# The Gamestorming Cheat Sheet

**The book** http://amzn.to/GamestormingBook
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# Games for a communicating core concepts

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## Games for finding the essence of an idea

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**Poster Session** p.114 – Communicating ideas with images in a poster format
**Draw the problem** p.90 – Short drawing exercise to make clear what the "problem" is
**Storyboard** p.71 – Players use a storyboard format to tell a story about an experience, how to solve a problem, etc.
**Cover Story** p.87 – To think expansively around an ideal future state; exercise in visioning
**Design the Box** p.161 – Teams imagine the package for an idea in order to make decisions about important features & other aspects of their vision that are difficult to articulate
**Elevator Pitch** p.166 – Uses madlibs to come up with a short, compelling description of the problem you're trying to solve
**The Pitch** p.192 – Players imagine that they're entrepreneurs and need to sell their ideas to rich venture capitalists (VCs)

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## Games for envisioning the future

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**Make a World** p.184 – Purpose is to make a 3D model of a desired future state
**Poster Session** p.114 – Communicate ideas with images in a poster format

**Cover Story** p.87 – To think expansively around an ideal future state; exercise in visioning
**Mood Board** p.186 – Create a poster or collage that captures the overall "feel" of an idea

## Games for building consensus (among members of a team):

**Draw the Problem** p.90 – Short drawing exercise to make clear what the "problem" is
**Elevator Pitch** p.166 – Uses madlibs to come up with a short, compelling description of the problem you're trying to solve
**Fishbowl** p.92 – Key listening exercise; inner circle discusses problem, outer circle listens
**Show and Tell** p.119 – To elicit stakeholders views, have them bring an object that that captures their perspective
**Spectrum Mapping** p.127 – Designed to reveal the diversity of perspectives and options around any given topic and to organize them into a meaningful spectrum
**Bodystorming** p.59 – Using improv or "play acting" to feel out what might work a problem
**Visual Glossary** p.225 – Group starts a meeting by defining their terms visually (everyone starts on the same page = works faster & more effectively later)
**Post the Path** – Will help develop a better understanding of a group's current process to uncover areas of confusion or misunderstanding

## Games for early kickoff meetings:

**The 7Ps Framework** p.54 – Used before a meeting to plan out an agenda, goals
**Affinity Map** p.56 – Group creates an "affinity diagram" to find categories within a cluster of ideas (to see which ideas are most common within a group, etc.)
**Pre-Mortem** p.117 – Be up front about risks
**The 5 Whys** p.141 – Helps discover the root cause of a problem
**Elevator Pitch** p.166 – Uses madlibs to come up with a short, compelling description of the problem you're trying to solve
**Storyboard** p.71 – Players use a storyboard format to tell a story about an experience, how to solve a problem, etc.
**Context Map** p.84 – Shows the effect of context
**Cover Story** p.87 – To think expansively around an ideal future state; exercise in visioning
**Draw the Problem** p.90 – Short drawing exercise to make clear what the "problem" is
**Poster Session** p.114 – Communicate ideas with images in a poster format
**Stakeholder Analysis** p.124 – Identify stakeholders and how to engage them
**Make a World** p.184 Purpose is to make a 3D model of a desired future state
**Start, Stop, Continue** p.249 – Used to spell out what aspects of an issue/product you want to discontinue, introduce, or continue (based on what's going well)

### Games for logo design (or developing a How-it-works Video):

**Graphic Jam** p.96 – Visualize abstract concepts, absorb complexity
**Cover Story** p.87 – To think expansively around an ideal future state; exercise in visioning
**Elevator Pitch** p.166 – Uses madlibs to come up with a short, compelling description of the problem you're trying to solve
**The Pitch** p.192 – Players imagine that they're entrepreneurs and need to sell their ideas to rich venture capitalists (VCs)
**Mood Board** p.186 – Create a poster or collage that captures the overall "feel" of an idea
**Show Me Your Values** p.121 – To understand people's deep-seated impressions of something
**Design the Box** p.161 – Teams imagine the package for an idea in order to make decisions about important features & other aspects of their vision that are difficult to articulate
**Heart, Hand, Mind** p.179 – Goal is to examine an issue from another perspective, and find significance in an issue.
**Product Pinocchio** p.194 – Players personify a product to better identify what features will resonate with and be more valuable for the end user

# Games for ideation

### Games for generating lots of ideas:

**Brainwriting** p.82 – Includes everyone in evolving an idea (silent brainstorming, followed by collaborative building on ideas), all done in silence
**6-8-5s** – Fast way to get initial ideas down, and to iterate through many ideas
**Post-Ups** p.19, 69 – To generate a lot of ideas
**3-12-3 Brainstorm** p.78 – Good for generating & developing lots of ideas in only 1 hour
**Heuristic Ideation Technique** p.98 – Generate ideas by recombining possibilities
**Image-ination** p.103 – Get unstuck with new ideas
**Object Brainstorm** p.109 – Uses objects as a starting point for association, exploration, brainstorming

## Games for developing a roadmap:

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**Who Do** p.74 – Lists out who's involved in the project & what their priorities/next steps are
**Graphic Gameplan** p.38 – Quickly develop an executable action plan for a project
**Build the Checklist** p.151 – Team creates a checklist to order, rank, and prioritize tasks
**RACI Matrix** p.203 – Group creates a matrix/checklist of people who are Responsible, Accountable, Consulted, and Informed — to sort out who is doing what (on a team, etc.)

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## Games for after you already have a prototype:

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**Do, Redo, Undo** p.164 – Asks a group to focus on the implications of dismantling or altering their idea (in order to "mistakeproof" their idea)
**Mission Impossible** p.107 – Take an existing design or idea and change one foundational aspect that makes it "impossible" in function or feasibility
**The Blind Side** p.149 – Helps to disclose and uncover information that might affect a group's success
**Give & Take Matrix** p.177 – Map out motivations & interactions among actors in a system
**Product Pinocchio** p.194 – Players personify a product to better identify what features will resonate with and be more valuable for the end user
**Speedboat** p.206 – Used to identify obstacles to your goal, things that may slow you down
**The SQUID** p.208 – Used to map out what's been done & what still needs to be done; stands for Sequential Question and Insight Diagram.
**Staple Something to Yourself** p.210 – Used to explore or clarify a process by following an object through its "day in the life"
**SWOT Analysis** p.212 – Used to gauge strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to our product or future

# Games for a different perspective

## Games for connecting with a user base:

**Empathy Map** p.65 – To develop a customer profile
**Storyboard** p.71 – To imagine and create possibilities using a storytelling format
**Staple Something to Yourself** p.210 – Used to explore or clarify a process by following an object through its “day in the life”

## Games for identifying stakeholder values:

**Stakeholder Analysis** p.124 – Identify stakeholders and how to engage them
**History Map** p.100 – Helps to appreciate an organization’s culture
**Campfire** p.156 – Leverages our natural storytelling capabilities, giving people a format and a space for to share work stories

## Games for seeing things from another perspective

**Customer, Employee, Shareholder** p.159 – Imagine many possible futures from different perspectives
**Challenge Cards** p.158 – Used to identify and think through potential challenges and pitfalls of a product
**The Anti-Problem** p.80 – For getting unstuck on hard problems: asks people to solve the problem completely opposite to their current problem
**Bodystorming** p.59 – Using improv or “play acting” to feel out what might work in the real world
**Empathy Map** p.65 – To develop a customer profile
**Flip it!** p.171 – Quick game to show people that perspectives are made, not born. Helps people see challenges as opportunities...
**Give & Take Matrix** p.177 – Used to map out motivations & interactions among actors in a system
**Heart, Hand, Mind** p.179 – Goal is to examine an issue from another perspective, and find significance in an issue.
**Help Me Understand** p.181 – Helps to uncover employees lingering questions or assumptions

**Pain Gain Map** p.190 – Used to develop an understanding of motivations & decisions
**World Cafe** p.228 – Improves large-group discussion by borrowing concepts from the informal café conversations: round tables, cross pollinating ideas, and pursuing questions that matter.

## Pro/con games

**Pain Gain Map** p.190 – Used to develop an understanding of motivations & decisions
**Challenge Cards** p.158 – Used to identify and think through potential challenges and pitfalls of a product
**Flip it!** p.171 – Quick game to show people that perspectives are made, not born. Helps people see challenges as opportunities...
**Plus / Delta** p.246 – To generate constructive feedback by focusing on what what positive or repeatable about an activity, and what you would change about the activity

## Games for thinking through problems or strategies

**Challenge Cards** p.158 – Used to identify and think through potential challenges and pitfalls of a product
**The Anti-Problem** p.80 – For getting unstuck on hard problems: asks people to solve the problem completely opposite to their current problem
**Forced Analogy** p.95 – Intentionally forces players to think about new concepts to break out of formal categories and help with problem solving & ideation
**Mission Impossible** p.107 – Take an existing design or idea and change one foundational aspect that makes it “impossible” in function or feasibility
**The 4 Cs** p.138 – Quick way to gather and organize information using 4 common key concepts (on a 2x2 matrix): Components, Characteristics, Characters, and Challenges
**The 5 Whys** p.141 – Helps discover the root cause of a problem
**Atomize** p.147 – Good for unpacking large, messy structures
**The Blind Side** p.149 – Helps to disclose and uncover information that might affect a group’s success
**Do, Redo, Undo** p.164 – Asks a group to focus on the implications of dismantling or altering their idea (in order to “mistakeproof” their idea)
**Give & Take Matrix** p.177 – Used to map out motivations & interactions among actors in a system
**Business Model Canvas** p.153 – Used to examine & rethink a company’s business model
**SWOT Analysis** p.212 – Used to gauge strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to our product or future
**World Cafe** p.228 – Improves large-group discussion by borrowing concepts from the informal “café” conversations: round tables, cross pollinating ideas, and pursuing questions that matter.
**Plus / Delta** p.246 – To generate constructive feedback by focusing on what what positive or

repeatable about an activity, and what you would change about the activity
**Post the Path** – Will help develop a better understanding of a group's current process to uncover areas of confusion or misunderstanding

# Games for making a decision

## Games for voting on choices

**Dot Voting** p.63 – To converge on ideas that resonate best with the group
**Forced Ranking** p.25, 67 – To agree on priorities (rank by impact and effort)
**$100 Test** p.232 – Uses the concept of cash to help prioritize items in a list
**20/20 Vision** p.234 – To agree on priorities & how to rank initiatives
**Impact & Effort Matrix** p.241 – Possible actions are mapped out on a 2x2 grid based on: effort required to implement & potential impact of an idea
**NUF Test** p.244 – Group rates ideas on three criteria: to what degree are they New, Useful, and Feasible?

## Games for finding patterns in data

**Affinity Map** p.56 – To discover patterns among similar categories
**Card Sort** – General-purpose categorization exercise
**Atomize** p.147 – Good for unpacking large, messy structures

## Also

**Start, Stop, Continue** p.249 – Used to spell out what aspects of an issue/product you want to discontinue, introduce, or continue (based on what's going well)

# Other games

## Games for managing meetings

**Pie Chart Agenda** p.112 – Quickly agree on an agenda, then use the agenda as a timekeeping artifact during a meeting
**The 7Ps Framework** p.54 – Used before a meeting to plan out an agenda, goals
**Visual Agenda** p.132 – A visual agenda create excitement, people talk about it, it implies the day might be interesting
**The Button** p.155 – Game where everyone speaks up before anyone speaks a second time
**5-Fingered Consensus** p.170 – Quickly gauges extent of the consensus of a group
**Red / Green Cards** p.205 – Red & green cards are used silently by audience to indicate approval or disapproval of issues being discussed in a meeting
**Open Space** p.188 – Method for hosting an event/meeting without a prepared agenda
**Talking Chips** p.217 – Uses "talking chips" as currency so group can make sure everyone has a chance to contribute to the conversation
**The SQUID** p.208 – Used to map out what's been done & what still needs to be done; stands for Sequential Question and Insight Diagram.
**Who / What / When Matrix** p.250 – Focuses a "Next Steps" conversation at the end of a meeting on clearly defined actions that people commit to

## Games for team bonding

**Low-Tech Social Network** p.105 – Great way to get to know each other; leave nice visual behind, too
**History Map** p.100 – Helps to appreciate an organization's culture
**Trading Cards** p.130 – Good icebreaker; also creates memorable visuals for later in the meeting
**Welcome to My World** p.134 – To share our internal system map of reality
**Campfire** p.156 – Leverages our natural story-telling capabilities, giving people a format and a space for to share work stories
**Mood Board** p.182 – Create a poster or collage that captures the overall "feel" of an idea
**Memory Wall** p.242 – Build a visual wall that serves to appreciate & celebrate people on a team

## Games for assessing company structure/leadership:

**Forcefield Analysis** p.174 – Helps people appreciate the forces both for and against change
**Affinity Map** p.56 – Group creates an "affinity diagram" to find categories within a cluster of ideas (to see which ideas are most common within a group, etc.)
**The 5 Whys** p.141 – Helps discover the root cause of a problem
**Stakeholder Analysis** p.124 – Identify stakeholders and how to engage them
**Help Me Understand** p.181 – Helps to uncover employees lingering questions or assumptions
**Prune the Future** p.247 – Uses a tree as a metaphor to show can the future of anything can be shaped, one leaf at a time (rather than hoping for immediate, broad sweeping change)

## Games for thinking through business models

**Business Model Canvas** p.153 – Used to examine & rethink a company's business model
**Elevator Pitch** p.166 – Uses madlibs to come up with a short, compelling description of the problem you're trying to solve
**The Pitch** p.192 – Players imagine that they're entrepreneurs and need to sell their ideas to rich venture capitalists (VCs)
**Design the Box** p.161 – Teams imagine the package for an idea in order to make decisions about important features & other aspects of their vision that are difficult to articulate
**Plus/Delta** p.246 – To generate constructive feedback by focusing on what what positive or repeatable about an activity, and what you would change about the activity

## Games for understanding the feasibility of change

**Forcefield Analysis** p.174 – Helps people appreciate the forces both for and against change
**Speedboat** p.206 – Used to identify obstacles to your goal, things that may slow you down
**Plus/Delta** p.246 – To generate constructive feedback by focusing on what was positive or repeatable about an activity, and what you would change about the activity