



## Mix it up in math class!

It is always fun to try a new take on an old classic! Many kids know how to play chess, but there are many other strategy games you can play on a chessboard. One such game is the **Game of Amazons**, where each player starts with only three pieces, all queens, and the queens shoot arrows at each move. Full directions can be found [here](#). And if you want to have a great strategy discussion about it too, check out the video [here](#) or the web page [here](#).

Visual thinking is often connected to mathematical reasoning. One fun puzzle that develops visual thinking skills is the [Fold and Cut Challenge](#). You will need plenty of paper and scissors. It's easiest if you have access to a printer, but you can always just draw your own shapes on a piece of paper! Careful, this puzzle can be addicting. Can you fold the shape so you can cut it out in just one straight cut?

Two puzzles that you can buy online are [Chocolate Fix](#) for younger kids, and [Dimension](#) for older kids. Both involve finding ways to arrange pieces, building visual reasoning alongside logic skills. And don't forget about the original logic puzzle where you need to move the pieces: [Rush Hour](#).

If you are looking for practice with basic math facts, the best way is probably with a deck of cards. You can play the game War, where each player starts with half the deck, and both players turn over their top card to see who has the higher card. One variation is to have each player turn over two cards, and see who has the higher sum, to help practice addition facts for kids in grades 1 - 2. Or, see who has the larger difference, and you are practicing subtraction for kids in grades 2 or 3. Multiply the cards to see who has the larger product, for grades 4 - 5. Or, for kids in grades 5 and 6, turn the two numbers into fractions, and see who has the larger fraction.