

White elephant: the rules

A gift exchange for 6 to 30 people. Everyone brings one wrapped gift, about the same value.



How to play

- 1 Bring one gift**
Wrapped, no name on it, within the budget. Put it in the pile.
- 2 Draw numbers**
Everyone draws a numbered tag. Number 1 goes first.
- 3 Open or steal**
On your turn, open a wrapped gift for everyone to see, or steal one that's already open.
- 4 Robbed? Go again**
Open a new gift or steal a different one. No stealing back the gift just taken from you.
- 5 Three steals: frozen**
A gift stolen three times stays with its third new owner.
- 6 The final swap**
Number 1 may swap with any gift that isn't frozen. Then everyone takes their gift home.

A turn can be a chain. Each steal sends the robbed person to choose again; the turn ends when someone opens a wrapped gift.

Short on time? Freeze gifts after two steals, cap each turn at two steals and use a 60-second turn timer.

Our house rules

A gift freezes after

☐ 2 steals ☐ 3 steals ☐ Never

Stealing a gift straight back

☐ Not allowed ☐ Allowed

Budget

US\$ _____

Steals in one turn

☐ No limit ☐ 2 ☐ 3

Number 1's final swap

☐ Yes ☐ No

Theme (optional)

Gifts people fight over

Cosy

Fuzzy socks, a soft blanket, a good candle, a mug with hot chocolate

Fun

A card game, a 1,000-piece puzzle, a desk plant, a book you loved

Tasty

Hot sauce trio, fancy chocolate, a coffee sampler, local honey

Useful

A good pen and notebook, a phone stand, an ice scraper, a nice umbrella

Playing apart? Open a free online room at playatyours.com/white-elephant-game/ and everyone opens and steals on their own phone. Real gifts are sent separately.