



How to Play The Lead Card

What's this for?

This Foundational Game helps your child with one of the most important skills of reading: “looking inside a word” to identify separate Sound Pictures, before blending across and reading the word.

Who's this for?

Young Beginner and
Beginner Players ages 2-7

Materials to Print

- /a/ Word List
- /a/ Word Labels (optional)

Cards to Use

- Lead Card for /a/
- /a/ Word Cards

Materials to Make/Get

- 3x5 cards, cut horizontally in half, to make Word Cards
- Marker, if writing out Word Cards

Note: When playing any variation of the Lead Card game, please do not skip any of the steps. Your child's learning the process of reading—the correct way to “think through” and decode words, both now and for advanced reading. Shortcuts at the early stages may disrupt your child's ability to read well at advanced levels.

What You're Learning...

- To **hear** the /a/ sound in the word
- To **see** the /a/ Sound Picture “hiding” inside the word
- To **teach** your mind one of the most important how-to parts of reading: looking inside of a word to “find” (identify) the Sound Picture before reading the word

How to Get Ready...

- Make a Lead Card for /a/ by writing an “a” on the center of a square card.
- From the /a/ Word List, choose at least 20 words.
- Make Word Cards with those 20 (or more) words. You can either print the Word Card Labels for /a/, then stick the labels on your blank rectangular cards (see Materials)—or you can write the words on the blank cards. Do not mark the cards in any other way than simply writing the words. Choose the number of cards that matches your child's age and ability. The older the child, the more words you can make, to play the game.
- Place the following page on a flat surface (such as a table or the floor) and put the /a/ Lead Card inside the square at the top of the page.
- Place all the /a/ Word Cards in a bag, bowl, jar, or container and mix up the cards.

How to Play...

1. **Draw:** Take one Word Card from the bag or bowl.
2. **Find:** “Find” the /a/ Sound Picture that is hiding in the word on the Word Card.
3. **Touch and Say:** Touch the Sound Picture /a/ inside the Word Card, and say /a/. **IMPORTANT NOTE!** When touching the /a/ and saying the /a/ sound, the player must *not say the letter*. He or she must only say the /a/ sound.
4. **Place:** Place the Word Card in the rectangle beneath the /a/ Lead Card.
5. **Lead Card—Touch and Say:** Touch the Sound Picture /a/ inside the Lead Card word and at the same time, say the sound, /a/.
6. **Word Card—Touch and Say:** Touch the /a/ within the word on the Word Card that you just placed below, saying the /a/ sound as you touch the letter. (Don't read the word.)
7. **Repeat:** Repeat with all of the Word Cards, until there is a long row of Word Cards stretching under the Lead Card.
8. **Finish:** Touch and say every /a/ Sound Picture, top to bottom.



Lead Card Game

a

Basic Code - Sound Pictures

a b c k ck d e f g h i j l m n o p r s t u v w y z s qu x

Alphabet

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z

a

Empty rectangular box for writing

Empty rectangular box for writing

Empty rectangular box for writing

Empty rectangular box for writing