Welcome to Improvisation
Watch a welcome video from Sherie Rene Scott, an Award Winning Writer, Actress, and Singer.

What is Improvisation?
In theater, improv is the act or art of speaking or performing without practicing or preparing ahead of time.

In other words, there is no script. You use your imagination and sometimes a prompts to create improvised scenes! Live in the moment and respond to what is said or done. Now that you know what improvisation is, we are ready to learn the rules of improv and start creating some theater!

What are the rules of improvisation?

The Five Rules of Improvisation

There are a few simple rules to follow when playing improv games.

- **Rule #1- AGREE.** Always agree and SAY YES! When you're improvising, saying “YES” means to agree (go along with) with whatever your partner has offered or created. If we deny or say “NO” … the scene ends (“dies”).

- **Rule #2- BUILD.** Always add onto whatever your partner has created. This is known as “Yes...and..”.
  - To learn more about “Yes and...” Watch this video With Tina Fey! She will show you!
  - Link: [https://youtu.be/NmafmRleet0](https://youtu.be/NmafmRleet0)

- **Rule #3: Make statements, not QUESTIONS.** If your partner asks you a question like “Where are we?” answer with a statement “It appears we are on Mars.” Then your partner might say “We need to find their leader!” etc. Add! If you just ask questions, your partner has to do all the imagining work.

- **Rule #4: NO MISTAKES!** There are no mistakes just opportunities to create!
Rule #5: IMAGINE! Use your imagination and have fun!

Let’s Play!

Game #1: “Yes, and…”

How to Play “Yes, and…”
1. Person 1 comes up with a question. The wackier the better!:
   Example: “Are you watering your rug?”

2. Person 2 responds by with “Yes,…..AND…” by adding to what the Person 1 created:
   Example: “Yes I am. Watering the rug, it helps it to grow. Would you like to try it?”

3. The 1st person responds with “Yes…and…” adding something to which his/her partner can respond:
   Example: “Yes I would thank you-and do you think it would work for hair?”

4. REPEAT and keep adding levels to build on the scene:
   Example: “Yes I do, I saw it work on TV and they always tell the truth in commercials, right?”

That is the game! Now you try it. Remember always say “YES” or the scene will fail.

Watch this video to see two people playing the game “Yes, And…”. 

Game #2: The Question Game

How to play The Question Game:
In this game the players are given a setting (a physical place like a restaurant) by the other players in the room. The players then have to create a scene can only ask each other questions. Here’s how you play it!
1. Player 1 asks the other player a question
   Example: “Waiter, why haven’t you brought me my food yet?”

2. The 2nd player responds with a question.
   Example: “Did I take your order?”

3. The 1st player responds back with a question.
   Example: “Don’t you recognize me?”
4. The game continues this way until 1 player responds with either a statement or a denial. Example: “No.” (denial) or “I’m having some problems with my memory.” (statement)

When this happens another player comes in and takes the place of the player who made a denial or statement and continues the scene.

To watch actors playing this game, watch an episode of the comedy improv show “Whose Line is it Anyway?”.

**Game #3: What are you trying to say?**

**How to play “What are you trying to say?”:**

1. Give two people/players a “quality” or a personality trait.
   Examples: Very nervous, Quick tempered, Sleepy, Excitable, judgmental, hypochondriac, etc.
2. Give the players a setting or place where they are:
   Examples: Clothing store, airplane, laundromat, fitting area, restaurant, movie theater, school classroom, etc.
3. The players create a scene figuring out their relationship by the setting (i.e. salesperson & customer).
   Start a scene in the setting AND when the feel it is the right moment, one says the phrase “What are you trying to say?” and overreacts to what the other person said — blowing it up with humor!
4. The other player calmly responds and the scene continues until he/she finds a moment to say “What are you trying to say?”

To watch actors playing this game, watch an episode of the comedy improv show “Whose Line is it Anyway?”.

**Game #3: The Infomercial**

**How to play “The Infomercial”:**

1. Select 2 players

2. Get a bag and fill it with 3-5 very different and random items (a banana, comb, fork, broken toy, pot lid, ribbon, etc...). These items should just be things you have at home. Note: The players in this scene cannot see or know what’s in the bag!!!

3. Come up with a common problem that people have:
   Example: Bad breath, hair loss, over-exhaustion, sloppy, clumsy, etc.
OR

An annoying behavior that people have that you’d like to stop

Example: popping gum, talking too much, complaining, etc.

4. The 2 players create an “INFOMERCIAL” for a product that makes the problem go away!

THE CATCH!?!: They must use EVERYTHING in the bag in their infomercial --demonstrating how they work!

If you want to see this game in action, watch “Whose Line is it Anyway?”

Want to Learn More?

Improv can be played anytime and anywhere!

The only thing you need to play the game is your imagination!

If you enjoyed what you learned today, here are some resources and ideas for you.

KEEP IMPROVISING & SHARE THE FUN!

Additional Resources:

1. Theaterfolk: Drama games for collaboration
   Description: This cite will give a a variety of improv games with clear instructions of how to play each game.

2. The Odyssey Online
   Description: This online publication has an article with myriad Improv games that can be played with a family large or small.

3. If you enjoy watching people do improv, you can watch full seasons of “Whose Line Is It Anyway?” on YouTube.

Idea: Film you infomercials, send them to a friend or family and challenge them to do the same!