

FOUR IN A ROW!

Players

two teams of two–six players in each team

Materials

one game sheet and one *Topics ticklist* per game;
a pen/pencil; coloured pens

Before starting

Photocopy one game sheet per group and cut along the dotted line to produce one word grid and one *Topics ticklist* for each group.

How to play

The aim of the game is to win a line – vertical, horizontal, or diagonal – of four connected circles, before the other team does. Toss a coin to decide which team goes first. At the start of each turn, teams must choose a word or phrase on the word grid and a topic from the ticklist. They then make a sentence related to this topic which includes the word or phrase from the word grid, e.g. *Food and drink* → *feel off-colour* = *I was feeling off-colour so I only ate plain white rice for a couple of days*. If the opposing team agrees that the sentence is acceptable and that it clearly exemplifies the meaning of the word or phrase, the team that made the sentence wins the circle and colours it in with the team's colour. The topic on the ticklist is ticked off and cannot be used again by either team until all the topics have been used once (or twice, etc.). If the sentence is incorrect, then both the topic and circle remain available. It is then the turn of the opposing team.

The game continues until one team gets four circles in a row on the word grid or all the words have been coloured in. If this happens, the team with the most circles wins.

When is a sentence 'acceptable'?

The teacher and the students themselves can decide how strict to be with the language produced – whether 100% grammatical accuracy is required, or whether clearly communicated meaning is enough. For example, the sentence *I was feeling off-colour so only I eat plain white rice for a couple of days* contains two grammatical mistakes (*I only ate*) but still expresses the meaning of *feel off-colour* clearly, so it could be acceptable for students at a lower level. For stronger students, the teacher could demand 100% accuracy from the class in their sentences.

An example of a sentence which is not acceptable as a valid answer would be *Sometimes when I eat, I feel off-colour*, because it does not exemplify the meaning of the word *feel off-colour* (in this case the sentence *Sometimes I don't want to eat anything if I'm feeling off-colour* would better exemplify the meaning of *feel off-colour*).

Before students start the game, the teacher could put the following examples on the board to demonstrate how to use the language and topics to make sentences.

Food and drink → *feel off-colour* = *I was feeling off-colour so I only ate plain white rice for a couple of days*.
Clothes and fashion → *inconsiderate* = *Designing uncomfortable clothes is inconsiderate towards consumers*.
Travel and tourism → *gruelling* = *Being stuck at the airport for 21 hours can be a gruelling experience*.
Fame and Celebrities → *overprotective* = *I think famous people have the right to be overprotective of their family*.
Health and Fitness → *to tackle* = *I'm hoping to tackle my new training schedule soon*.

TIP

Teams can 'block' their opponent by winning the circles that the other team needs to make a row of four.

Versions of the game

- **Spoken or written:** The teacher can specify if the sentences are to be spoken or written, depending on what students need most practice of. If players write sentences on the whiteboard or on a piece of paper, the game will take longer.
- **It must be true:** The teacher can specify that the sentences must, wherever possible, be true for at least one member of the team.
- **Bottom to top:** Students must begin on the bottom row and can only win circles in higher rows that are on top of circles which have already been won by either team.
- **You give me the topic:** Team B chooses the topic for Team A and vice versa, either before or after the circle is chosen.

Notes

This game revises a range of grammar and vocabulary from Student's Book 9, Units 9–12; the *Topics ticklist* covers topics in the Student's Book up to and including Unit 12.

Follow-up activity

If students played the speaking version of the game, ask them to remember as many of the sentences as they can and write them down.

therapeutic

have nothing to lose

outgrow

get back into shape

get a move on

pull a muscle

make sense of

pitfall

misunderstanding

be laid off

disrespectful

retrieve

unaffordable

be full of beans

the gist

inconsiderate

make ends meet

fabricate

outgoings

overprotective

gruelling

get the hang of

flashback

craze

discrepancy

overcharge

stamina

get your hands on

a long-shot

affluent

feel off-colour

on track

trigger

tackle

pay off

outdated

well-being

vague

make it

fad

underpaid

overcrowding

TOPICS TICKLIST

Family and relationships	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Language	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The Future	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Food and Drink	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Clothes and Fashion	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Travel and Tourism	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The Landscape	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Fame and Celebrities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Health and Fitness	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Challenges and Achievements	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Memory and Forgetting	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Social Change	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐