

Pictus

pictures at center stage

Pictus is a game about guessing pictures based on hints and clues, and is designed for players of all ages.

Each picture in the stack of cards is unique.

Ideal number of players is 4 to 6.

At the beginning of the game, each player draws 6 cards and takes a die. One player starts the game as the *narrator*.

The narrator chooses a picture in their hand, puts it on the table face down, and gives other players a clue to describe the picture. The nature of the clue can be diverse – it can be a word, collocation, sentence, a whole story, tune, gesture, a piece of pantomime, hand-drawn picture, or a combination of these options. Note that only the picture on the card should be considered when giving the clue.

Then, each other player chooses a picture in their hand that matches the clue the best, and hands the card face down to the narrator. The narrator shuffles all cards, including their own, and turns them face up in the middle of table. Except for the narrator, each player tries to guess the narrator's card. They may inspect cards closely before deciding for which to vote. Just before the voting, arrange the cards, number them, and each player except for the narrator makes their guess secretly, using their die. All players reveal their guesses simultaneously. Narrator can vote too but he or she chooses someone else's card that in the narrator's opinion describes the clue the best. You can play Pictus either that everyone but the narrator votes, only the narrator votes, or everyone votes. No player shall ever vote for their own card.

Each player should ensure not to reveal in any way, which card is theirs before the vote!

Important: the narrator only scores when at least one player guesses right and, at the same time, at least one player guesses wrong. It is advisable to be crafty about the clue and maybe target it at a particular player.

Scoring:

If all players guess right or guess wrong, the narrator gets no points and everyone else gets 2 points.

Otherwise, the narrator and each player who guessed right get 3 points.

Each player who is not the narrator but someone else guessed their card, gets 1 point for each such vote.

If the narrator voted, the player whose card they chose gets 1 point.

Players can take used cards as points and if there is not enough of them, take cards from the bottom of the deck. Alternatively, one player can keep score on a piece of paper. After the points are allocated, each player draws a cards and the player sitting next to the narrator becomes the narrator for the next round.

For higher difficulty, you can

decrease the maximum hand size,

add a random card from the top of the deck among the cards to be guessed,

consider text on the card, as well as the picture, when thinking up a clue.