

# Pyramid Math Card Game

This single-player game will give your child the opportunity to challenge his knowledge of basic math facts. Learning addition and subtraction facts up to 20 may seem tedious, but it lays the foundation for later math. It's absolutely essential that kids get these facts down perfectly by the end of third grade.

Want to ditch the flash cards? Create a pyramid with playing cards, then challenge your kid to invent equations in order to remove cards. The player who removes the last card wins!

Play together and help one other find the best possible moves (or the longest possible equation). Encourage your child to use addition and subtraction to hone his automatic recall. Then watch as he improves his critical thinking skills while practicing his math facts!



## Skills:

- Addition & subtraction
- Creating number sentences (equations)

## Term to Know:

Equation: a statement that uses an equals sign to show that both sides are the same. (e.g.  $3 + 4 = 7$ )

## What You Need:

- Deck of playing cards
- Pencil and scratch paper (optional)

## What You Do:

1. Shuffle the deck. Distribute the first 15 cards, face up, into the shape of a pyramid, as shown.
2. Deal 3 cards, face up, to the side of the pyramid. These are "helper" cards. Place the rest of the deck face down nearby.
3. Keep in mind that an ace counts as 1, a jack is 11, a queen is 12, and a king equals 13.
4. The object of the game is to remove as many cards from the pyramid as possible. Here's the catch: to remove cards, you need to make an equation where both sides are equal. For example,  $3+4=7$  or  $2+1+5=6+2$ . Only cards that are "free" (not covered by other cards) may be used.
5. If you look at the picture shown, there are several possible moves for this particular layout. A player could remove the 4, 9, and a 5 because  $4 + 5 = 9$ . Or, instead, a player could use a helper card to create the equation  $9 \times 1 = 9$ .
6. A player may create as complex of an equation as they'd like. Using the set-up in the picture, again, a player could create the equation  $9 + 5 + 5 = 9 + 7 + 3$  to remove six cards at once!
7. Whenever cards are used to form an equation, collect them and place them in a discard pile. If



helper cards were used, replenish them using what is left in the deck.

8. If you become stuck, you can put any or all helper cards into the discard pile and replenish them using the deck.
9. When the deck is depleted, the game is over. If all of the cards have been removed from the pyramid, you've done well!

### **Variations:**

- Record your score and try to improve with practice.
- Place 21 or 28 cards in the pyramid. Cards may only be removed if they add up to 13.
- Remove the kings. Then place 21 or 28 cards in the pyramid. Cards may only be removed if they add up to 12.
- Remove the face cards. Then place 21 or 28 cards in the pyramid. Cards may only be removed if they add up to 10.

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