

Rules for Factor Match

Factor Match is a game which gives students an enjoyable way to practice recognizing common factors in numbers. It also gives practice in recognizing the various ways a number can be reached on the times tables. These two skills are very important when working with fractions and in various operations in algebra.

The game includes a total of ninety-nine cards. Eighty-seven cards have numbers (number cards), and twelve dictate a change of action (action cards). The action cards include six Change Cards, three Reverse Cards and three Skip a Turn Cards.

The game works well with 2-6 players. Each player is dealt 5 to 7 cards, depending upon how many are playing. For example, if there are six players, each would be dealt five cards. The remaining cards are placed face down in the center of the playing area as the Draw Pile. The top card of the Draw Pile is turned face up. This becomes the first Target Card. The object of the game is to play a card which has a factor in common with the number on the Target Card. The first player to play all the cards in his hand wins.

The first player considers the factors of the Target Card. The factors must be within the basic times table, that is, from 1×1 through 12×12 . For example, if the Target Card is a 48, the suitable factors would be 4, 6, 8, and 12. Any number card having one of these factors may be played. (Two and three are also factors, but 2×24 and 3×16 are beyond the basic times table.) Suppose the first player has a 42. He may play that card, and call out that the common factor is 6. ($6 \times 7 = 42$; $6 \times 8 = 48$).

The next player must consider the factors of 42, which are, of course, 6 and 7. He may play any card whose number has a factor of 6 or 7, that is, any number that is on either the 6 or 7 times table. It is a good practice for the player to call out the common factor as the card is placed on the Target Card. The game continues, each player having to consider the various factors of the new Target Card.

If a player has no card with a factor which matches the factors of the Target Card, he must draw from the Draw Pile until he can match a factor. Once he is able to complete his turn, the game continues.

There are also six Change Cards in the deck. If a player has one of these in his hand, he may play it at any time. If a player can not match a factor of the number of the Target Card, but has a Change Card, he may play it and call out a factor which must be matched by the next player. Then the game continues.

The game also includes three Reverse Cards and three Skip a Turn Cards. These cards are not essential, but will increase the excitement of the game. When a Reverse Card is played, the rotation of play is reversed. When a Skip a Turn Card is played, the player who would normally be next loses a turn.

A player wishing to play either a Reverse Card or a Skip a Turn Card first places one of these cards on the Target Card, then plays a card which has a factor in common with the Target Card. Players can not play a Reverse or Skip a Turn Card unless they are also able to match a factor.

Once the Draw Pile is empty, the cards beneath the current Target Card, including any action cards, are shuffled, placed face down, and used as the new Draw Pile. The game continues until one of the players has no more cards.