Pass the Parcel

HOW TO PLAY?

A favourite kids' party game that can also be a great game for adults just by making slight variations. The idea is to pass around a parcel wrapped in many layers that has a gift in the middle. In the musical variety, the parcel can only be passed when music is playing. As soon as the music stops, one layer can be unwrapped until the surprise in the last layer is reached. Several variations on this classic game are provided.

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Instructions

1. Prepare your parcel.

Place a gift at the center of the parcel

* Use a small box if you want an even shape or to make it look larger than it is.
* Wrap as many layers as players, with some to spare in case more players turn up.
* The parcel should be large enough for at least a 5 minute game, so add more layers even when you have only a few players; it just means they get more turns.

2. Begin the game

3. Sit in a circle.

All the players should be seated comfortably and close enough to the person each side of them that they can pass the parcel quickly.

4. Select the music-keeper.

This person will be responsible for turning the music on and off. It should be someone who is able to keep an eye on the players and stop the music in a fair way that allows everyone a turn at unwrapping. It is a little tricky because the music-keeper must be able to both see the players but at the same time, players should not be able to see the movements of the music-keeper getting ready to stop the music.

5. Stop the music.

The music-keeper plays the music and stops it when least expected.

* The player holding the parcel unwraps a layer. If the parcel was midway in the air between exchanges, the parcel goes to the player it was being passed to.

6. Restart after each layer is unwrapped.

The music-keeper starts the music again. This continues until all the layers have been removed.

7. Continue playing until the last layer is unwrapped

The player who unwraps the last layer keeps the item.

8. Prepare the parcel.

This is the part that varies from method one. Instead of placing a gift at the centre of the parcel alone, also place a smaller gift on every layer of the parcel. This is the best way of preparing the parcel for children ages 3 - 8, as then each child receives a prize no matter who wins the prize wrapped in the middle of the parcel.

9. Begin the game.

10. Sit in a circle.

All the players should be seated comfortably and close enough to the person each side of them that they can pass the parcel quickly.

11. Select the music-keeper.

This person will be responsible for turning the music on and off. It should be someone who is able to keep an eye on the players and stop the music in a fair way that allows everyone a turn at unwrapping. It is a little tricky because the music-keeper must be able to both see the players but at the same time, players should not be able to see the movements of the music-keeper getting ready to stop the music.