

The Food Sharing Game

This is a game for young children ages 5-8. It follows a common board game format for children, where you throw a die and move around the board collecting items and taking them to your home space. However, this game has a twist to it. Unlike most games where you only look out for yourself and “winning” means getting the most for yourself at the expense of others, **this game encourages sharing and helping others, and “winning” means that everyone has enough.**

To create this game, you will need:

[A playing board](#) – Print out the 4 piece template for the board and then glue the pieces together onto a large piece of cardboard or poster board. Color the 4 starting arrows and the 4 cupboards to match the colors of the “baskets” you choose below.

4 small baskets of different colors – You can buy or make these. One easy way is to use four different colored 2-liter bottle caps. However, you may want to make yours look more like real baskets.

50-60 large dried kidney beans

A small dish to keep the beans in

1 die on which the side with 6 dots has been replaced with a picture of some beans like this:



(You can cut this picture out and use it to put on the die or without taping this on the die remember that the 6 has a special rule for when it is rolled)

A timer (optional) – It is best if it makes a ticking noise or counts down the seconds so the players have a sense of the urgency of time passing. You don’t have to use a timer if you don’t want to, but it adds to the excitement.

Objective of the game: Winter is coming soon and you and your fellow farmers have to cooperate to get enough food stored in your cupboards before the first snow falls. You must work together so that everyone has at least 10 beans in their storage cupboard before the timer rings.

Starting position: Each person starts in their home, which is the same color as their basket. You can move in or out of your home only at the space your colored arrow points to. When moving into your home cupboard, the roll of the dice doesn't need to be exact (e.g. if you roll a 3 and the cupboard is 1 space away, you will end your turn in the cupboard).

Rules of Play

After everyone is in their "home" space, set the timer. If you have 2 players, set it for 20 minutes, 3 players, 25 minutes, and 4 players, 30 minutes. Then the youngest player begins by throwing the die and moving their basket forward the number thrown, in the direction of their starting arrow. Each player must be careful to follow their own direction, as indicated by the arrow at their starting position. The arrow at your start square is the arrow that you follow. You simply ignore the other three arrows at the other start Squares.

If you land on a space with a picture of beans, load up the number of beans indicated on the space by taking the beans from the dish at the side of the board and placing them in your basket.

The bean picture on the die (or the 6 if the bean picture is not taped on):

If you throw the beans on the die, you do not move. Instead, you may take up to 3 beans from the pot and you can make a choice as to whether you want to share some of your beans with another player. You don't have to take any beans or you can take less than 3 if you want. Likewise, you don't have to share, but you can share if you want to and you can share as many or as few beans as you want with whomever you want (if they accept the offer).

Crossroad space:

Each person must cross this space twice on each journey around the board. You cannot change direction at the crossroads. Whoever lands on the crossroads space is allowed to take up to 3 beans from the pot and also can share up to 3 beans with someone else. You are not required to do either. Be sure to remember which direction you are going through the center, so you can complete the entire circuit, passing all of the cupboards (whether there's a player or not for the cupboard) on your way back to your home cupboard.

Meeting another person:

If you land on a space that is already occupied by someone else, then you can share beans with each other. Neither person is required to share, but you can if you want to. If it is a “beaned” space, you first take the number of beans indicated and then you can share with each other if you choose to.

Take enough, but not too much!

If, after landing on a bean space, you find you have more than six beans, then you must empty your basket and return all the beans to the dish!

Goal:

The goal is to get your beans back safely into your cupboard AND to help others get enough beans into their cupboards as well before the timer rings. As soon as you arrive back at your home, unload your beans into your cupboard. Then you start out again in the direction of your arrow to collect more beans. Once you have collected ten beans, you still continue to play, collecting beans and giving them away when you can to the most “needy” of your friends so that everyone will have 10 beans before the timer rings.

Discussion Questions:

If you’d like to talk about the game after playing, here are some questions to help get a conversation going.

What surprised you when playing this game?

What in your day-to-day life is like this game, where sharing helps everyone to win?

How do you know you have enough to share?

What is something you have more than enough of that you could share with someone else? Who doesn’t have enough of that?