

SET Junior OT Skill Connections

SET Junior is a game mainly played for fun and entertainment. The fact that it teaches, strengthens and exercises an abundance of skills makes it one of the best possible tools for Occupational Therapy. Because it is fundamentally a game people enjoy, SET Junior inspires an intrinsic motivation and desire to “play”. The repetition of playing again and again encourages progress and success.

SET Junior Strengthens

- Cognitive Development
- Visual Perception
- Physical Development
- Social Development
- Emotional Development



Ages: 3 to adult

Players: 2 to 4

About SET Junior

SET Junior’s two-sided board is designed to grow with the player. The first side of the board is a matching game. Players take turns matching the tiles in their hands to the squares on board. Each match must be identical so players must match the color, shape and number. Players earn point chips for placing the tile that completes a *SET*, so they start to recognize *SETs*.

A *SET* is 3 tiles that are either *all the same* OR *all different* in each individual feature.

Each tile has three features: **color** (red, green or purple), **shape** (oval, diamond or squiggle) and **number** (1, 2 or 3).

On the second side of the board, players race to find *SETs* from the 10 tiles on the board. The first player to see a *SET* says “*SET*” and takes it from the board. The tiles are replaced and the game continues. The player with the most *SETs* at the end of the game wins!

How SET Junior Develops Skills

Cognitive Development

- **Analytical Skills & Critical Thinking:** On side one players must analyze the three features on each card to make the correct match. On side two players learn to analyze combinations of tiles and take all three of their characteristics into account to find patterns and reveal *SETs*.
- **Attention:** Players willingly focus on the board to find matches on side one or to find *SETs* on side two. On side two, the player with the most *SETs* wins — encouraging increased attention and focus. Because SET Junior is fun to play, players repeatedly practice this skill, which is crucial for development.
- **Cognitive Flexibility:** Players look at three different characteristics to make matches on side one and find *SETs* on side two. They must take all three characteristics into account for each match and each *SET* they find. Their minds constantly transition between color, shape and number. On side two they must also transition between the different methods of finding *SETs*. These are just a few of those methods:
 - looking for a *SET* that is all the same color,
 - sequencing through the 10 tiles, two at a time to see if the third tile that completes the *SET* is on the table,
 - looking for a *SET* that is all different in all three features.
- **Left Brain Right Brain Connectivity:** The SET game involves learning a rule of logic, so players must invoke “left brain” logical thinking skills. To find *SETs*, players must examine the spatial array of tiles and locate the tiles that satisfy the rule – which exercises “right brain” spatial and intuitive thinking skills.

- **Logical Reasoning:** On side two, players practice their logical reasoning skills by applying the rule of SET to identify which tile combinations make a SET. For every two tiles, there is one and only one tile that completes the SET. Players must determine what the third tile is and if it's on the board.
- **Processing Speed:** Because there are no turns on side two, players must process information quickly to find a SET before the other players. Once they see a SET, they must respond appropriately by saying "SET", pointing it out and picking it up. Players are intrinsically motivated to think as fast as they can to win. Playing SET Junior improves players' processing speeds, which helps with learning, communication and social relationships.
- **Strategy:** On side one, there is some light strategy in the order tiles are played. Players learn that corner tiles can earn up to three points if played later in the game and center tiles can earn up to four points!
- **Working Memory:** When playing SET Junior, players must be able to recall the rules of the game, what constitutes a SET and the methods used to find SETs.

Visual Perception/Processing:

- **Visual Perception:** On side two, every time a SET is found, three more tiles are dealt creating a new assortment of visual information. The 10 tiles on the board are never the same. Players repeatedly exercise their ability to interpret, analyze and give meaning to every new group of tiles, strengthening their visual perception skills. SET Junior also exercises many building blocks of visual perception.
 - **Form Constancy:** Players exercise form constancy each time they complete a row/SET on side one or find a SET on side two. Players learn that a SET may be
 - all the same shape, but different in number and color or
 - all the same shape and all the same number, but different in color or
 - all the same shape and all the same color, but different in number.
 - **Spatial Reasoning:** On side one, players mentally match their tiles to the correct spaces on the board before physically placing them on the board. On side two, players practice spatial reasoning by mentally re-arranging or grouping the tiles on the board to find a SET without physically touching the tiles.
 - **Visual Discrimination:** To find SETs, players must be able to detect differences in three characteristics — color, shape and number.
 - **Visual-Motor Integration & Speed:** On side two, players must be able to perceive and process the visual information, say "SET!" and then physically move their hands to pick up the SET.

Physical Development:

- **Bilateral Coordination:** SET Junior helps with symmetrical and asymmetrical integration as well as crossing the midline.
 - **Symmetrical Integration:** Using both hands to hold the thick tile-like cards requires symmetrical integration.
 - **Asymmetrical Integration:** There are many opportunities for asymmetrical integration while playing SET Junior: holding the tiles in one hand while placing a tile on the board with the other hand, holding tiles with one hand while picking up a tile with the other, picking up point chips with one hand while holding tiles in the other hand.
 - **Crossing the Midline:** SET Junior constantly makes players practice this skill. On side one, players must cross their hand in front of themselves in order to place their tile down and make a correct match. On side two, because a SET can be anywhere in the 10 cards on the board, players cross the midline each time they pick up a SET. If a player needs to work on this skill have them first point out the SET using one hand and then use the other hand to pick up the tiles.
- **Fine Motor Skills:** Playing SET Junior helps strengthen *finger isolation*, *in-hand manipulation*, *pincer grasp* and increases overall *dexterity* and *motor planning*. These skills are consistently used when mixing (or shuffling) the tiles, drawing a new tile, placing or replacing tiles on the board, picking up point chips and grabbing SETs from the board.

- **Motor Planning:** On side two, the *SETs* on the board are constantly changing so the mind and body must perceive a *SET*, call out “*SET!*”, plan to grab the *SET* and finally take the correct 3 tiles from the board. Because side two is a racing game, there are no turns and no luck so the players must have their hands ready to grab *SETs* at any given moment.

Social Development

- **Social Skills:** Playing SET Junior provides multiple opportunities for learning and exercising proper social skills such as: ***verbal and non-verbal communication; turn-taking; following rules; listening; using appropriate vocal volumes, words and touch; and coping with losing and proper behavior when winning.***
- **Social Balance – Self-Control:** Side two of SET Junior helps balance some common social differences like overly introverted people and overly extroverted people. On side two, players must first say “*SET*” (loud enough that everyone can hear) before they can take the *SET*, encouraging shyer players to speak up and be heard. But if a player says “*SET*” and doesn’t have one, he or she loses a point, this immediate consequence helps boisterous players think before acting and increases their self-control.

Emotional Development

- **Confidence:** Each time a player finds or completes a *SET*, his or her confidence grows. As players repeatedly play SET Junior their cognitive, physical, social and emotional skills continually develop increasing their overall self-confidence.
- **Growth Mindset:** Over time each player’s ability to find *SETs* increases dramatically. Excelling at something that was once difficult reinforces a growth mindset.
- **Intrinsic Motivation:** Playing SET Junior is fun so players are intrinsically motivated to play again and again. This repetition is key to developing skills. Each time a player finds or completes a *SET* he or she feels a sense of accomplishment, which creates an urge to find more. The reward of receiving a point chip for completing or finding a *SET* reinforces the intrinsic motivation.
- **Mood Enhancement:** SET Junior offers players a way to maintain or improve essential skills in a fun and positive way. The enjoyment of playing and the feeling of success every time a *SET* is completed or found naturally enhance moods. It’s purposeful play that impacts each player’s environment and mindset in a very positive way.
- **Self-Esteem:** Playing SET Junior increases players’ skills and abilities, which builds their confidence, improving their overall self-esteem. A strong, positive self-esteem directly relates to players’ abilities to think and cope with challenges throughout their lives. It is the foundation of success and happiness.