

House of Cards

Purpose

For players to make individual contributions to a cooperative project: building a tower of index cards. The purpose is to develop each player's ability to share ideas and blend alternative strategies making it obvious whether players are contributing to the group.

Requirements

- **Time:** Full match (three 2 minutes games) is 30-45 minutes including a debrief.
- **Number of Players:** 2 or more people
- **Age range:** at least 7 years old - adults have fun playing this game too!
- **Space:** Table or floor recommended
- **Equipment:** Measuring tapes (one per pair), timer, and 3x5 colored index cards
 - *Optional:* EnTeam [scoresheet](#) for 3-players, players compare working solo vs. in partners. EnTeam [scoresheet](#) for 4-players, players rotate partners.
- **Prerequisites:** None

How to Play

Playing without a score sheet

1. Divide the group into pairs.
2. Give each pair 8 3x5 index cards (4 for each partner). Place cards down.
3. Set a time limit - 2 minutes for players to build the tallest tower possible.
4. Using only their 4 cards, players will build when the timer starts.
5. Towers can be measured at any time, only the tallest tower that stood for 5 seconds will be recorded. If the tower falls, you may rebuild.
6. When time is up, sum up all scores from all pairs and present the group score.
7. Between games, players debrief and create strategies to improve the score.

Playing with a score sheet

1. Divide everyone into groups of 3 or 4. Each group will create two towers total by working with a partner or solo
2. Partners (or solo members if in a group of 3) have 2 minutes to build their tower.
3. Each player can only use their 4 cards (if you are in a group of 3 and building solo, you will build using 8 cards).
4. Towers can be measured at any time, only the tallest tower will be recorded. If the tower falls, you may rebuild.
5. When time is up, sum up all scores from all groups and present the group score.
6. Between games, players debrief, create strategies to improve, and rotate partners within their group of 3 or 4. The goal is to improve the group score.

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Rules

1. Players may only touch their cards. You may not touch your partner's cards.
2. You may fold or tear your cards as you choose but you can only use cards to build the tower.
3. The tower must stand for at least 5 seconds without support, while you measure.
4. You can measure your tower at any time. If it falls, you can rebuild.
5. Subtract one point if anyone other than you touched your cards.

Scoring

- Your score is the height of your tallest tower in centimeters (round to whole numbers).
- Subtract one point if anyone other than you touched your cards.
- Everyone wins if the group score improves. If it doesn't improve, everyone loses.

Debrief Questions

The purpose of debriefing is to learn from each game and to develop better strategies that will improve the group performance and apply lessons learned to everyday life.

What happened?		
What did you see? What did you hear? What was the score?	What worked? What didn't work?	How did people feel? What issue(s) came up? What issue(s) remain?
So what?		
What did we learn?	How does this experience relate to other experiences?	Why are we doing this? How is it relevant to us?
Now what?		
How could we improve our score in this activity?	How can we work together better?	How could we apply these ideas elsewhere?

Digging Deeper

1. If there was a team of 3 where one person built on their own:
 - a. How did you like building on your own vs in a pair? Was there a difference?
2. Were there any examples of **moral hazard** to discuss?
 - a. Did anyone purposefully build a shorter tower the first round to beat it easily?
 - How does this affect your partner? Were you thinking about what's best?
 - How does this impact the entire group when all scores are tallied together?
 - b. Did anyone lie about their score? How does this impact the rest of the group?