enthusiasm.

The play follows the play of a normal game of dominoes, but the scoring is different. You can use any of the different varieties of dominoes, so I will not specify the full rules for play here. The important rules that must be satisfied are that:

- (a) After each person plays a domino there is a single chain of dominoes
- (b) The game ends when one player "goes out" – that is they play their last domino and thus have no dominoes left in their "hand".

The scoring is as follows:

- 1) After each domino is played, add the two values at the end of the chains. Score 1 point if this is even, no points if it is odd. (This will quickly teach the child that 0 is even.)
- 2) If you have played the last domino and "gone out" score an extra 1 point

The player with the higher score wins.

You can cheat by deliberately playing to make the total odd and thus not get a point. The child doesn't know what dominoes you have, so won't know you are playing to let them win.

Example

If after the child plays there is a 6 at one end of the chain and a 2 at the other, the total is 8 which is even, so the child scores a point. If the adult now plays the 6-1 domino, the numbers are now 1 and 2 which total 3, which is odd, so the adult does not score a point.

Once the child is comfortable with the game, you can vary the normal domino rules to help the child learn number bonds to 6. When a player puts down a domino, instead of matching the number at the end of the chain, she or he has to make the sum of the number at the end and the new number equal to 6. For example, if the end of the chain is 4, you have to put a domino with a 2 next to it. The odd-even scoring stays the same.