

eslactive

Go Fish

Tags: [alphabet](#), [animals](#), [beginner](#), [classroom objects](#), [home](#), [jobs](#), [kids](#), [numbers](#), [some/any](#)

The Go Fish ESL game is a version of the classic card game, in which students have to get four numbers/vocabulary items of the same type.

 2+  10-20+ mins  Playing Cards **or** Card and Coloured Pens/Pencils

Setup

Students will play this game in groups of four or five (or two or three with a very small class). You will need a set of playing cards for group.

For practising numbers, these cards can be a set of traditional playing cards (skip the next step). If you wish to practise a different type of vocabulary, you will need to make your own cards with the help of your class. This option is designed for kids classes.

To make sure all the cards are the same size, cut some pieces of card into equal sized rectangles beforehand (one set will require at least 40 cards). Each student should then make one card for each vocabulary item (e.g. for animals, a pig, a cat, a monkey...) by writing the word and drawing a small picture.

To make a complete set you will need at least ten different vocabulary items, and four cards for each vocabulary item. The students in a group can combine the cards they have made to make a complete set.

Game

1. Each group sits in a circle, with one set of cards.
2. The cards are shuffled then dealt so that each student has five cards (seven in a group of two or three). The rest of the cards are placed face down in the middle.
3. Students take turns playing. On their turn, a student asks any other person if they have a particular type of card (fours, pigs etc.). If that person has that type of card, they have to give it to the asker. Otherwise, they say "Go Fish", and the asker takes a card from the middle.

4. If a student receives one or more of the cards that they ask for (either from another player or the middle), their turn continues. Otherwise, play passes to the student to the left.
5. If at any point a student holds four cards of the same type, they must place this set face up in front of them. Each complete set is worth one point.
6. Play continues until all sets are complete, and the student with the most points at the end wins.

Target Language

The Go Fish ESL game is most commonly played to practise **numbers**. However, if you make your own cards, you could practise almost type of vocabulary. As the game is only suitable for beginners, this vocabulary is usually limited to the **alphabet**, **animals**, **jobs**, **classroom objects** and **household objects**.

It can also be useful practice for the correct use of **some and any**. In this case, make sure students use these words in both questions and answers (including before "Go Fish"). For example, *Do you have any fours? Yes I've got some fours / No I haven't got any fours – Go Fish!*