

# Pictomania



A CLEVER GAME FOR 3-6 PICTOMANIACS, AGED 9 AND UP, BY VLAADA CHVÁTIL

## OBJECT OF THE GAME

In *Pictomania*, you are each secretly dealt a clue, which you have to draw. You also try and guess what your fellow players are drawing – all at the same time! You secretly make guesses with your guess cards. Each correct guess earns you points. The faster you complete your drawing and make your guesses, the more bonus points you can score. Whoever has the most points after 5 rounds wins the game.

## COMPONENTS



6 sketch boards



30 scoring tokens  
(5 each in 6 player colours)



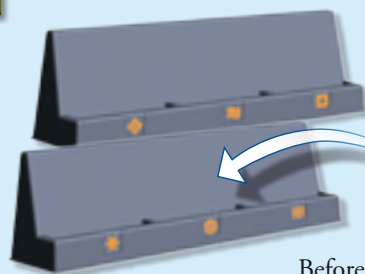
5 bonus point tokens  
(black)



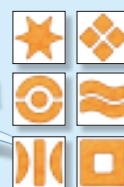
6 dry-erase markers



6 small erasers



2 card racks

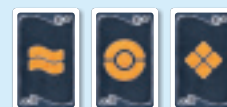


6 stickers

Before your first game, stick these onto the designated spots on the card racks in any order.



42 guess cards  
(7 each in 6 player colours)



6 symbol cards  
(black)



7 number cards  
(black)



99 clue cards  
(double-sided), divided into 4 difficulty levels



## QUICK START RULES

Hello, my name is **Picto**! You want to start playing right away, without having to read the entire rulebook? Then just read my outlined comments and skip the paragraphs in between.

If any questions come up during your first game, you can always refer to the full rules text for clarification. I would, however, recommend reading the **entire** rulebook before playing your second game of *Pictomania*.

**Note:** If you prefer to learn *Pictomania* not via the quick start rules, please read the entire rulebook, i.e. Picto's comments as well as all the text in between.



## GAME SETUP

Each player chooses a **colour** and takes the **sketch board**, **7 guess cards** and a number of **scoring tokens** depending on the number of players, all in their colour:

- 3 players:
- 4 players:
- 5 players:
- 6 players:

Each player also takes **1 dry-erase marker** and **1 eraser**. Place both **card racks** on the table so that every player can easily read the cards put onto them. Separate the **clue cards** by colour into 4 decks and place them on the table next to the **number cards** and the **symbol cards**. Depending on the number of players, place **bonus point tokens** in the centre of the table where everyone can reach them:

- 3 players:
- 4 players:
- 5 players:
- 6 players:

If there are fewer than 6 players, return all remaining sketch boards, tokens, cards etc. to the game box. You will not use them during this game.

# HOW TO PLAY THE GAME

Each game of Pictomania consists of **5 rounds**. Each round is made up of the following **3 phases**:

**1** Setup   **2** Draw and guess   **3** Score

## 1 SETUP



Separately shuffle the **number cards** and **symbol cards** and deal **1 of each type** face-down to each player. Each player keeps his two cards **face-down** in front of himself and **may not look at them** yet! As a group, choose the **difficulty level** for this round. For the first round of your first game, we recommend the **green** cards, as they are the **easiest**. Take the top **6 clue cards** from the deck of the chosen difficulty level and place them in the **card racks**.

Randomly determine which side of each card you want to use. Only the **front of the card** is relevant for this round; ignore the reverse sides. Each card lists **7 clues**. The **clues** can be anything from single words to phrases, titles etc.

For each following round, you are free to choose the same difficulty level or a different one. The difficulty levels are colour-coded:

	Green	Easy
	Orange	Slightly tricky
	Blue	Difficult
	Purple	Very difficult

## 2 DRAW AND GUESS

### Drawing

Players should take a moment to read through all the clue cards to familiarise themselves with them. Important: Do **not** discuss the clues at this point!



One player gives a **start signal**. Now, each player secretly looks at the **number card** and **symbol card** he was dealt. The two cards tell you which clue you are supposed to draw. Place the two cards **face-down** on the table above your sketch board. They form the basis of your **guess pile**. Then all players start to **draw** their clue. You may not write, talk or in any other way try to communicate which clue you are drawing. For detailed drawing rules, see the last page of this rulebook.

To be more specific: Your symbol card indicates the clue card, and your number card indicates the particular clue on that card you are supposed to draw. For example: You have the symbol and the number 5. This means you are supposed to draw the 5th clue on the clue card indicated by the symbol on the card rack.

Clues on the same card are always somewhat similar to each other. So it is always a good idea to read through **all** the clues on your clue card. In order for other players to guess your clue correctly, you should take care to distinguish it as clear as possible from the other clues on the same card.

### Guessing



While you are drawing your own clue, you will also be trying to guess everyone else's clues. To make a guess at someone else's clue, place your **guess card** with the corresponding number **face-down** onto that player's **guess pile**.

The guess cards only show numbers from 1 to 7. That is because correct guesses are determined only by the number of the clue, not by the symbol. For example: You think that Christine is drawing clue 3 (bicycle). Put your guess card with the number 3 face-down on top of Christine's guess pile.

Note: If Christine is actually drawing spectacles ( 3), your guess still counts as correct because both clues happen to share the same number.

Always put your guess card **on top** of the topmost card of each guess pile. The two bottommost cards in each guess pile are the symbol card and number card of that particular player. The first player to make a guess at that player's clue puts his guess card face-down on top of these two cards. The second guesser then puts his guess card on top of the first guesser's card, etc.

You are free to make guesses at other players' clues even if you have not finished your own drawing. If you think you will take longer in drawing a particular clue, it is often a good idea to interrupt your drawing and concentrate on making guesses for a while, then continue drawing.



You can put **no more than 1 guess card** on each other player's guess pile. Once you put a guess card onto a guess pile, you are **not** allowed to take it back or exchange it for another.

For example: Shortly after making your guess at Christine's clue ( 3 – bicycle), you start to think that she is actually drawing clue 7 (motorcycle). You cannot correct your guess and put your number 7 guess card onto her guess pile. To make matters worse, you are now missing your number 3 guess card, which you later realise you need to guess Dave's clue 3.

### Finishing play



Each player is free to decide when to stop drawing and guessing. If you decide to stop, you may grab the **bonus point token** with the **most stars** from the centre of the table and place it in front of you. This is called finishing play. Once you have finished play, you can no longer make guesses or change your drawing in any way.

Players who have not finished play may still make guesses at your clue, even after you have finished play. If you want, you can finish play without having made a guess at every player's clue. The sooner you finish play, the better your chances to grab a valuable bonus point token.



## End of the phase



Whoever takes the **last bonus point token** says “stop”. The last player **immediately** has to stop drawing and guessing. He does not get a bonus point token. The following phase is the **scoring** phase.

You do not have to take a bonus point token if you don't want to. If one player decides not to take a bonus point token, the round still ends with a player grabbing the last bonus point token. If, however, 2 or more players decide not to take a bonus point token for fear of negative points (see *Score* below), one or more bonus point tokens will remain in the centre of the table. In this case, the round ends when all players without a bonus point token agree to end the round.

## 3 SCORE

### Awarding scoring tokens



You now award points for other players' guesses at your clue. It does not matter who starts awarding his points, as long as you do it **one player after the other**.

To award points, flip over your entire **guess pile without changing the order** of the cards!

Once you have flipped your pile, the top two cards are your symbol card and your number card. Underneath these are your fellow players' guess cards in the order they were put onto your guess pile.



Show your **symbol card and number card** to the other players, and check whether you have actually drawn the right clue.

If you have **obviously** drawn the wrong clue (and only then!), your drawing is scored as if nobody had made a guess at your clue! Return all guess cards to the respective players. You award **no** scoring tokens, and your bonus point token does not earn you any points, but it could still lose you points (see *Scoring bonus point tokens* below). Use this rule only if you really have obviously drawn the wrong clue!



Next, check each guess made at your clue **one by one** in the order they were made (from first to last guess card in your guess pile).

**Correct:** If the number on a guess card **matches the number** on your black number card, the guess is **correct**. Give the player who made the guess back his guess card along with the **most valuable scoring token** you still have.

**Incorrect:** If the number on a guess card **does not match the number** on your black number card, the guess is **incorrect**. In this case, you **do not award a scoring token**. You do **not** return the guess card to the player. Instead, you place it in the **centre of the table**.

Repeat this process until all players have resolved their guess pile.

In this way, each player checks all guess cards in his guess pile and awards scoring tokens. The **first player** who made a correct guess at your clue gets your **most valuable** scoring token; the **second player** gets your **second most valuable** scoring token etc. After you have completely resolved your guess pile, you have as many of your scoring tokens left as there were players who did not guess your clue correctly or at all. This means that you will still have all your scoring tokens if nobody guessed your clue correctly.

## Adding up points



**Positive points:** All scoring tokens other players have awarded you for guessing their clue correctly are worth positive points. You **get 1 point for each star**.

**Negative points:** The scoring tokens of your colour that you did not award are worth negative points. You **lose 1 point for each star**.

So, if another player guesses your clue correctly, that's good for both of you. He gets points for your scoring token, and you don't lose points for it. If you guess other players' clues faster than the others and get them right, you get the more valuable scoring tokens, which means more points for you.

## Scoring bonus point tokens



Count the **guess cards** of each player in the **centre of the table** (remember: they were put there if that player made an incorrect guess). The player who made the **most incorrect guesses** is the **black sheep** for this round. If the black sheep has taken a **bonus point token**, that player **loses 1 point for each star** on that token. If two or more players are **tied** for the most incorrect guesses, there is **no black sheep** this round.

If you are **not** the black sheep: You **get 1 point for each star** on your **bonus point token** if at least 1 player has guessed your clue correctly. If **nobody** has guessed your clue correctly, you **neither get nor lose points** for your bonus point token.

The sooner you finish play, the better your chances at grabbing a more valuable bonus point token. However, the token only earns you points if at least 1 player has guessed your clue correctly. If you make too many incorrect guesses, you might end up the black sheep and the bonus point token will lose you points. So sometimes it may be better not to take a bonus point token at all.



Calculate your **total score** for this round (+ other player's scoring tokens, – your own scoring tokens, +/- bonus point token) and write it in one of the boxes along the edge of your **sketch board**.

## END OF THE ROUND



Use your **eraser** to clear your sketch board, but be careful not to erase your scores. If this was not the 5th round, set up the next round exactly like the last one.

In more detail:

- Place your **bonus point token** and all other players' **scoring tokens** in the centre of the table.
- Take all **scoring tokens** and **guess cards** of your **colour** from the centre of the table.
- Collect all black **symbol and number cards** into two piles as before. Don't forget the cards that were not used in the current round.
- Return the 6 **clue cards** from the last round to the game box.
- Then you start the next round like the last one with phase 1: Setup.

## END OF THE GAME



After **5 rounds** the game is over. Add up your scores from the 5 rounds and write the **final score** in the middle of your sketch board. Whoever has the **biggest final score wins** the game. In case of a tie, players share the victory.

# THE DO'S AND DON'TS OF DRAWING

To avoid arguments among players, follow these rules for what you can and cannot do during the game. The most important rule is that you **cannot use any letters or numbers**. Most players will find the other rules either obvious, or they only apply to special cases. *Pictomania* is about having fun. Whenever there is an argument, try to agree as a group on how strict you want to be with the Do's and Don'ts.

## DO'S

### Erasing

During a round, you can erase parts of your drawing, or all of it, if you want to change something. But you are not allowed to “animate” your drawing. The other players are supposed to guess the clue from a stationary drawing, without any activity.

### Context of the clue

You may draw the context of your clue. If, for example, your clue is *tennis ball*, you are allowed to draw a racket and a tennis player.

### Arrows

You may highlight certain parts of your drawing with arrows. In the example above, you may draw a racket and a ball and then an arrow pointing to the ball. You may also use arrows to indicate a sequence or a direction. You could, for example, draw an arrow pointing from a baby to an old man if your clue is *Ageing*. (However, you may not number a sequence like this, as numbers are never allowed.)

### Crossing out

You may cross parts of your drawing out, like a fir, in order to highlight an oak next to it.

### Symbols

You may draw mathematical symbols and other icons as long as they are important for your clue and do not reveal anything about the position of the clue on the card. For example, you may draw a cross on a hospital or a speech bubble (without text). You may draw symbols like € or \$ that are derived from letters, but no letters or abbreviations containing letters, like cm for centimetres.

### Compound words

You may draw the parts of a compound word separately, like drawing a door and next to it a bell for the clue *doorbell*.

### Drawing nothing

You may choose to draw nothing at all if you just cannot think of anything. In this case, you do not take a bonus point token, but you can make guesses at other players' clues. Apart from that, the same rules apply as if you had drawn the wrong clue.

## DON'TS

If you do any of the following things, your drawing will be scored as if nobody had made a guess at it. Return all guess cards to the respective players. You award no scoring tokens, and your bonus point token does not earn you any points, but it could still lose you points. Regardless, you can still earn points by guessing other players' clues correctly.

### Letters, numbers, characters

You may not use any numbers or letters/characters of any alphabet (Roman, Greek, Japanese, Morse, etc.). You may, however, use scribbles to symbolise text (e. g., if your clue is “book”, and the text on the pages is part of your drawing).

### Comments

No comments on your clue (“I can't draw animals.”) or on your drawing (“This was supposed to look more rounded.”) are allowed, neither are hints (“You all have this in your home.”).

### Sounds and gestures

You may not make any sounds (humming, grunting etc.) or gestures that may indicate or help others guess your clue.

### Placeholders

You are not supposed to draw the word(s) on the clue card, but the idea behind it. You may not use underscores or similar placeholders for letters or parts of a word. Players should be able to guess your clue regardless of the language they speak.

### Referencing the clue card

Your drawing may not contain any references to the position of the clue on the card nor to the position of the card on the rack. Nor are you allowed to draw the symbols on the card racks.

### Referencing the players' surroundings

Your drawing may not reference objects or people in the room, like drawing an arrow that points at another player or at a glass on the table. The other players are supposed to guess the clue independently of the surroundings of the game group.

### A different clue

You may not draw a clue from another clue card.

## MISCELLANEOUS

*Pictomania* is not a trivia game. Every player should understand all the clues on the clue cards. Some clues might be easy for some groups but very difficult for other groups. When choosing clue cards, we recommend you follow these rules:

After placing the 6 clue cards onto the racks, but before looking at your symbol and number cards, have all players read through the clue cards for 5-10 seconds. If a player sees a clue he does not know or understand, he may replace the card with another one from the same deck. Unless all players agree otherwise, each player may only replace 1 card per game in this way. You should not abuse this rule to get rid of clues that are difficult to draw. You might enjoy the look on your fellow players' faces when they have to draw that clue!

## VARIANT

For an easier game, such as with young children, we recommend using only the green cards. An even easier way to play *Pictomania* is using only 1 card for all players. If you do this:

- use only 1 card rack, no matter which one;
- only deal out number cards, no symbol cards;
- place only 1 clue card on the rack;
- each player draws a clue from that card.

All other rules stay the same.

## CREDITS

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