

CRYPTIC WORDS

A Two-Player Deduction Game

(Updated September 8, 2021)

Cryptic Words is a word guessing game for two players. Each player thinks of a secret word and hides it in plain sight for their opponent to decode.



COMPONENTS

- 30 cryptic letter cards numbered 1-30 with 6 letters/bigrams per card
- 10 padlocks
- 20 trackers
- 2 start markers, 2 end markers
- 6 tracking & decoding forms
- 2 dice.

INITIAL SETUP

1. Each player gets a tracking form and pencil.

When you have run out of tracking forms, print more at www.CrypticWords.com.

Scan QRCode for forms:



PLAY IN FIVE ROUNDS

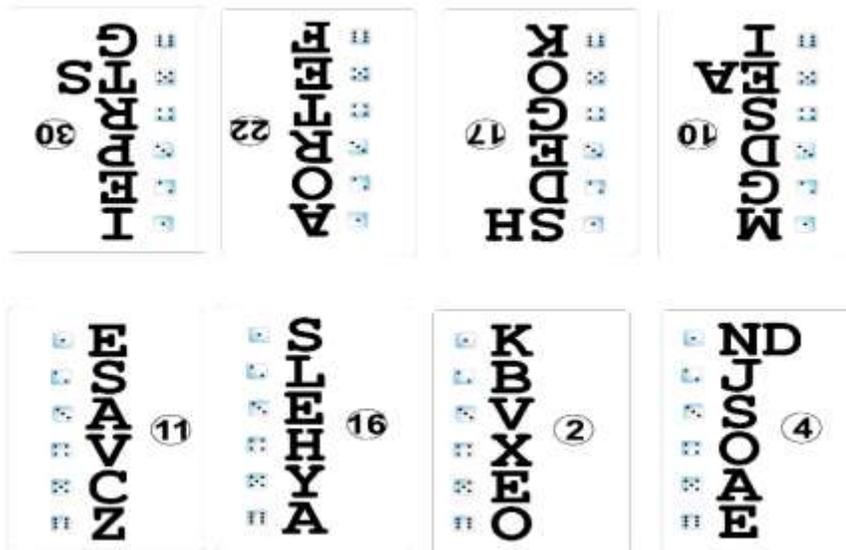
Each round consists of dealing letter cards, thinking of a word, writing down its secret codes (encoding) and trying to unscramble known letters into a possible solution (decoding).

Basically, ask questions, reveal any matches, take a guess.

SETUP FOR EACH ROUND

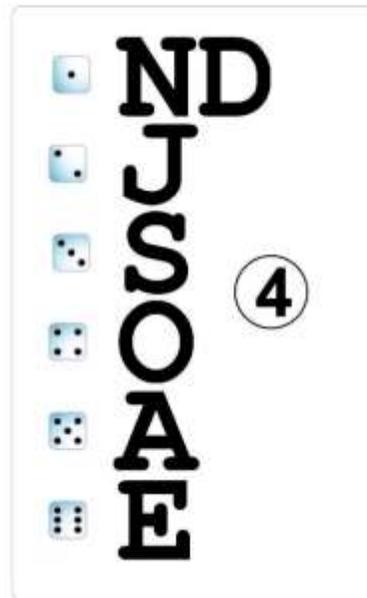
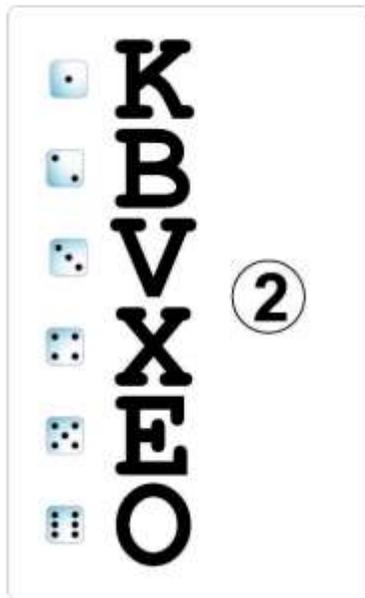
At the start of each round:

1. Place the padlocks, trackers and markers to one side.
2. Shuffle all cryptic letter cards and secretly deal the indicated number of cards (4-6 on form) per player.
3. Set the remaining cards aside.
4. Each player examines and rearranges their cards and comes up with a secret word using one letter or bigram per card, with at least 3 letters.
5. On your tracking form, secretly write down the pairs of codes from each card used for your word. *See the encoding example below.*
6. When both players have their word encoded, shuffle your cards and trade them with your opponent.
7. Each player places their opponent's cards immediately in front of them, in no specific order.
8. Make sure the pairs of cards face each other:



ENCODING - WRITING YOUR CODES

A code is the combination of a card number and a letter. Codes make it quicker to reveal a letter when questioned. Using this sample set of cryptic cards, the secret word is SEND. The first letter's code is 16-S, followed by 2-E and 4-ND. You can also encode S-16, E-2, ND-4, whatever is easier for you.



Fill out the form using either method below, writing down codes in the order of the letters in your word.

Your word length: 3 <input checked="" type="radio"/> 4 5 6 7 8 (Circle one) Your Card-Letter Codes: 16 2 4 S E ND S E ND 16 2 4
Your word length: 3 <input checked="" type="radio"/> 4 5 6 7 8 (Circle one) Your Card-Letter Codes: 16-S 2-E 4-ND

GAME PLAY – DECODING PHASE

Players take turns rolling dice and asking questions to get enough clues to unscramble letters and guess each others word. Clues include word length, starting and ending letters, card order and actual letters in both words.

On each turn, a player will...

1. Roll both dice. *If doubles are rolled, proceed to the doubles action section and ignore the following ...*
2. Place one or both dice between pairs of facing cards.
3. The number on the die corresponds to one letter or bigram on both target cards. This gives you the “card number + letter” code to check against your form.
4. Match the die with the same die image on both cards to give you the letter in question.
5. Both players will determine if the matched letter and card number are in their list of codes.
See the example of matching a question below.
6. If a player has a matching code, they must call out “MATCH” so that their opponent can mark the letter with a **padlock** on the card in front of them.
7. If the letter is not matched, place an “X” on that letter.
8. Either or both players may optionally now attempt to guess their opponent’s word (only one guess each).

AN EXAMPLE OF MATCHING THE QUESTION

The secret word for player two is BUNNY (with codes: 23B,6U,21NN,5Y) while player one has hidden TRUCK (26T,22R,25U,29C,18K).

Here is a coding sample with a pair of facing cards.

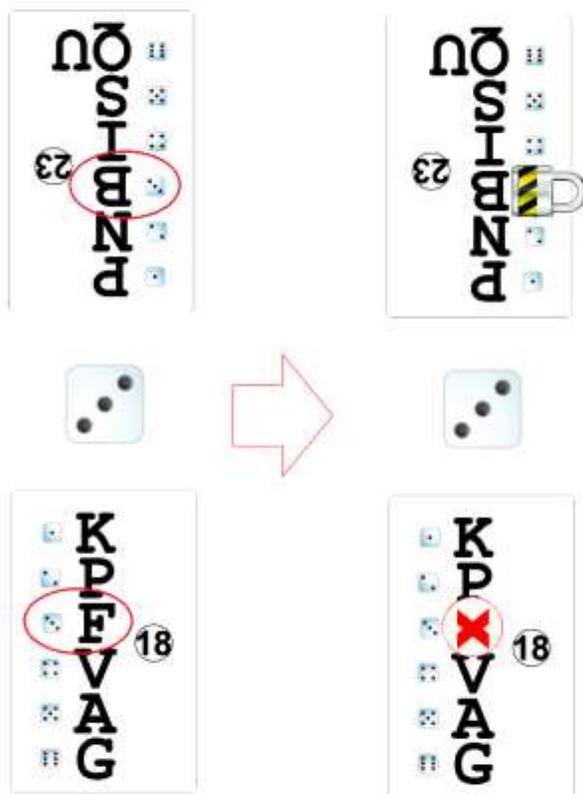
Player one rolled three .
This represents the letters "B" on card 23 and "F" on card 18.
Both players now examine their secret codes. Player two knows that B-23 is in their codes list, so calls out "MATCH".

Player one adds a padlock to mark "B" on the card.

Player one now knows that one of the letters in the player two's word is "B".

Player two places "X" to indicate "F" is not in player one's word.

Player one's side.
Player TWO's letters.



Player two
Player ONE's letters.

Don't be confused: The letters in front of you are those for your opponent's word. Your codes are for the cards in front of your opponent.

DOUBLES ROLL ACTIONS

A double roll causes an action to take place. The action occurs on the cryptic cards immediately in front of each player. Remember, the cards in front of you contain your opponent's secret word, not your word.

Both players proceed with the action indicated:

1-1	Mark STARTING card	Both players call out the first card number in their secret codes list. Each player moves the card to the left and marks it with a [First] card.
2-2	Mark ENDING card	Both players call out the last card number in their secret codes list. Each player moves the card to the right and marks it with a [Last] card.
3-3	Reveal FIRST letter	Both players call out the code for the first letter. Each player rotates the indicated card and places a [PadLock] on the letter. If not leftmost, move the card to the left.
4-4	Show LAST letter	Both players call out the code for the last letter. Each player rotates the indicated card and places a [PadLock] on the letter. If not rightmost, move the card to the right.
5-5	Reveal word LENGTH	Both players inform each other of the number of letters in their secret word. Both players circle the length on their form.
6-6	Order the cards	Both players call out the card numbers for their hidden words. If less than six cards, include the remaining card code numbers in any order to confuse your opponent. Both players then carefully rearrange the cards on their side.

Once the action is complete, both players get one attempt to guess each other's word.

Note: If the action has already been performed, select any other doubles action for both of you to perform.

TRACKING YOUR GUESSES

Keep track of your guesses with padlocks and “X”s. Write your opponent’s known letters on the tracking form. Use padlocks to lock known letters and cards.

By examining the letters found and perhaps knowing the length of the word along with first and last letters, you will be able to unscramble and decode your opponent’s mystery word.

GUESSING THE WORD

At the end of a player’s turn, both players can make one attempt to guess their opponent’s word.

If correct, score the word.

If incorrect, your turn is over.

Players cannot take more than one guess between dice rolls.

SCORING

When you have correctly guessed your opponent's word, your score is the number of letters in that word.

Once the first guess is made, your opponent will continue to play by rolling the dice two times and attempting to decode your word as per the decoding phase rules.

ENDING THE GAME

The game is over once you have played five rounds. Add up your points to determine the winner. If tied, play another round.

STRATEGIES

- Do not use all your cards to fool your opponent.
- Use words with ambiguous letter combinations to make it more difficult for your opponent to unscramble and guess your word.

For example:

CLAMS vs CALMS

TRAPS vs STRAP vs PARTS

ART vs RAT vs TAR

GODS vs DOGS.

TRACKING & DECODING FORM *(Fold to keep secret)*

Round 1 4 cards	Your word length: 3 4 5 6 7 8 (Circle one) Your Card-Letter Codes:	Opponent: 3 4 5 6 7 8 Letters:	Score
Round 2 5 cards	Your word length: 3 4 5 6 7 8 (Circle one) Your Card-Letter Codes:	Opponent: 3 4 5 6 7 8 Letters:	Score
Round 3 6 cards	Your word length: 3 4 5 6 7 8 (Circle one) Your Card-Letter Codes:	Opponent: 3 4 5 6 7 8 Letters:	Score
Round 4 6 cards	Your word length: 3 4 5 6 7 8 (Circle one) Your Card-Letter Codes:	Opponent: 3 4 5 6 7 8 Letters:	Score
Round 5 6 cards	Your word length: 3 4 5 6 7 8 (Circle one) Your Card-Letter Codes:	Opponent: 3 4 5 6 7 8 Letters:	Score

TRACKING & DECODING FORM *(Fold to keep secret)*

Round 1 4 cards	Your word length: 3 4 5 6 7 8 (Circle one) Your Card # - Letter Codes:	Opponent: 3 4 5 6 7 8 Letters:	Your Score
Round 2 5 cards	Your word length: 3 4 5 6 7 8 Your Card # - Letter Codes:	Opponent: 3 4 5 6 7 8 Letters:	Score
Round 3 5 cards	Your word length: 3 4 5 6 7 8 Your Card # - Letter Codes:	Opponent: 3 4 5 6 7 8 Letters:	Score
Round 4 6 cards	Your word length: 3 4 5 6 7 8 Your Card # - Letter Codes:	Opponent: 3 4 5 6 7 8 Letters:	Score
Round 5 6 cards	Your word length: 3 4 5 6 7 8 Your Card # - Letter Codes:	Opponent: 3 4 5 6 7 8 Letters:	Score