

Word Slam!

Great for kids of all ages who love games, need vocabulary practice, and don't want to sit down and read. This is a high speed game where all players compete at the same time to change the word on the table using the cards in their hands. Excellent way for children to learn spelling and increase vocabulary and reading, while having fun! Just remember to keep a dictionary handy! (If you want to be more lenient, use an official Scrabble dictionary that features thousands of words a standard dictionary does not.)

Materials: 110 single letter cards (printed out on cardstock) or 55 two sided cards (one easy method is to print out the cards, cut them out, and tape two different letters securely back to back). You may want a limited amount of hard letters, no Q or X and only a few of V and Z.



For Reference: For standard Scrabble, the alphabet Letters and their number of pieces are: A=(9), B=(2), C=(2), D=(4), E=(12), F=(2), G=(3), H=(2), I=(9), J=(1), K=(1), L=(4), M=(2), N=(6), O=(8), P=(2), Q=(1), R=(6), S=(4), T=(6), U=(4), V=(2), W=(2), X=(1), Y=(2), Z=(1), Blank=(2)

Set up: Gather the players around the table. One player nominates a word of four letters, which is then made up from the cards. The word must be spelled correctly. Example: The word GAME is suggested. Now the players search through the deck and place the letters G,A,M, and E in order on the table. Now distribute the remaining letter cards equally among all of the players.

To Play: Once all players have their cards, one player says, "Ready, Set, Slam!" Now all players race at the same time trying to change the word in the frame by covering any one of the existing letters with another letter, making a different word of four letters. Players shout out the new word and place their letter card over another letter to change the word on the table to the new word. You may only add ONE new card at a time. Example: Player A calls out "Fame!" and plays the "F" card in the first slot to change GAME to FAME. A half second later, Player B calls out "Fate!" and plays his "T" card in the third slot to change FAME to FATE.

Acceptable words: The regular Scrabble rules governing acceptable words also apply to “Scrabble Slam!” Proper names (ex. Sally, Jose), place names, acronyms (U.S.D.A.) are not acceptable.

Disputed Words: If a player calls out a word that is not a real or acceptable word, the other players may dispute the word. Example: Player B plays his “L” card and calls out “FALE.” Player A doesn’t think this is a real word so she calls out “Time out!” All players discuss the word in question and check a dictionary if necessary. If the word is determined to be legitimate, play continues. If the word isn’t real, the player who played the objectionable card must take their card back, and play resumes instantly.

Repeated words: Words can be repeated during the play of the game, but players may not place a letter on top of the same letter. Example: If the active word is FATE, you may not play an F on top of the F card. But if a player plays a K to make the word FAKE, it is now acceptable to play a T, to make the word FATE again.

Question Mark Cards: Some cards have a question mark. These cards can be used to represent any letter. To play a question mark card decide what letter you want the card to represent, then play it as you would play any other card, calling out the new word that you want to create. Example: If the current word is FATE, and you want to change it to FADE but you don’t have a D, then you may play your question mark card. As you play it, be sure to call out “FADE-the question mark is a D.” After you have played the question mark card, it keeps its identity as a D. So that if someone wants to play an S on top of the E, they can turn FADE into FADS.



To Win: Play continues until one player gets rid of his last card. The first player to get rid of all of their cards is the winner. If, towards the end of the game, no player can change the word on the table, the game ends. The player with the least number of cards remaining in their hand is the winner.

Alternate Methods of Play:

- Change the number of letters in the words. Try two letters with beginning readers and once players have mastered four letters move to five letter words (and increase your deck size) for even more of a challenge.
- With players who cannot or don’t want to hold so many

cards it is just as fun for each player to lay their cards on the table in front of them (ex. 5 of them), draw a new card every turn, and then do the regular rules with the word to change in the middle.

- Slow it down—Start slow, having each player take turns changing the word instead of all trying at the same time (those who can't think of a word using their letters skip their turn). As players get more familiar and skilled game play can be sped up.
- Speed it up—Each player can play up to 3 cards on top of the 4 on the table (have to keep one of the letters from the last word created, ex. GAME is made into F**A**RM, the A from the original word GAME has been kept intact). It takes more concentration than just being able to change one, and someone can go out faster when you are only playing with 2 people.
- Print two sided cards (different letters on each side) to give each player more options during game play. One easy method is to print out the following cards on cardstock, cut them out, and tape two different letters back to back. You may wish to write in the upper left corner what the letter is that is on the other side for easy reference for each player.

A

B

C

D

E

F

G

H

I

J

K

L

M

N

O

P

Q

R

S

T

U

V

W

X

