



The SESK Party Game

STUFF EVERY BIRD OWNER SHOULD KNOW

How to play (30 seconds)

1. The reader reads a card and its three answers out loud.
2. Everyone says "One, two, three, Goldilocks!" and holds up 1, 2, or 3 fingers.
3. The reader flips the card and reads the answer and the Why.
4. Everyone who was right takes a point.
5. The reader reads the joke with a straight face. Anyone laughs or groans? The reader takes a point. Nobody got it right? The reader takes a point.
6. Pass the deck left. Most points when the points run out wins.

What you need

These cards and the point tokens on the last two pages. No tokens? Use coins, buttons, pebbles, or marshmallows. 3 to 10 players, ages 8 and up.

Expert rule: Bet It

Before the reader flips the card, you may put one of your points on your answer. Right: take your normal point plus one extra. Wrong: your bet goes back to the pile. That's it.

Printing

Print single-sided, on cardstock if you have it. Cut on the dashed lines. Each card is a 3.5 x 5 inch index card. The answer half is upside down on purpose, so the table can't peek. Cards 1 to 50 of 115. More cards and the free daily online game at sesk.info. Built 2026-10-12.

BIRDS



About how long does a pet budgie (parakeet) usually live?

- A** About 5 to 10 years
- B** About 1 to 2 years
- C** About 40 to 60 years

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

#7665

SESK.INFO

STRAIGHT FACE
Why did the budgie go to the candy store? To get a little tweet.

A About 5 to 10 years
WHY Merck lists the budgie's average lifespan as 5 to 10 years. A budgie you get in 3rd grade could still be with you in high school.

BIRDS



About how long can a pet cockatiel live?

- A** Up to about 3 years
- B** Up to about 20 years
- C** Up to about 80 years

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

#7666

SESK.INFO

STRAIGHT FACE
Why did the cockatiel sit on the clock? It wanted to be on time.

B Up to about 20 years
WHY Merck lists cockatiels as living up to 20 years. Even this smaller parrot can require care for many years, so plan for the long haul.

BIRDS



Large parrot species may live for more than how many years?

- A** About 8 years
- B** About 18 years
- C** More than 70 years

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

#7667

SESK.INFO

STRAIGHT FACE
What do you call a parrot that has lived a very long time? A real old-timer with feathers.

C More than 70 years
WHY The University of Illinois veterinary school says large parrot species may live more than 70 years. Families should plan carefully before making such a long commitment.

BIRDS



What average lifespan does Merck give for Amazon parrots?

- A** 40 to 50 years
- B** 5 to 10 years
- C** 10 to 15 years

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

#7668

SESK.INFO

STRAIGHT FACE
What is a parrot's favorite game? Hide and speak.

A 40 to 50 years
WHY Merck lists Amazon parrots at 40 to 50 years. They are great talkers and singers, but loud, and often bond closely to one person.

BIRDS



Why do African grey parrots often develop behavior problems?

- A** They need a special liquid diet
- B** They are very smart and need lots of attention
- C** They must live outdoors

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

#7669

SESK.INFO

STRAIGHT FACE
What do you get when you cross a parrot with a centipede? A walkie-talkie.

B They are very smart and need lots of attention
WHY Merck calls African greys the most intelligent parrots and says they often have behavior problems. They need a lot of time and attention every day.

BIRDS



Which of these birds does Merck say is NOT for inexperienced owners?

- A** Budgie
- B** Canary
- C** Cockatoo

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

#7670

SESK.INFO

STRAIGHT FACE
Why did the cockatoo sit on the TV remote? It wanted to be in control.

C Cockatoo
WHY Merck says cockatoos are very loud when they scream, may demand lots of handling and attention, and are not for inexperienced owners. That warning does not appear for the other two choices.

BIRDS



Why can lots of cuddling be a problem for cockatoos?

- A** It can add to hormonal behavior problems
- B** It always makes them calmer
- C** It teaches them to talk sooner

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

#7671

SESK.INFO

STRAIGHT FACE
Why did the cockatoo bring a pillow? It wanted a hug-and-snooze.

A It can add to hormonal behavior problems
WHY Merck says cockatoos may demand a lot of handling, cuddling and attention, and this can add to hormonal behavior problems. Loving a cockatoo means more than snuggling it.

BIRDS



Which bird does Merck call suitable for apartment living because it is usually not loud?

- A** Macaw
- B** Budgie
- C** Sun conure

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

#7672

SESK.INFO

STRAIGHT FACE
What do budgies watch on TV? The feather forecast.

B Budgie
WHY Merck says budgies suit apartments because they are not usually loud, and they can learn to talk. Macaws and big conures have very loud screams.

BIRDS



Why can a macaw cause trouble with neighbors?

- A** Its cage must be kept outdoors
- B** It attracts wild birds to the property
- C** Its scream is very loud

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

#7673

SESK.INFO

STRAIGHT FACE
What do you call a macaw that yells at the TV? A loud-speaker.

C Its scream is very loud
WHY Merck says macaws, the largest parrots, have a very loud screaming voice that can irritate neighbors. They also need a lot of exercise, time and attention.

BIRDS



Larger conures, like sun and jenday conures, are known for what?

- A** A piercing scream
- B** A soft cooing voice
- C** Strong talking ability

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

#7674

SESK.INFO

STRAIGHT FACE
Why was the sun conure always on time? It got up with the sun.

A A piercing scream
WHY Merck says larger conures are active and beautifully colored, but their voice is piercing when they scream, and they are not known for talking. Small conures are relatively quiet.

BIRDS



African greys may know the most words of any parrot, but often won't talk when?

- A** In the morning
- B** In front of strangers
- C** When music is playing

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

#7675

SESK.INFO

STRAIGHT FACE
What do you get if you cross a parrot and a shark? A bird that talks your ear off.

B In front of strangers
WHY Merck says African greys are excellent mimics that may know the most words, but they do not like to talk in front of strangers. Don't expect a show for your friends.

BIRDS



Which birds are happy singing in their cage and don't enjoy being held?

- A** Cockatoos and African greys
- B** Macaws and Amazons
- C** Canaries and finches

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

#7676

SESK.INFO

STRAIGHT FACE
What kind of music do canaries like? Anything with a good tweet

C Canaries and finches
WHY Merck says canaries and finches do not enjoy being held and are happy singing in their cages. This describes interaction with people, not whether finches should have other finches nearby.

BIRDS



Large parrots like cockatoos and African greys need interaction with people how often?

- A** Every day
- B** About once a week
- C** Only on weekends

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

#7677

SESK.INFO

STRAIGHT FACE
Why did the parrot bring a calendar? It wanted to book more play dates.

A Every day
WHY Merck says larger parrots want a lot of attention and need to interact with people every day. Think about how much time you really have before picking one.

BIRDS



A lonely, bored pet bird may start doing what?

- A** Grooming normally after a bath
- B** Pulling out its own feathers
- C** Singing more during daylight

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

#7678

SESK.INFO

STRAIGHT FACE
What do birds say on Halloween? Trick or tweet!

B Pulling out its own feathers
WHY Merck says birds are social and get lonely. Without enough attention and activity they can start biting, screaming or pulling out their feathers. Boredom is a big reason.

BIRDS



What can result from keeping a solitary bird in a small cage with little exercise?

- A** Better fitness and fewer behavior problems
- B** No effect if food and water are supplied
- C** Physical and psychological harm

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

#7679

SESK.INFO

STRAIGHT FACE
Why did the parrot join a flock? It wanted to be part of the in-crowd.

C Physical and psychological harm
WHY Merck says keeping a solitary bird in a small indoor cage with little exercise has physical and psychological consequences. A proper cage also needs enrichment and room to move.

BIRDS



What safety rule applies when a bird exercises outside its cage?

- A** Keep it safe and supervised
- B** Leave it alone to explore
- C** Open a window for fresh air

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

#7680

SESK.INFO

STRAIGHT FACE
Why did the parrot love recess? It finally got some wing time.

A Keep it safe and supervised
WHY Merck says birds should leave their cages for exercise, but they must be safe and supervised. Check the room for hazards before opening the cage.

BIRDS



How big should a bird's cage be, at the very least?

- A** Just as wide as its body
- B** 1.5 times its wingspan in every direction
- C** Exactly as tall as its tail

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

#7681

SESK.INFO

STRAIGHT FACE
Why did the bird get a bigger cage? It needed more tweet-ing room.

B 1.5 times its wingspan in every direction
WHY Merck says the cage should be at least one and a half times the bird's wingspan in all directions so it can stretch. Small cages stress birds.

BIRDS



What cage shape do most birds prefer?

- A** Round
- B** Tall, narrow tube
- C** Rectangular

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

#7682

SESK.INFO

STRAIGHT FACE
What do you call a bird in winter? A brird.

C Rectangular
WHY Merck says most birds prefer rectangular cages to round ones because they like having corners to sit in. A pretty round cage is not the best pick.

BIRDS



What bar spacing does Merck recommend for a budgie or cockatiel cage?

- A** 0.5 inch
- B** 1.5 inches
- C** 3 inches

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

#7683

SESK.INFO

STRAIGHT FACE
What did the budgie say about its new cage? This place is bar none!

A 0.5 inch
WHY Merck's table gives 0.5 inch bar spacing for budgies, cockatiels, lovebirds and parrotlets. Bigger birds get wider spacing.

BIRDS



Macaws and large cockatoos need cage bars spaced about how far apart?

- A** About 0.5 inch
- B** About 1.5 inches
- C** About 1 inch

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

#7684

SESK.INFO

STRAIGHT FACE
Why did the macaw need such a big cage? It had a lot of wingspan to explain.

B About 1.5 inches
WHY Merck lists 1.5 inch bar spacing for macaws and large cockatoos. Its minimum cage size for these birds is 48 by 36 by 66 inches.

BIRDS



When buying a cage, what does Merck advise owners to get?

- A** The smallest cage, so the bird feels cozy
- B** A round cage just bigger than the bird
- C** The largest cage they can fit and afford

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

#7685

SESK.INFO

STRAIGHT FACE
Why did the parrot hire a real estate agent? It wanted a bigger perch-ase.

C **WHY** The largest cage they can fit and afford
Merck advises buying the largest cage possible while following minimum sizes. It must fit toys, foraging, perches and room to move and exercise.

BIRDS



How does a bird's size affect the cage it needs?

- A** A bigger bird needs a bigger cage
- B** Bird size does not affect cage size
- C** A bigger bird needs a smaller cage

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

#7686

SESK.INFO

STRAIGHT FACE
What did the bird say when its cage broke? Cheep! cheep!

A **WHY** A bigger bird needs a bigger cage
Merck tells buyers to consider the bird's size because it affects the cage size. It also says to consider the cost, time and effort needed to keep the bird healthy.

BIRDS



How often does Merck say to take a pet bird to the vet?

- A** Only after signs of illness
- B** At least once a year
- C** Once every five years

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

#7687

SESK.INFO

STRAIGHT FACE
Why did the parrot mark the calendar? Its yearly checkup was coming.

B **WHY** At least once a year
Merck says to feed good food, keep the cage clean and take the bird to the vet at least once a year. Vet visits are part of the true cost of a bird.

BIRDS



When should a new bird first see an avian (bird) vet, per CDC?

- A** Only after its first birthday
- B** Never, if it looks healthy
- C** Within a few days of getting it

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

#7688

SESK.INFO

STRAIGHT FACE
Why did the new bird visit the vet? To start on the right wing.

C **WHY** Within a few days of getting it
CDC says to take a new bird to an avian vet within a few days of purchase or adoption. The vet performs a health visit and gives care advice.

BIRDS



Where should a pet bird come from?

- A** Raised in captivity
- B** Caught from the wild
- C** Either, it makes no difference

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

#7689

SESK.INFO

STRAIGHT FACE
Why did the bird stay home? It was a little cage-y about going out.

A **Why** Raised in captivity
Merck says to make sure the bird was raised in captivity and not taken from the wild. Wild birds can be sick and not as tame as captive-raised birds.

BIRDS



What should make you careful when buying a bird?

- A** A clean cage with fresh water
- B** A very low price and no proof of origin
- C** A bright, alert bird

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

#7690

SESK.INFO

STRAIGHT FACE
Why was the bird so cheap? It only said cheep.

B **Why** A very low price and no proof of origin
Merck warns buyers to be careful when someone quotes a very low price and to ask for proof of the bird's origin. Price alone does not prove that a bird is healthy or legally sourced.

BIRDS



What should a good bird seller agree to?

- A** Never let a vet examine it
- B** Sell it only without paperwork
- C** Take it back and refund you if it's not healthy

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

#7691

SESK.INFO

STRAIGHT FACE
What did the parrot say to the duck? Put it on my bill.

C **Why** Take it back and refund you if it's not healthy
Merck says the seller should agree to take the bird back and return your money if it isn't healthy, and you should get written proof of its health.

BIRDS



When choosing a bird, which is a warning sign it may be sick?

- A** Sitting puffed up and huddled
- B** Bright, alert and clear-eyed
- C** Active and moving around

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

#7692

SESK.INFO

STRAIGHT FACE
What is an owl's favorite subject? Owl-gebra.

A **Why** Sitting puffed up and huddled
Merck says healthy birds are bright and alert with clear eyes and are active. Birds huddled together or puffing up their feathers may be sick.

BIRDS



Most pet birds today wear a closed leg band. When is it put on?

- A** When it is fully grown
- B** When the bird is a chick
- C** At import quarantine after purchase

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

#7693

SESK.INFO

STRAIGHT FACE
What's a bird's favorite cookie? Chocolate chip.

B **When the bird is a chick**
WHY Merck says most birds are now banded with closed bands as chicks for ID. Decades ago, imported wild parrots got open steel bands at quarantine.

BIRDS



Most pet parrots in the US today are what?

- A** Caught from the wild
- B** Recently imported from overseas
- C** Captive-bred

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

#7694

SESK.INFO

STRAIGHT FACE
Why did the owl invite friends over? It didn't want to be owl by itself.

C **Captive-bred**
WHY Merck says mass importing of wild-caught parrots was curtailed in the mid-1980s, and today's pet birds are mainly captive-bred parrots.

BIRDS



What does the US Wild Bird Conservation Act do?

- A** Limits imports of exotic wild birds
- B** Bans owning any pet bird
- C** Requires every bird to be microchipped

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

#7695

SESK.INFO

STRAIGHT FACE
Why don't birds need passports to fly south? They use their wing-pass.

A **Limits imports of exotic wild birds**
WHY The Act requires that wild bird trade involving the US be sustainable and good for the species, and limits or bans imports of exotic birds when it is not.

BIRDS



After living abroad at least a year, how many exotic pet birds may a person import in a year?

- A** Up to twenty
- B** No more than two
- C** Any number, no limit

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

#7696

SESK.INFO

STRAIGHT FACE
Why did the parrot pack light? It only had a carry-on bag.

B **No more than two**
WHY Federal rules say no individual may import more than two exotic birds as pets in any year. The owner must have lived outside the US for at least a year.

BIRDS



Does the Wild Bird Conservation Act cover exotic bird feathers too?

- A** No, only live birds count
- B** Only eggs are covered
- C** Yes, feathers and other parts are covered

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

#7697

SESK.INFO

STRAIGHT FACE
Why did the bird bring a feather to court? It was evidence of a tickle.

C Yes, feathers and other parts are covered
WHY A 2023 FWS notice says bird parts such as feathers, wings and skeletons are within the Act. Its rules apply to parts as well as whole birds.

BIRDS



What is CITES?

- A** A global treaty on wild animal and plant trade
- B** A US law covering native migratory birds
- C** A veterinary standard for captive birds

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

#7698

SESK.INFO

STRAIGHT FACE
What kind of bird can write? A pen-guin.

A A global treaty on wild animal and plant trade
WHY FWS says CITES is a global treaty to make sure international trade in wild plants and animals is legal, traceable and sustainable. Many parrots are listed.

BIRDS



A bird species on CITES Appendix I is what?

- A** Common and freely traded
- B** Threatened with extinction, trade only in exceptional cases
- C** Listed by one country only

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

#7699

SESK.INFO

STRAIGHT FACE
Why did the rare parrot hire a bodyguard? It was on the protected list.

B Threatened with extinction, trade only in exceptional cases
WHY US rules say Appendix I species are threatened with extinction and may be affected by trade. Trade in them can happen only in exceptional circumstances.

BIRDS



In 2016, African grey parrots got what new protection?

- A** Removed from CITES
- B** Kept on CITES Appendix II
- C** Moved to CITES Appendix I

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

#7700

SESK.INFO

STRAIGHT FACE
What do you call a gray parrot in the rain? A wet grey-t.

C Moved to CITES Appendix I
WHY FWS reported that CITES moved African greys to Appendix I, which prohibits international commercial trade. Over 25 years, more than 1.5 million had been taken from the wild.

BIRDS



Can you catch a protected native songbird to keep as a pet?

- A** No, not without federal authorization
- B** Yes, if the bird is common locally
- C** Yes, if it is kept for under a year

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

#7701

SESK.INFO

STRAIGHT FACE
Why don't birds use social media? They already tweet

A No, not without federal authorization
WHY The Migratory Bird Treaty Act prohibits killing, capturing, selling, trading or transporting protected migratory birds without US Fish and Wildlife Service permission.

BIRDS



Since a 2004 change, which birds may the Migratory Bird Treaty Act protect?

- A** All native and introduced birds
- B** Listed native migratory species
- C** Only federally endangered birds

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

#7702

SESK.INFO

STRAIGHT FACE
What bird is with you at every meal? A swallow.

B Listed native migratory species
WHY The 2004 Migratory Bird Treaty Reform Act says the law applies only to bird species native to the US and its territories. Introduced species are listed as not protected by it.

BIRDS



The Migratory Bird Treaty Act first carried out a 1916 treaty with which country?

- A** France
- B** Australia
- C** Canada

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

#7703

SESK.INFO

STRAIGHT FACE
Why did the goose cross the border? It was on a migration vacation.

C Canada
WHY FWS says the 1918 Act carries out four treaties: Canada in 1916, Mexico in 1936, Japan in 1972 and Russia in 1976. Birds cross borders, so protection does too.

BIRDS



Which pet parrot cannot legally be kept as a pet in California?

- A** Quaker (monk) parakeet
- B** Budgie
- C** Cockatiel

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

#7704

SESK.INFO

STRAIGHT FACE
Why did the bird get in trouble at school? It was caught tweeting on a test.

A Quaker (monk) parakeet
WHY California lists the Quaker, or monk, parakeet as a restricted species. State wildlife officials say permits are not issued to keep restricted wild animals as pets.

BIRDS



Before getting a bird, CDC says to check which laws?

- A** Only international treaties
- B** State, local and property laws
- C** No laws apply to pet birds

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

#7705

SESK.INFO

STRAIGHT FACE
Why did the parrot read the lease? It wanted to know if it could have a perch-ty.

B State, local and property laws
WHY CDC says to check state, local and property laws before adopting or buying a pet bird. In most states, local or property rules can add limits, so check the rules where you live.

BIRDS



Why is giving away a large parrot so hard on the bird?

- A** It needs a tropical climate
- B** It recognizes only one cage
- C** It bonds strongly and has trouble adjusting

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

#7706

SESK.INFO

STRAIGHT FACE
Why did the parrot hug its owner? It was a true bird of a feather.

C It bonds strongly and has trouble adjusting
WHY Merck says larger parrots can live 20 to 50 years and bond strongly to owners, which makes it hard for them to adjust if they change homes. Pick a bird you can keep.

BIRDS



Why are lorries and lorikeets extra messy pets?

- A** They need nectar food that spoils quickly
- B** They crack large nuts into shells
- C** They bathe several times each day

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

#7707

SESK.INFO

STRAIGHT FACE
Why was the lorikeet so sweet? It ate nectar for breakfast.

A They need nectar food that spoils quickly
WHY Merck says lorries and lorikeets need a special liquid diet, which is messy. Lorikeets eat nectar in the wild, and prepared nectar can spoil quickly, so it must be changed often.

BIRDS



What diet balance does Merck recommend for most budgies and cockatiels?

- A** 40 to 50% pellets, plus measured seed and produce
- B** All seeds and nuts
- C** Mostly fruit with a few pellets

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

#7708

SESK.INFO

STRAIGHT FACE
Why did the budgie read the menu? It wanted a well-rounded tweet.

A 40 to 50% pellets, plus measured seed and produce
WHY Merck recommends 40 to 50% pellets, 30 to 40% seed mix, 10 to 15% vegetables and 5 to 10% fruit for most small birds. This is not a seed-only menu.

BIRDS



What should form most of a larger parrot's diet?

- A** Sunflower seeds
- B** Pellets
- C** Fresh fruit

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

#7709

SESK.INFO

STRAIGHT FACE
Why did the parrot choose pellets? It wanted a square meal in round bites.

B Pellets
WHY Merck recommends 80% pellets for larger parrots, with smaller portions of vegetables and fruit. Seeds and nuts are occasional extras, not the main food.

BIRDS



For a larger parrot, when are seeds and nuts best offered?

- A** As the only breakfast
- B** In an always-full bowl
- C** Occasionally as treats or training rewards

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

#7710

SESK.INFO

STRAIGHT FACE
Why did the parrot earn a seed? Its training was going tweet-tweet-fully.

C Occasionally as treats or training rewards
WHY Seeds and nuts are tasty and useful as rewards, but they should not replace a balanced diet. Merck recommends offering them occasionally for larger parrots.

BIRDS



Why can a mixed bowl of pellets and seeds still leave a bird underfed?

- A** It can select seeds and leave balanced food
- B** Pellets dissolve all seeds
- C** Vegetables remove every vitamin

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

#7711

SESK.INFO

STRAIGHT FACE
Why did the parrot sort dinner? It had a pecking order.

A It can select seeds and leave balanced food
WHY A bird can sort through a mixture and eat only preferred pieces. Merck says this selective eating can lead to inadequate nutrient intake even when pellets are present.

BIRDS



What is a major problem with a traditional seed-only bird diet?

- A** It contains too much water
- B** It is high in fat and nutrient-poor
- C** It always has too much calcium

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

#7712

SESK.INFO

STRAIGHT FACE
Why did the seed fail nutrition class? It could not balance the course load.

B It is high in fat and nutrient-poor
WHY Merck says seed mixes are high in fat and deficient in calcium, vitamin A and other nutrients. A full seed bowl does not mean a complete diet.

BIRDS



How should a bird usually be changed from seeds to pellets?

- A** Remove all food for a day
- B** Replace seeds suddenly
- C** Introduce pellets gradually

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

#7713

SESK.INFO

STRAIGHT FACE
Why did the bird change lunch slowly? It did not want to wing the recipe.

C **Introduce pellets gradually**
WHY Birds may distrust unfamiliar food. Merck warns that switching too quickly can leave a bird thin and sick, so introduce pellets gradually instead of forcing a sudden change.

BIRDS



What should an owner track while changing a bird to pellets?

- A** Body weight
- B** Number of chirps
- C** Tail feather color

FLIP FOR THE ANSWER

#7714

SESK.INFO

STRAIGHT FACE
Why did the budgie stand on the scale? It wanted the tweet total.

A **Body weight**
WHY A bird can appear to visit the bowl without eating enough. Merck says owners should monitor body weight throughout a pellet conversion so dangerous weight loss is caught.



