

eslactive

Tic Tac Toe

Tags: [advanced](#), [beginner](#), [intermediate](#), [irregular verbs](#), [kids](#), [past simple](#), [phonics](#), [prepositions \(at/in/on\)](#), [synonyms and antonyms](#), [verb patterns](#), [vocabulary](#), [warmer](#)

The Tic-Tac-Toe ESL game is a version of the classic game in which players can only draw their symbol if they complete a mini language task successfully.

 2+  5-15 mins  None

Setup

Each student will need a piece of paper.

Game

1. Each student draws a 3×3 grid on their paper.
2. In each square, they write a word according to the target language (e.g. an irregular verb).
3. The students then challenge each other to games of Tic-Tac-Toe. As normal, one student is 'O' and the other is 'X', and they take turns drawing their symbol in different squares until one player has three in a row vertically, horizontally, or diagonally (or there is a stalemate).
4. However, before they can draw their symbol in a square, they must complete the target language challenge for the word in that square. For example, if it is an irregular verb, they have to say the past and past participle forms. If they are incorrect, play passes to the other player.
5. The students can repeat for as long as desired, with new grids and new partners.

Target Language

The Tic-Tac-Toe ESL game is a great way to quickly review recently learned topics, often as a warmer or time-filler. It can be used with a wide variety of different language topics, and therefore with beginner, intermediate, or even advanced classes.

At any level, students could fill the grid with recently learned vocabulary and have to give definitions/descriptions. Similarly with [synonyms and antonyms](#), the target vocabulary and difficulty can be adapted (e.g. for more advanced classes, giving three close synonyms or antonyms).

As mentioned above, you can practise [irregular verbs](#) simply by writing the base form in the grid. Or for regular verbs in the [past simple](#), students would have to say the correct -ed pronunciation. You can also use it for [verb patterns](#), by asking for the correct form and example sentence (e.g. make = object + base form = She made me do my homework).

By filling the grid with different places/times, students can practise identifying the correct [at/in/on preposition](#). And especially for younger kids, practise [phonics](#) by filling it with different phonemes and asking for words that start with that sound.