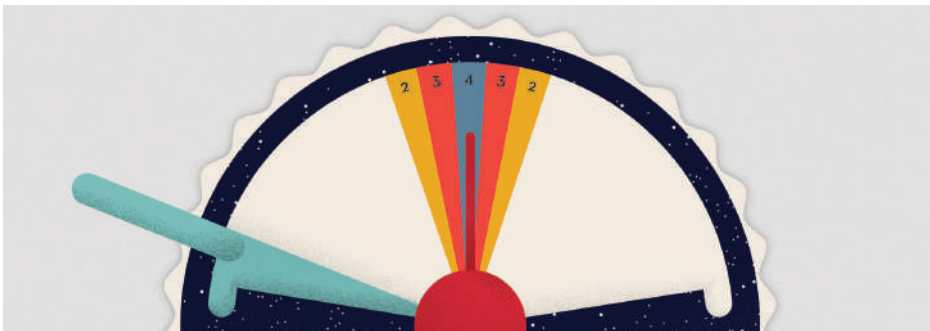


How to play

WAVELENGTH

Your team's goal



Turn the red dial as close to the center of the colored target as you can.

Here's the twist



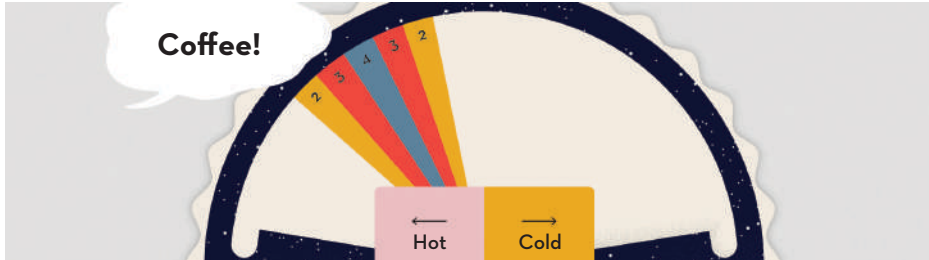
The target is completely hidden behind this blue screen and is in a random location each round.

Fortunately, one of your teammates is Psychic
and knows exactly where the target is!



They draw a card that has two opposing concepts on it, like
“Underrated - Overrated” or “Hot - Cold.”

The Psychic gives a clue where the target is located
ON THE SPECTRUM between the two concepts



In this example, the target is slightly to the “hot” side, so the Psychic says “Coffee” since coffee is hot, but not the hottest thing imaginable.

Now it's up to the Psychic's team to discuss the clue and decide where to turn the dial



Everyone thinks out loud and ponders very dumb ideas—all while the other team poisons your brain with bad suggestions.

Finally, the Psychic opens the screen to reveal whether the dial is in the target area



The closer to the center of the target, the more points your team scores! (The other team also gets a chance to score)

SETUP

Target

Screen

Device

Guessing token for
non-Psychic team -

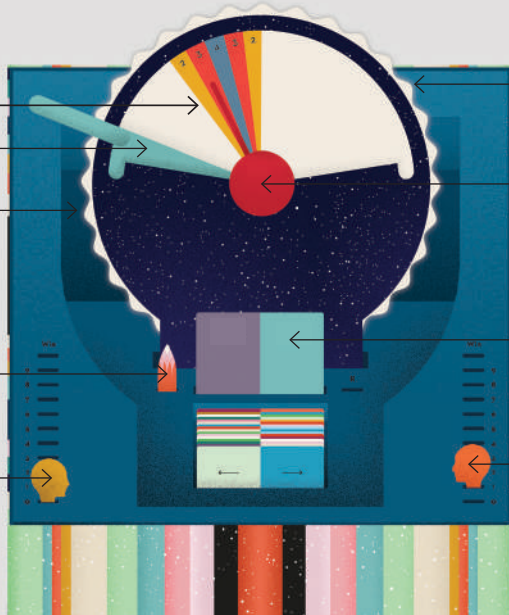
Left Brain
scoring token

Wheel

Dial

Wavelength cards

- Right Brain scoring token



GAME SUMMARY

Wavelength is a social guessing game where two teams compete to read each other's minds.

Teams take turns rotating a dial to where they think a target is located along a spectrum that's hidden behind a screen. One player from the active team—the Psychic—knows where the target is, but can only give a clue **ON THE SPECTRUM** between two opposing concepts. After that, their teammates have to guess where the target is.

SETUP NOTES

Wavelength takes less than a minute to set up and is played entirely in the box: you can just pass the game around

without ever taking anything out. To start, place the device (the big plastic thing with the dial and rotating wheel) into the slot in the middle of the box's tray. Then insert the 3 tokens—the “heads” and guessing piece—into their various slots. The diagram on the left shows where everything goes.

Now divide into 2 teams of roughly the same size. Then decide who on those teams will be the Psychics (clue givers) for the first round.

The team that goes first starts at 0 points. The team that goes second starts at 1 point. We call the teams Left Brain and Right Brain, but you can call yourselves anything you like.

That's it! You're ready to play Wavelength.

PSYCHIC PHASE

Each round begins with the current team's Psychic spinning the wheel to randomize the target's location, drawing a wavelength card, and giving a clue ON THE SPECTRUM between the two concepts on the card.

The Psychic should do all of this secretly, so players on both teams can't see where the target is.

Here's the official order the Psychic should go in (it's a little over-detailed, but in practice it's easy):

1. **Close the screen:** Rotate the screen using the plastic handle until it's entirely closed and clicks into place.

2. **Choose a wavelength:** Draw 1 wavelength card from the deck. They're double sided, and the Psychic can choose the side they want to use for their clue. On most cards there's a "normal" side and a "weird" side. Don't think too hard about it: just pick the one you find most interesting!

Place the card in the slot in front of the device, with your chosen side facing forward, and read the card text so both teams can hear.

3. **Randomize the target location:** Turn the wheel—using your fingers along the wavy edges—until you're sure that the target is in a completely random position. The plastic screen should be CLOSED while you spin: you can't keep it open to select the target's location.

4. **Open the screen:** Using the plastic handle, open the screen and look at where the target is located. You should always open the screen COMPLETELY, even if you can see the target with it partially open: otherwise, players watching you will be able to guess the general target location.

Very infrequently, the target's center (the 4 point wedge) won't be visible at all. If that happens, close the screen and spin again. If the center target is ever partially in view on the left or right extreme, that's valid—even if it's just a sliver.

5. **Give a clue:** Look at where the target's center is located spatially along the visible area of the wheel. Now think of a clue that is conceptually where the target is located ON THE SPECTRUM between the two concepts on your card. Rules for how to give clues can be found later in this book.

6. **Close the screen:** Using the plastic handle, close the screen completely. Now turn the box to face your team, so they can interact with the device.

Now the Psychic stops communicating ENTIRELY!

After the Psychic has given their clue, they are no longer allowed to say ANYTHING—not even clarifications—and must keep an entirely straight face.

If a Psychic ever gives away the target location after giving their clue, either verbally or nonverbally, it's up to everyone playing to decide whether to penalize the team. We tend to just let the Psychic give a new clue with a new card and target location, but we're generous that way.

TEAM PHASE

After the Psychic gives their clue, it's up to the rest of their team to READING THEIR MIND and turn the dial as close to the center of the target area as they can.

This is the core of the game and it is almost entirely free of rules: teammates can discuss, debate, and argue in any way they like.

After the Psychic's team has come to an agreement, they let the other team know that they've finalized their dial position.

During this phase, just keep a couple things in mind:

- Don't use percentages or numbers as shorthand for where to turn the dial.

Since Wavelength is based off of gut feelings, you should restrict yourselves to saying things like “way more to the right,” or “down a little” rather than “turn it to 25%.”

There's no penalty associated with doing this—you should just avoid it in the spirit of the game.

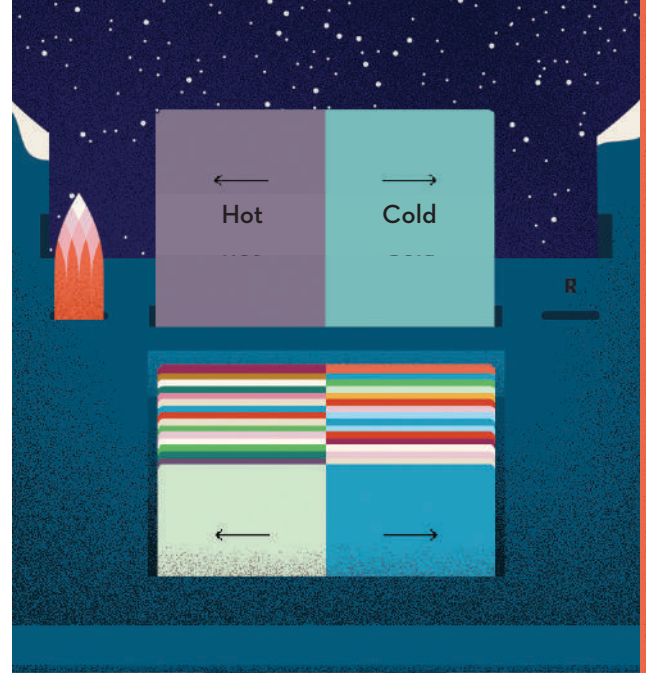
- Everyone on the team has the right to turn the dial at any time. It's up to the team to determine how to negotiate this.

LEFT/RIGHT PHASE

In Wavelength, BOTH teams always have a chance to score points from a clue.

After the Psychic's team has finalized their dial position, the other team gets to guess whether the center of the target (the 4 point wedge) is to the left or right of the dial. This discussion should be fairly brief, since it's a simple binary choice: LEFT or RIGHT. The team makes their guess by placing the marker in either the LEFT or RIGHT slot next to the wavelength card.

For example, the image on this page shows the team guessing LEFT, i.e. they think the Psychic meant to convey something MORE HOT than the current team guessed.



SCORING PHASE

Once both teams have finalized their guesses, it's time for the most exciting part of the game: THE REVEAL. The Psychic opens the screen to reveal the target. Their team scores points if the dial is within the colored target area, as listed on the colored wedges (2-4 points). If the dial is ever on an edge between two results, the Psychic's team always scores the better of the two results.

The other team scores 1 point if they correctly guessed whether the target is to the left or right of the final dial position. If the Psychic's team guessed perfectly (the 4 point wedge), the other team cannot score.

Move each team's scoring marker by those amounts.

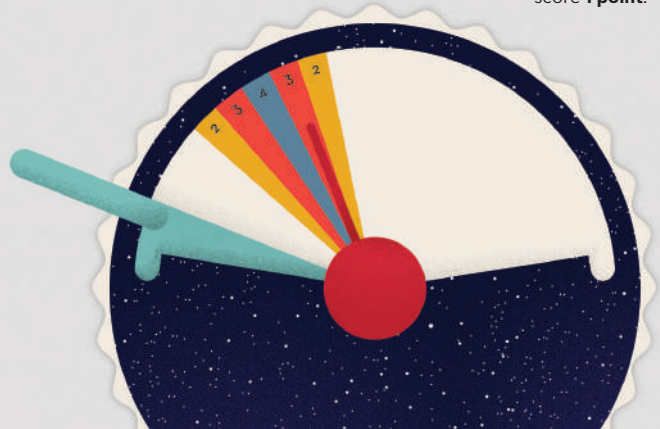
PSYCHIC TEAM

Scores the number of points printed on the wedge that the dial is in. Below, the team scores **3 points**.

OTHER TEAM

Scores by guessing if the center of the target is to the left or right of the dial.

Below, if the team had guessed LEFT, they would score **1 point**.



HOW THE GAME PROGRESSES

PSYCHIC PHASE: Current team's Psychic gives clue

TEAM PHASE: Psychic's team discusses and turns dial

LEFT/RIGHT PHASE: Other team guesses left/right

SCORING: Psychic reveals target and points are given

After Scoring, the other team begins their round **UNLESS the catch up rule is triggered**, detailed in the next section.

Play continues like this, with teams take turns giving clues, with a new player being the Psychic each time.

AN IMPORTANT CATCH UP RULE

No matter how much a team is losing in Wavelength, there's

always a chance to catch up. If the Psychic's team scores 4 points, and is still losing to the other team after that round's scoring, they immediately take another turn (with a different player as Psychic).

This means that a team down 9-0 could hypothetically take 3 turns in a row and win.

WINNING

Once a team has reached 10 points, the game ends—and the team with the highest score wins! If there's a tie, each team takes a final sudden death turn. The team that scores the most points that round wins (including the LEFT/RIGHT guess). If there's still a tie, repeat until a team has won.

CLUE GIVING: FIRM RULES

Wavelength is all about wildly creative clues. So we tried to give players as much freedom as possible to do that. These rules are here only to restrict clue giving methods that frequently broke the game—feel free to adapt them to whatever works best for you and your friends. And if you do, please share them with us!

1. Convey a single thought: A clue shouldn't combine multiple ideas or give a lot of explanatory context. Words like "AND," "BUT," "WHILE," "WHO," and "WHEN" are sometimes OK, but not when they basically combine two clues together. A dead giveaway is a team debating one part of the clue, then debating the other part, and figuring out how to weigh both.

EXAMPLE: Safe - Dangerous

ALLOWED: "A Honda Accord" or "Texting while driving"

NOT ALLOWED: "Texting while driving a Honda Accord" or "Bungee jumping over crocodiles"

2. Don't "invent" something: The clue must exist as a thing in the universe outside of you giving the clue. It can be fictional, just not something you're making up exclusively for this situation.

EXAMPLE: Masterpiece - Failure

ALLOWED: "The Mona Lisa" or "The monkey Jesus fresco"

NOT ALLOWED: "A Beatles album performed exclusively by Nicolas Cage" or "A gritty reboot of The Odyssey"

3. Be on topic: Your clue has to be related to the concepts on this round's card. You aren't allowed to use one side as a double meaning, e.g. "hot" meaning attractive—though if both words have the same double meaning, like the examples below, you can use those meanings.

EXAMPLE: Dirty - Clean

ALLOWED: "My bedroom" or "Stand up comedy" or "A cop"

NOT ALLOWED: "The speed of light" or "Ennui"

4. Don't use the words on the card or any synonyms: You can't use words from the same "family" as those on the card.

EXAMPLE: Peaceful - Warlike

ALLOWED: "Gandhi" or "America"

NOT ALLOWED: "Peace" or "A pacifist" or "Siege warfare"

5. No numbers: You can't use numbers, percentages, ratios, or anything numeric to sneakily suggest the location of the target.

If a number is in the proper name of a thing, that's OK.

EXAMPLE: 80s - 90s

ALLOWED: "One by U2" or "Three's Company"

NOT ALLOWED: "1991" or "A B+ grade"

CLUE GIVING: SUGGESTIONS

These rules aren't 100% necessary, but we've found that they improve the spirit of play, especially if players start bending the rules in ways that make the game less fun.

6. Be concise: Try to use five words or fewer. This often stops people from giving overly targeted, fussy clues.

EXAMPLE: Neurotic person - Chill person

ENCOURAGED: "My older brother"

DISCOURAGED: "My older brother who works out at 5:00 am every day."

7. No modifiers: Words like "but," "very," "almost," "slightly," and "kind of" nearly always makes a team weigh the thing

itself versus the qualifier used. Same with adding things like "after [an amount of time]" or "during [another thing]." Keep it simple.

EXAMPLE: Bad date - Good date

ENCOURAGED: "Seeing a scary movie"

DISCOURAGED: "Seeing a very scary movie" or "Going out to dinner after being married for a year."

8. Use proper nouns: When a card asks for a specific category of thing, like "_____ person" try to use a proper name and not "Something that..." or "Someone who..."

EXAMPLE: Scary person - Nice person

ENCOURAGED: "Freddy Krueger"

DISCOURAGED: "Someone who steals candy from kids"

FAQ

If this round's card is "Sad Song - Happy Song," can I say "Happy" by Pharrell even though it has a word from the card in the title?

Yes, assuming the clue is still on topic, since you're referencing the name of a thing not the concept.

Can I use a pun or play on words?

In general, puns nearly always break the "on topic" rule. For example, imagine a wavelength of "Jack of all trades - One trick pony" and the clue being "Ginuwine," since Ginuwine has a song called "Pony." That's kind of clever, but basically cheating.

Can I use rhymes, homonyms, and such?

No funny business!

When the target is in an extreme position to the left or right, we can see a tiny section of colored wedge area on the *opposite* side of the spectrum as well. Can our team score points if they guess there?

Because of the laws of geometry, there wasn't any way to prevent this from happening. But you should just ignore any visible target area on the opposite side of where the center target (the 4 point wedge) is. That's the one you're aiming for.

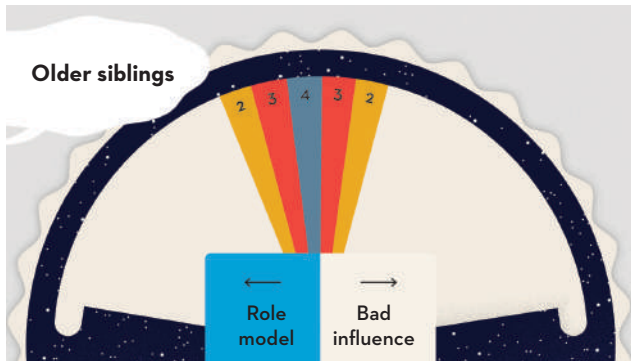
EXAMPLES OF REALLY GOOD CLUES (All of these are from players of our daily Twitter challenge @wavelengthdaily)



Clue by @MesaGameLab



Clue by @geminióice



Clue by @JohnduBois



Clue by @zannah

COOPERATIVE MODE

In this mode, everyone wins or loses together as a single team. It works really well with 2-5 players, but you can play at any size. The rules are mostly the same, except:

- To start, put 7 random wavelength cards in the card slot. When that deck runs out, the game is over. Then use the chart on the right to determine how well you did!
- Points works the same as usual, except **the center wedge is only worth 3 points—but you ALSO get to draw a bonus card to add to the deck**, adding an extra round to the game.
- Skip the left/right guessing phase.

<u>Score</u>	<u>How you did</u>
0 - 3	Are you sure it's plugged in?
4 - 6	Try turning it off and back on again
7 - 9	Blow into the bottom of the device
10 - 12	Not bad! Not great, but not bad
13 - 15	SO CLOSE
16 - 18	You won!
19 - 21	You're on the same...wavelength
22 - 24	Galaxy brain
25+	

CREDITS

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CLUE GIVING RULES

- Convey a single thought
- Don't invent something
- Be on topic
- No synonyms
- No numbers

CLUE GIVING SUGGESTIONS

- 5 words or less
- No qualifiers, like "very," "kind of," or "after three drinks"
- Use proper nouns, not "Someone who..." or "A place where..." or "A thing that..."

ROUND GUIDE

1. Psychic player prepares and gives a clue:
 - Close the screen
 - Draw one card and choose a side
 - Rotate the wheel until randomized
 - Open the screen
 - Give your clue
 - Close the screen
2. Psychic's team discusses and turns dial
3. Other team guesses LEFT or RIGHT
4. Psychic opens screen to reveal target
5. Scoring
6. Other team's turn (unless catchup rule is triggered)