



second STEP Brain Builder Game: Mixed-Up Rules

WHAT?

Brain Builders are active, fun games with specific rules and steps.

They include ways to increase the challenge.

They give children the message that their brains can get stronger and smarter with practice and effort.

WHY?

Brain Builders look like simple games, but they do a whole lot more.

They develop the parts of children's brains that help them pay attention, remember, and have self-control.

WHO?

Brain Builders can be played with children ages three to eight.

In this age range, children's skills are rapidly developing, so it's the perfect time for extra practice.

WHERE?

Brain Builders can be played often and at any time, either inside where children have room to move, or outside.



Get Ready

1. Have children stand, leaving enough room to move.
2. Tell children to listen to the rules:
 - Rule 1 is, when I say “Touch your nose,” touch your toes.
 - Rule 2 is, when I say “Pat your back,” pat your belly
 - Rule 3 is, when I say “Tap your knees,” tap your ears.

Play the Game

1. Face children.
2. Say: **Touch your nose.** Children touch their toes.
3. Say: **Pat your back.** Children pat their bellies.
4. Say: **Tap your knees.** Children tap their ears.
5. Repeat Steps 2–4 with other mixed-up rules.

Mixed-Up Rules

Direction	Action
Jump high	➤ Squat low
Turn around	➤ Sit down
Wiggle your toes	➤ Wiggle your fingers
Look down	➤ Look up
Hop back	➤ Hop forward
Clap your hands	➤ Stomp your feet

Increase the Challenge

- Add words without matches to the list.
- Add more words to each category.
- Read the list twice and require three or four repetitions for a match.

Tips

- Play the game for only a few minutes at a time.
- Play the game at least twice a day.
- Have children take turns leading the game.
- Increase the challenge as children get better at the game.