

## Twenty Questions

Tags: advanced, animals, beginner, home, intermediate, jobs, kids, passive (present simple), present simple, sports and hobbies, warmer

The Twenty Questions ESL game is the classic parlour game in which students have to find out what their classmate is thinking of, using only yes/no questions.

 1+  10-20 mins  None

### Setup

Twenty Questions can either be played as a whole class, or in small groups/pairs.

### Game

1. One student thinks of an animal, object, sport/hobby or famous person. You can limit these categories to make the game easier for lower level students.
2. The other students have to narrow down what the other student is thinking of by asking yes/no questions. For example: *Is it an animal? Do people have it as a pet? Can it fly?*
3. They have twenty questions/guesses in which to find the correct answer, otherwise the student thinking of something wins. If you like, you could award points based on how many questions it takes the other students to guess.
4. Repeat with a different student thinking of something (usually the student who guessed correctly in the previous round).

To avoid cheating, you could get the student thinking of something to write it down on a piece of paper and show it to you first. That way you can also check that the rest of the class will have some chance of getting it!

## Target Language

The Twenty Questions ESL game is great for practising yes/no questions in the [present simple](#) in particular. Be aware that if you involve famous people students may need the past simple and present perfect simple too. So you may want to remove them as a option, depending on your level/target language.

You can also use it to practise specific vocabulary related to [animals](#) (*Does it have wings?*), [objects in the home](#) (*Is it in the kitchen?*), [sports and hobbies](#) (*Do you use a ball?*), or [jobs](#) (*Do I wear a uniform?*), simply by focusing solely on those categories. You may want to reduce the number of questions allowed to ten in this case.

You can even play a version to practice the [present simple passive voice](#). Just limit the category to objects, and encourage questions of the form *Is it used in the kitchen?*. You could even count correct passive questions as only 'half a question'.