

Mastermind

Focus:

- Logical Reasoning

Prerequisites:

- None

Materials:

- Partner(s), Cuisenaire rods (other colored markers may work)

Objective:

- Deduce the hidden selection of rods in as few guesses as possible.

How To Play:

1. Place the entire set of Cuisenaire rods on the table. A player is chosen as the pattern maker. The rest of the players close their eyes. The pattern maker chooses three Cuisenaire rods (no repeating colors) and hides them from the other players.
2. The other players open their eyes and present possible solutions to the pattern maker. In this version, each player will present a set of three rods as their guess to the pattern maker.
3. The pattern maker then tells that player how many rods in the guess match the rods that are hidden. For example, if the pattern maker chose blue, red and yellow rods and the player presents a guess of red, green and brown rods, then the pattern maker would say "You have one correct color."
4. The player then presents a new guess, using the information gathered in the previous guess and the pattern maker states how many rods in the new guess match the hidden rods.
5. Play continues until the player correctly identifies all three hidden colored rods, in other words, the pattern maker would say "All three colors are correct." Count how many guesses it takes to find the pattern and this is the player's score.

Variations:

- To increase difficulty, increase the number of hidden rods to 4 or 5. For even higher difficulty, allow repetition of colors. Finally, for super advanced Mastermind, require the correct order of the rods. In this final version, the pattern maker would divulge two clue responses for every guess: How many colors are correct, and how many colors are in the right location.
- With multiple players, the players take turns presenting guesses to the pattern maker, racing to be the first to identify the hidden pattern.

