

As a hobby board gamer, I'm sure you'd love to avoid a holiday gathering full of the same old Parker Brothers and Milton Bradley games and inject a little newness into the tradition. But when the whole family gets together for the holidays, it's important to read the room and save some of the more advanced board games for your regular game night. Here's a list of fun, family-friendly, and most importantly, easy-to-learn board games.

For this list, I also recommend against using advanced or expansion versions and stick to the basics so you won't confuse Grandma or little Billy.

Camel Up

This recent family game is really basic in concept. You're at a camel race in the desert and you're betting on which camel will win. You can also manipulate the race to change up the results and score points. Just tell them it's like horse-racing, but a board game.

King of Tokyo

This is a real winner if your family likes King Kong or Godzilla movies. You pick a monster and through a series of dice rolls and bonus cards try to destroy the other monsters. Just tell them it's Yahtzee with monsters.

Machi Koro

This basic dice and card game allows players to roll the dice and buy city cards. Then you try to build the biggest city. Just tell them it's like Monopoly, but without the four hour playing time and fights (hopefully).

Tsuro

This strategy game is for the more intellectual family, but is still simple enough for older kids to play. Players lay down tiles and move their game piece and try to stay on the board and not run into other players. Just tell them it's like chess, but with tiles and a group can play.

Ticket to Ride

This is the easiest choice for a family gathering. This game is so easy to learn, anyone who doesn't own it yet will likely ask for it for Christmas. Players build a railroad line across America. It's strategic, educational for the kids, and still fun for adults. Just tell them it's like Ticket to Ride; how have they not heard about it yet?

There are more family-friendly games out there you can check out, such as Hanabi and Forbidden Island. Just remember to keep it simple and you might be the guy who made the party memorable; not the guy who brought it to a screeching halt (I've been both).