

OCTAGION

OCTAGION (rhymes with “contagion”) is a fast-paced word-building game that uses special cards, each displaying a letter and a number. The catch is that you can’t use more than one card with the same number when spelling a word. Ideal for solo play, head-to-head matches, or team competitions, each team uses its own deck to strategize. The game consists of eight rounds, presenting an 8-letter challenge word for each round that players must solve quickly.

OCTAGION is the ultimate family-friendly speed-spelling game.

It’s contagious!

Basic Rules

How to Play

1. Setup

- Each team (1 or more players) starts with an **OCTAGION** deck. There are 48 cards (with full-color backs) that have a letter and a number (1 through 8).
- Each team will need a minimum tabletop work area of 24” wide by 15” deep.
- Included are Treatment Cards (blue backs) and Countdown Cards (red backs). Set aside these cards for your first game. Then, read on for rule variations to add even more excitement.

2. Starting a Round

- Shuffle your deck. You may not pre-sort or rearrange your cards before the timer starts.
- One player chooses an 8-letter word, known as the “sequence,” from a Word Card (green back) and reveals it to everyone. Each team may study the sequence for a moment, and write it down and refer to it during the round if desired.
- Start a 2-minute timer (available on ocagion.com) when everyone is ready.

3. Constructing the Word

- Search through your deck for the letters you need to complete the sequence.
- Place letters into a row of cards in front of you (at the top of your work area) to spell the sequence, separate from any other cards. This row is called the “variant.”
- You may replace or remove any cards in the variant or stack them if desired.

4. Ending the Round

- The round ends when the timer runs out **or** when a team member calls “**Got it!**”.
- At that moment, **all players must stop** adjusting their cards. Then, everyone tallies their score for the round.

5. Finishing the Game

- A standard game continues for 8 rounds.
- The team with the highest total score wins!

Scoring

1. **Only the first 8 letters count.** If your variant has more than 8 letters, remove the trailing cards.
2. **Start with 8 points.** Then, make the following subtractions and/or additions. Individual cards are not penalized more than once.
 - **-1 Point** for each:
 - ✓ Repeated number.
 - ✓ Incorrect letter.
 - ✓ Empty position.
 - **+/-2 Points** if you call **“Got it!”**
 - ✓ **+2 Points** if your entire variant correctly matches the sequence without repeated numbers.
 - ✓ **-2 Points** otherwise.

Amplify the Challenge

The following variations include the use of Treatment and Countdown Cards. They can make it easier to spell words without penalty, but can make the rounds more difficult by having less time to do so. Set aside any superfluous cards and start with the easiest variations for your initial games.

1. **Treatment Cards (blue backs) are wildcards that are good for just one use during the game. Place your reserve of Treatment Cards off to the side of your work area, and be ready to use one or more as a round closes. There is no penalty for using Treatment Cards.**
 - To make the game easier, use all 5 Treatment Cards.
 - The standard play uses 3 cards.
 - Use fewer or no cards to make the game more challenging.
2. **Countdown Cards (red backs) indicate the amount of time you are allowed for each round. Times range from 45 seconds to 1 minute and 55 seconds. The top of each card is labeled with a difficulty level, numbered from 1 to 3.**
 - The easiest variation is to use cards from levels 1 and 2, with the longest times.
 - The standard version uses all the Countdown Cards.
 - The hardest variation uses cards from levels 2 and 3, with the shortest times.

Variations – Play Your Way!

Rule *Mutation Alpha*: Reducing the Clock for Each Round in a Game

1. Start the first round with a 2-minute timer.
2. Reduce the clock by 5 seconds for each round. The last round is set at 1:25.

Rule *Mutation Beta*: Using Treatment Cards to Handicap the Competition

1. Allocate up to 5 Treatment Cards (blue backs) to each team based on their skill level. Give fewer or no cards to stronger teams.
2. Use a 2-minute timer for your rounds or combine with Rule Gamma. Set the timer and begin the round.
3. After scoring each round, remove any exposed Treatment Cards from the game.

Rule *Mutation Gamma*: Using Countdown Cards

1. Shuffle the Countdown Cards (red backs) and place the stack face down on the table.
2. Draw the top card.
3. The time indicated in the middle is the amount of time you are allowed to play for this round. Set the timer and begin the round.
4. After scoring each round, remove any exposed Treatment Cards from the game. Place the used Countdown Card on the bottom of the stack.
5. Repeat from step 2 to begin a new round.

Rule *Mutation Delta*: Randomizing the Word Selection

1. Shuffle the Countdown Cards (red backs) and place the stack face down on the table.
2. Shuffle the Word Cards (green backs) and place the stack face down to the right of the Countdown Cards.
3. Flip over the top card of each stack.
4. Shuffle your decks, and randomly draw a card from one of them.
5. Add the number on the Letter Card to the bottom number (+0, +8, +16, +24, +32) on the Countdown Card. The result is a number from 1 to 40. Use this number to pick the corresponding word on the Word Card. (Note: Word Cards are numbered A1...A40, B1...B40, etc. Ignore the letter prefix.) Write down the word.
6. Return the Letter Card to its proper deck.
7. Set the timer and begin the round.
8. After scoring each round, place the used Countdown and Word Cards on the bottom of their stacks.
9. Repeat from step 3 to begin a new round.

Rule *Mutation Epsilon*: Each Team Solving a Different Word

1. Each team shuffles their deck, and randomly draws a card.
2. Using Rule Delta, repeat the word selection for each team.
3. If the selected word is the same as another team's word, draw a new Word Card, and select again.

Rule *Mutation Zeta*: Using Non-Conforming Words

1. Use 8-letter words that do not necessarily conform to the **OCTAGION** deck.
2. The use of Treatment Cards may be **necessary** to spell words without repeating numbers.

Our Favorite

Virulent **OCTAGION**: Combining Rules Beta, Gamma, Delta and Epsilon

1. Allocate the agreed number of Treatment Cards (blue backs) to each team.
2. Shuffle the Countdown Cards (red backs) and place the stack face down on the table.
3. Shuffle the Word Cards (green backs) and place the stack face down to the right of the Countdown Cards.
4. Flip over the top card of each stack.
5. Each team shuffles their deck, and randomly draws a card.
6. For each team, one at a time going clockwise, add the number on their Letter Card to the bottom number (+0, +8, +16, +24, +32) on the Countdown Card. The result is a number from 1 to 40. Use this number to pick the corresponding word on the Word Card. Write down the word.
7. If the selected word is the same as another team's word, draw a new Word Card, and select again.
8. Return the Letter Cards to their proper decks.
9. The time indicated in the middle of the Countdown Card is the amount of time you are allowed to play for this round. Set the timer and begin the round.
10. After scoring each round, remove any exposed Treatment Cards from the game. Place the used Countdown and Word Cards on the bottom of their stacks.
11. Repeat from step 4 to begin a new round.

Credits

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