

## Back Seat Games

### The Story Game

Sometimes it is good to let the family's wacky imagination wander. With The Story Game one person starts off by saying the classic phrase, "Once upon a time..." From there, going around in a circle, each family member adds his or her own sentence to the story. With everyone throwing in their two cents, each story is a custom-creation and can include knights, aliens, submarines and other unique ramblings.

If you are playing with older children or teens, it might be fun to modify the game and add a memory element. With this change, each family member would only add one word to the story. The person who starts says, "Once." Then the following person must repeat "Once" and add "Upon." The third: "Once, Upon, A..." Thus each time one new word is added, the following individual must repeat the entire story. This uses up lots of memory and brain power and also makes the story even wackier. Sometimes the sentences won't make any sense at all!



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## Family Travel Forum

891 Amsterdam Avenue  
New York, NY 10025  
Phone: 212/665-6125

[members@familytravelforum.com](mailto:members@familytravelforum.com)  
[www.familytravelforum.com](http://www.familytravelforum.com)



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### License Plates



The great thing about the open road is that everyone is from somewhere different and the best way to keep track of each car's origins is through its license plate. At the start of your road trip, put one child in charge of the master list that includes all the license plates. Then as you travel to your destination, make sure the entire family screams out the various license plates they see along the way. The goal is to cross off each state/territory/province off the list. Remember it will be easy to spot the plates from the area you are traveling, but good luck finding Puerto Rico or Hawaii! Once, while traveling from New York City to Montreal, Canada, my family managed to see a plate for Guam!

### The ABC Game



For kids that have recently learned the alphabet or even for the older kids in the mood for some fun competition, this game makes car trips fly by. Everyone gets a pen and paper. Then, be on the lookout for letters; you can find them anywhere: on signs, billboards, bumper stickers, etc. Once you spot a letter for the first time, jot it down on your list. The first person to cover from A to Z is victorious! Prizes can be distributed at mom's or dad's discretion!

### 20 Questions



Everyone gets to play this game and there will be many rounds, as well. Have one child, maybe the youngest, go first and pick something: a person, place, or thing. Then, each person in the car gets to ask Yes or No questions to try and uncover the mystery. After each question is answered, the person who asked it gets to take a guess. The first person to correctly solve the puzzle goes next. The limit is 20 questions and if no one can figure out what the thing is by then, the round is over; everyone has been stumped and that person gets to go again!

### I'm Going on a Picnic



A random family member gets to start: "I'm going on a picnic and I'm going to bring apples." Thereafter, each passenger takes a turn and says what they will be bringing on the picnic, but it must go in alphabetical order: "I'm going on a picnic and I'm going to bring apples... baseballs... cantaloupe... dinosaurs, etc." To make the game more interesting, throw the memory element into the mix. Each person has to list all of the items that have been said previously before they add a new item to the list. If someone forgets or misses something, they are eliminated from the round. The game continues until there is only person left.

### The Name Game



This one is pretty easy: simply think of a name and then tell the group what letter it starts with and whether it is a boy's or girl's name. Then each passenger takes turns guessing what it can be. The person to guess correctly gets to think of the next name.

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### I Spy



This is a classic game that makes long periods of downtime fun, so we can bet that your kids have played it before. The basics are simple. Have an adult start out with: "I spy with my little eye, something that is..." and then fill in the color. Taking turns, each child has to guess the mystery object seen by the Spy. Whoever is correct gets to be the Spy during the next round. Instead of using colors, some kids might find it entertaining to switch it up and use letters instead: "I spy with my little eye, something that starts with the letter..." Both alternatives are fun!

### Song Title Game



There are certain words that are frequently in song titles: Baby, Love, Happy, Heart and plenty of others. Have one person chose a word that is popular in song titles and have another person keep a list. Then everyone can go around and name songs with that word in the title. This game requires a group effort because the object is to get your list as long as possible.

### Geography



Have someone start by naming a country; it might be fun to name the one you are traveling in; for example, Canada. The next person has to name a country that starts with the last letter of the previous country. In this case, A; so Afghanistan would be a good answer. Then N, so your child might say Norway and so on... The game continues until someone gets stumped or repeats a country that was already said. Families can broaden the rules as well to include other forms of geography such as cities, states, rivers and other bodies of water.