

About

Do you ever wonder which toy would win in a contest: My Little Pony or Optimus Prime? Do you have toys that haven't been played with in years? Bring them to *Toy Chest*!

Is your toy faster, fuzzier, cuter or older than its opponent? In *Toy Chest*, it's not just about firepower. Compare traits and play your cards right to be the first to earn enough points to win. You may be surprised at which toy emerges triumphant.

To play, you need 3 or 4 players, an imaginative mind set, and as few as 20 minutes. Feel free to borrow toys from our collection for playing, or bring your own. You are welcome to donate toys for others to play with, but please don't take any toys out of the exhibit!

If you'd like to purchase a game of *Toy Chest* to play at home, email us and we'll let you know when it is available:
lea@leafcutterdesigns.com

Made By

Toy Chest was made by Chaim Gingold and Lea Redmond, friends who both love to play and collect toys.

Chaim Gingold is a computer scientist and interactive designer by training. By trade, he is a computer game designer & digital toymaker. Working closely with Will Wright at Maxis/EA, Chaim designed *Spore's* award winning creative tool suite. Currently, he is developing an interactive geology book that teaches through play, works as an independent game developer & design consultant, and is pursuing a PhD at UC Santa Cruz on design, computation, & play. You can learn more about his work at <http://levitylab.com>.

Lea Redmond crafts objects, ideas, and activities. *Leafcutter Designs*, her creative studio in Oakland, CA seeks to create a more playful, peaceful world by offering curious goods, surprising services, and participatory projects. Lea loves to make things that inspire, tell stories, and make us wonder. She is Postmaster of the World's Smallest Post Service and is currently developing a board game for publication by Chronicle Books in 2013. You can see and participate in many of her projects at <http://www.leafcutterdesigns.com>.



Rules

Overview

Toy Chest is a light-hearted contest between three or four players, each of whom brings a toy to the game. You will compare toys as you play cards that highlight various attributes of toys—both literal and metaphorical. You might be surprised which toy wins!

To play you'll need:

1. The *Toy Chest* cards.
2. Three or four players.
3. One toy for each player.
4. The *Toy Chest* **Toy/Pretend** coin.

How to Win

The basic idea of the game is that players take turns playing toy comparison cards, and the toy that wins the comparison collects the card.

Toys get one point for each card collected, plus any applicable bonus points from those cards. The toy with the most points wins.

Setting Up

Each player chooses a toy and sets it on the table in front of him or her in full view.

To play, shuffle the card deck and deal each player 5 cards. Players can look at their hands, but should hide them from their opponents.

The remainder of the deck is placed face down between the players (the draw deck), and the top card is turned over and becomes the discard pile.

The youngest player goes first. Turns proceed counter-clockwise (to each player's right).



Play

On your turn, the following happens. (Steps will be explained in more detail after this section.)

- ▶ **Decide.** Which cards might be in your favor to play, and which are not. To play a card, it must match the suit or rank of the card on the top of the discard pile.
- ▶ **Discard.** If the card you want to play doesn't match the suit or rank of the top of the discard pile, you can "chain discard" to change the top card. You can discard zero or more cards face up, as long as each one matches the suit or rank on top of the one beneath it. (This can also be helpful for getting rid of unwanted cards.)
- ▶ **Play a card** which matches the suit or rank of the card on top of the discard pile.
 - ▶ *State the comparison.* Who are you comparing against, and why does your toy win?
 - ▶ *Toss.* Defender can optionally choose to toss Toy/Pretend coin.
 - ▶ *Respond.* Defender can make a creative case for their toy.
 - ▶ *Compare.* Player and defender agree upon a winner. (If they can't agree, then the other players adjudicate.)
 - ▶ Winner collects the card, adding it to their score.
- ▶ (If you can't discard or play any cards, then discard one card.)
- ▶ **Draw** back to 5 cards.

Matching Suit or Rank

Each card discarded or played must match the *suit* or *rank* of the preceding card on top of the discard pile. There are *four suits*—cog, wind-up key, magnifying glass, glue. There are *three ranks*, which is the number of objects in the top left corner of the card (1, 2, or 3). Chaining discards helps you get rid of unwanted cards, and find a way to play the card you want.

For example, in the sequence shown below:



- ▶ 1 magnifying glass (placed first)
- ▶ 3 magnifying glasses (matched last **suit**)
- ▶ 3 wind up keys (matched last **rank**)
- ▶ 1 wind up key (matched last **suit**)

Comparing

The card you play challenges another toy of your choice to a comparison. For example, if you play the “Big” card on another player’s toy, the bigger toy wins the comparison and collects the card. When you play a comparison, you must state the comparison, which toy you are comparing yours to, and why your toy wins. For example, you might play “Bigger” and say “My teddy bear is bigger than your toy truck.”

Sometimes the winner will be very obvious; other times, you might win a comparison through creative interpretation. The game is most enjoyable if you don’t get stuck on literalness and embrace each other’s imaginative ideas. For example, you could claim that your airplane is more like an animal than toy blocks because it flies like a bird. Since blocks are more like inanimate bricks, the player with the blocks should concede to the player with the airplane.

Sometimes a comparison relies upon information that you won’t know until discussing the comparison with another player, like the age of his or her toy. Players are not obliged to divulge any information until their toy has actually been challenged in play.

Toy/Pretend Coin

Is a teddy bear really bigger than a tiny toy truck? It depends on whether we are comparing the teddy bear and toy truck, or the bear and truck they pretend to be. Astute players will recognize that any explanation on why a toy wins hinges upon whether pretend or pretend attributes are being compared.

After a player plays a card against another’s toy, the player receiving the challenge (whose turn it is not), can then decide to respond by tossing the wooden Toy/Pretend coin. Whichever face lands up—the teddy bear “toy” side or the bear “pretend” side—determines whether the comparison is settled by comparing attributes of the toys or attributes of the real world things the toys represent. In the earlier example, if the coin landed on the “pretend” side, then the truck would probably win, since real trucks are usually bigger than real bears. But if it landed on the “toy” side and the teddy bear is bigger than the toy truck, the teddy bear takes the point. And remember: playfully explaining and conceding is the key to having fun!



What if it's a tie?

If it is not obvious which toy/player wins a comparison, the two players involved in the comparison should briefly express why they think they should win the point. At this moment, it will probably be clear to all which toy should get the point. The game is the most fun if players are generous and graceful in forfeiting to the better explanation. You might even concede simply because the other player's explanation was especially creative, funny, or impressive. (If laughter is involved, you'll know you're playing the game right.)

In the event the tie persists and the two players comparing toys can't agree on who wins, then the other player/s can award the comparison to who they think should win, or decide that it is truly a draw and no one gets the card (in which case it stays on the top of the discard pile).

Ending and Scoring the Game

The game is over when the draw pile is exhausted, and everybody is out of cards.

Each toy's card collection should be shown face up and spread out so everyone can see it.

At the end of the game, toys get one point per card, plus any applicable bonus points. Toys earn bonus points from their cards only if they meet the stated bonus criteria.