

Ten Fun Car Game Ideas

Road trips with your children don't have to be difficult ordeals punctuated with a repeated "Are we there yet?" Put away the DVD player, phones and gaming devices and enjoy a fun, interactive, educational time for all the family. Here are ten games to try the next time you're on the road again.

1. Animal Guessing Game

Ages 4 and up: One person secretly thinks of an animal. The other players then take turns asking questions, such as "Can it fly?", "What continent does it live on?", "Is it a marsupial?" and "Is it a carnivore?" until one player makes the correct guess. Questions should be leveled according to your child's age and ability, and a partner can help younger children choose an animal and answer the questions.

2. The Animal Name Game

Ages 6 and up: One person names an animal. Then each person in order has to name another animal (no repeating!) that starts with the last letter of the previous animal named. There are no winners or losers in this game. With older children, try the game with geographical categories such as cities or countries.

3. The Alphabet Game

Ages 5 and up: One person chooses the right-hand side of the road, and someone else the left. Each player looks for letters of the alphabet that appear on signs or license plates on their side. The object of the game is to point out all the letters of the alphabet in order, from A to Z. The first person to spot the entire alphabet wins.

4. I Spy

Ages 4 and up: Look around the car and secretly select an item. Give one clue such as "I spy something blue," or "I spy something made of wood." Each person takes a turn trying to guess the secret item.

5. The Theme Song Game

Ages 5 and up: One person hums a familiar tune, and everyone else tries to name the song as fast as possible. The first person to guess correctly hums the next song.

6. Memory Game

Ages 6 and up: The first person says "A is for ---" filling in the blank with any word beginning with the letter A, such as "apple." The second person comes up with a word for the letter B, such as "book," but must also repeat the "A" word: "A is for apple, B is for book." Continue through the alphabet, each person taking several turns and reciting more and more letters and words. By the time you reach the letter Z, that player will recite the whole alphabet and its corresponding words. However, if you're playing with younger kids you may want to choose an earlier letter than "Z" to be the final one.

This is a variation on the popular game "I'm going to camp and I'm packing a..." where the list grows and players need to repeat each subsequent item.

7. Secret Place Race

Ages 7 and up: One person looks at a road map and finds a small town, village, river, etc. That person announces the name of the place she has chosen. A second player has 60 seconds to look at the map and try to find the secret place.

8. Restaurant Race

Ages 5 and up: Each player chooses a restaurant, such as Burger King, Taco Bell, McDonalds, etc. Players earn points by spotting their restaurant off the road, on a billboard, on exit markers, or on Food/Fuel signs. Impose a time limit -- say, 20 minutes -- and then add up the points.

9. Tell Tall Tales

Ages 5 and up: Start a story with a single, open-ended sentence like, "Katie knew it was going to be a horrible day when..." and have everyone add a line or two. Keep going around the car until the story has run its course.

10. High and Low

All ages: Take turns stating the best thing that happened to you today, then the worst thing. It's a good way of putting things into perspective. High and low is great for the dinner table, too!