

This is a simple game to teach odd and even up to 12. It has the unusual feature that you can “cheat in reverse” – that is, you can let the child win without them noticing. This can be useful in boosting the child’s enthusiasm.

The play follows the play of a normal game of dominoes, but the scoring is different. You can use any of the different varieties of dominoes, so I will not specify the full rules for play here. The important rules that must be satisfied are that:

- (a) After each person plays a domino there is a single chain of dominoes
- (b) The game ends when one player “goes out” – that is they play their last domino and thus have no dominoes left in their “hand”.

The scoring is as follows:

- 1) After each domino is played, add the two values at the end of the chains. Score 1 point if this is even, no points if it is odd. (This will quickly teach the child that 0 is even.)
- 2) If you have played the last domino and “gone out” score an extra 1 point

The player with the higher score wins.

You can cheat by deliberately playing to make the total odd and thus not get a point. The child doesn’t know what dominoes you have, so won’t know you are playing to let them win.

Example

If after the child plays there is a 6 at one end of the chain and a 2 at the other, the total is 8 which is even, so the child scores a point. If the adult now plays the 6-1 domino, the numbers are now 1 and 2 which total 3, which is odd, so the adult does not score a point.