



# OWL – One Word Lyric

Game Rulebook (Expanded Edition)

---

## GAME OVERVIEW

**OWL – One Word Lyric** is a team-based music guessing game that challenges players to identify songs using only **vocally performed lyric fragments**, revealed one word at a time.

On each turn, one player serves as the **Presenter**, who privately reviews a Lyric Card containing five randomly selected words from a song. Each word is labeled by its general song section (Verse, Bridge, Hook, or Chorus) to help the Presenter recognize the song’s structure and perform it appropriately.

The Presenter delivers the lyric **one word at a time**, using only vocal expression—such as singing, humming, or whistling—while their teammate, the **Guesser**, attempts to correctly identify **both the song title and artist** as quickly as possible.

Teams earn more points for earlier correct guesses and may optionally wager on the level at which their partner will succeed for bonus points. Strategic risk-taking, musical intuition, and teamwork are essential to victory.

The team with the highest total score at the end of the game wins.

---

## PLAYERS & TEAMS

- **Players:** 4–16
- **Teams:** 2–8 teams of two players
- **Recommended Age:** 12+

Each team consists of:

- **Presenter** – performs the lyric using vocal expression
- **Guesser** – attempts to identify the song and artist

Teams may switch roles between rounds if desired.

---

## OBJECTIVE

Accumulate the highest total score by:

- Correctly guessing songs as early as possible
- Successfully predicting (wagering) the level at which your partner will guess
- Making smart decisions about when to perform, wager, or skip

Strategic considerations include:

- Confidence in early-level performances
  - Risk vs. reward when placing wagers
  - Knowing when skipping a card is the better option
- 

## SETUP

1. Shuffle all Lyric Cards thoroughly and place them face down in a central draw pile.
  2. Place the score notepad where all players can see it, or use the **OWL Play Live** companion app.
  3. Divide players into teams of two.
  4. Each team selects a Presenter for the first round.
  5. Randomly choose a team to take the first turn.
- 

## HOW TO PLAY

### Turn Structure

On a team's turn:

1. The Presenter draws the top Lyric Card and keeps it hidden from their teammate.
2. Each card contains **five lyric levels**, each displaying **one word** from the same song.
  - Each word is marked with its general song section:
    - **V** = Verse
    - **B** = Bridge
    - **H** = Hook
    - **C** = Chorus
  - These indicators are intended only to help the Presenter recognize and perform the lyric naturally.

3. *(Optional)* Before performing, the Presenter may make a **silent wager** predicting the level on which their partner will guess the song.
  4. The Presenter begins performing at **Level 1**, using only vocal expression.
  5. The Guesser attempts to identify the **song title and artist** within the time limit.
- 

## Vocal Performance Rules

### The Presenter MAY:

- Sing
- Hum
- Whistle
- Use pitch, rhythm, tempo, inflection, or vibrato

### The Presenter MAY NOT:

- Use hand gestures or body language
- Speak, spell, or add words
- Provide hints, confirmations, or clues

Only the **exact words printed on the Lyric Card** may be vocally expressed.

---

## Lyric Levels & Timing

- Each Lyric Card has **five levels**, numbered 1 through 5.
- Each level allows **up to 10 seconds** for a guess.
- Play always begins at **Level 1**.

If the song is not guessed:

- Play advances to the next level
- Previously revealed levels may be repeated if requested

The turn ends when:

- The song is correctly guessed, or
  - All five levels are attempted without a correct guess
-

# SCORING SUMMARY

## Regular Scoring (No Wager)

If no wager is made, score points based on the level on which the song is guessed:

- Level 1 → **5 points**
  - Level 2 → **4 points**
  - Level 3 → **3 points**
  - Level 4 → **2 points**
  - Level 5 → **1 point**
- 

## OPTIONAL WAGER (LEVELS 1–3 ONLY)

Before performing, the Presenter may place a **silent wager** predicting the level on which their partner will correctly guess the song.

### Wager Rules

- Wagers may only be placed on **Levels 1, 2, or 3**
  - The Presenter signals the wager by:
    - Pointing to the level on the card, or
    - Selecting the level in the companion app
  - Opposing teams must be able to see the wager
  - The Guesser must **not** be informed of the wager
- 

## Bonus Scoring (Correct Wager)

If the wager is **exactly correct**, bonus points replace regular scoring:

- **Level 1** → 10 points
  - **Level 2** → 8 points
  - **Level 3** → 6 points
- 

## Incorrect Wager (No Points)

If a wager is made and the song is guessed on **any other level**, the team scores:

- **0 points for the turn**

No regular points are awarded in this case.

---

### **Wager Example**

- Wager placed on **Level 2**
  - Song guessed on Level 2 → **8 points**
  - Song guessed on Levels 1, 3, 4, or 5 → **0 points**
- 

## **SKIPPING A CARD**

At any time during their turn, the Presenter may skip the current Lyric Card if they:

- Do not recognize the song
- Are uncomfortable performing it
- Prefer to take a chance on a new card

### **When Skipping:**

1. Place the skipped card face up in a separate pile.
  2. Draw a new Lyric Card immediately.
  3. Apply a **-1 point penalty** to the team's score.
- 

## **NO-WAGER MODE**

For casual, classroom, or introductory play, the wager system may be removed.

### **In No-Wager Mode:**

- Only regular scoring applies
- No wagers or bonus points
- Skipping still results in a -1 point penalty

### **Ideal for:**

- Ages 12+

- Classrooms
  - Casual group play
- 

## END OF THE GAME

The game ends when:

- An agreed-upon number of rounds is completed, or
- The Lyric Card deck is exhausted

### Final Scoring:

1. Total all points earned by each team
  2. Subtract skipped-card penalties
  3. The team with the highest score wins
- 

## FINAL NOTE

**OWL – One Word Lyric** rewards creativity, musical intuition, and smart risk-taking.

Every round plays differently, and every word matters. Perform boldly, guess quickly, and outplay your opponents—**one word at a time.**

### Legal Disclaimer

#### Performance Intent Notice

OWL – One Word Lyric is a music-inspired guessing game. Lyric fragments are presented in a transformative, limited format and are intended solely to facilitate gameplay. Vocal performances are expressive interpretations by players and

are not intended to reproduce or substitute for original musical works. No audio recordings are provided, stored, or transmitted as part of the game.