

Mitten Matching Game

For many of us, winter means it's time for coats, hats, and mittens! Learning how to put all of these items on is a big deal for young children, and mittens are especially tricky. First you have to get the right mitten on the right hand (or should I say correct hand). Then you have to keep all your fingers together while you coax your thumb into the small "thumb place." All in all it's a major skill and a great topic for a song!



Mitten Matching Game

(walk around in a circle)

I need a mitten for my right hand, mitten for my left
Two mittens that look the same
Except that one's for the right hand
One's for the left
We're playin' the mitten game

(hand each child a mitten and have them find the matching one on the floor in the middle of the circle. Their goal is to find mate before end of third verse)

I'm gonna give you a mitten
Take a look and you will find
Another that looks quite similar
One's for the left
One's for the right

Now I have a mitten for my right hand, mitten for my left
Two mittens that look the same
Except that one's for the right hand
One's for the left
We're playin' the mitten game
That's how we're playin' the mitten game

Be sure to cut out the mittens from the template and see additional activities and recommended picture books on the next pages.

For this song you'll need a pair of paper mittens for each child. I've provided a pattern which you can print out on colored paper, scrapbook paper, or even have each child color his or her own pair. Then cut them out and laminate them if you plan to use them more than a few times. You'll see the "R" and "L" are already on the pattern, so children can use the game/song to learn their right from their left.

Below are a few variations you can use depending on the ages of the children and your available space. The main idea in all variations is to find the matching mitten and have children place their hands on the paper mittens correctly by the time the song ends. Make sure to instruct them to place the sides with the letters facing up. *This is where scrapbooking paper comes in handy as you can buy it printed on only one side.

Before you sing: Talk about right and left, and point out the letters. You can use the old tip of showing how you can make an "L" with the fingers of your left hand, and that's how you know it's your left.

1. **2-year-olds:** Make mittens from felt and mix up 3 pairs on a felt board. Sing the first verse of the song and point to one of the mittens. Name the letter, R or L), and ask the children which of the mittens is the matching one in the pair. Sing again and match the others.
 2. **Younger threes:** give each child a right mitten. Place all other mittens on a table and let children find a mitten that matches. You can then help them place their hands on the paper mittens correctly.
 3. **Preschoolers:** Have children stand in a circle, and give each child a right mitten, placing all of the left mittens letter side down in the middle of the circle. Hold hands and walk around the circle for the first verse, then instruct children to find their matching mittens during the second, and place their hands on them on the third verse. Instead of walking around the floor, children walk around a couple of tables with the mittens on them so they don't step on and tear them if they are not laminated.
- ◆ When you're finished, count the pairs.
 - ◆ Ask children what things besides mittens we find in pairs
 - ◆ Sing another song of the month, **Fuzzy Slippers**- also about counting pairs.



