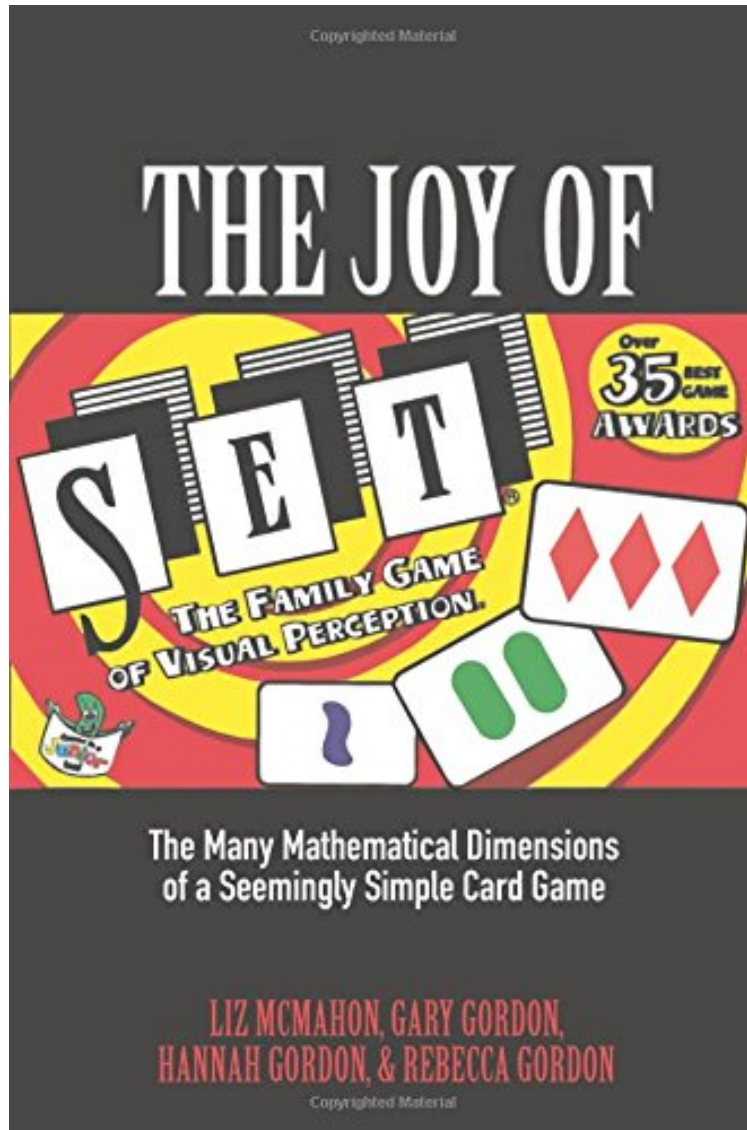


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## The Joy of SET: The Many Mathematical Dimensions of a Seemingly Simple Card Game

*Liz McMahon, Gary Gordon, Hannah Gordon, Rebecca Gordon*  
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**Liz McMahon, Gary Gordon, Hannah Gordon, Rebecca Gordon : The Joy of SET: The Many Mathematical Dimensions of a Seemingly Simple Card Game** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Joy of SET: The Many Mathematical Dimensions of a Seemingly Simple Card Game:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy Steven G. ReynoldsGreat

Have you ever played the addictive card game SET? Have you ever wondered about the connections between games and mathematics? If the answer to either question is "yes," then *The Joy of SET* is the book for you! *The Joy of SET* takes readers on a fascinating journey into this seemingly simple card game and reveals its surprisingly deep and diverse mathematical dimensions. Absolutely no mathematical background is necessary to enjoy this book all you need is a sense of curiosity and adventure! Originally invented in 1974 by Marsha Falco and officially released in 1991, SET has gained a widespread, loyal following. SET's eighty-one cards consist of one, two, or three symbols of different shapes (diamond, oval, squiggle), shadings (solid, striped, open), and colors (green, purple, red). In order to win, players must identify sets of three cards for which each characteristic is the same or different on all the cards. SET's strategic and unique design opens connections to a plethora of mathematical disciplines, including geometry, modular arithmetic, combinatorics, probability, linear algebra, and computer simulations. *The Joy of SET* looks at these areas as well as avenues for further mathematical exploration. As the authors show, the relationship between SET and mathematics runs in both directions playing this game has generated new mathematics, and the math has led to new questions about the game itself. The first book devoted to the mathematics of one of today's most popular card games, *The Joy of SET* will entertain and enlighten the game enthusiast in all of us.

"[A] model of mathematical exposition. The quality of writing is consistently high: clear but not condescending, humorous, chatty, and a genuine pleasure to read. . . . I doubt it will be very long before I find something from [*The Joy of SET*] to use in one of my classes."--Mark Hunacek, MAA s "[*The Joy of SET*] shows how budding interest in mathematics can be fostered and developed. . . . If [middle and high school teachers] ever try to enliven their classes or just interaction with curious students, this book is one they may depend on."--Alexander Bogomolny, *Cut the Knot* blog "[A]mazing. . . . What I love about *The Joy of SET* is that it is written in such a way that it can be read and enjoyed by both SET enthusiasts and someone that has never played SET before. . . . Really and truly, there is enough math in this book to keep you busy for a lifetime! . . . I definitely recommend this book."--Sarah Carter, *Math Equals Love* blog "[*The Joy of SET*] takes readers on a fascinating journey into this seemingly simple card game. . . . The book is in my view just the right way to talk about math as fun, and intellectually challenging."--Robert Harington, *Scholarly Kitchen* "[A]s the authors convincingly demonstrate . . . the mathematics behind SET actually goes very deep. . . . [*The Joy of SET*] would make a fantastic resource for a middle school, high school, or undergraduate math club."--Brent Yorgey, *Math Less Traveled* blog "This book, written by a mathematically inclined family, is the first and only work to explore the connection between the game and mathematics. . . . [*The Joy of SET*] will attract those who play SET and those who want to explore mathematically related subjects."--Choice "The game of Set certainly has connections to several aspects of mathematics, and this book explores these connections in a deep, yet still accessible way. . . . An excellent guide on how to relate abstract mathematical ideas to a more concrete setting and do it in a way that is both fun and thought provoking. Such an application is rare for so wide a collection of mathematical topics and is useful for classroom instruction."--Ryan Hoffpauir, *Mathematics Teacher* From the Back Cover "The Joy of SET uses a popular and very simple card game as a springboard for a whirlwind tour through probability, combinatorics, finite geometries, and experimental mathematics. Whether or not you play SET, you'll find a lot of great math to play with in this book."--Jordan Ellenberg, author of *How Not to Be Wrong: The Power of Mathematical Thinking* "SET is, arguably, the most popular of all commercially sold mathematical games. This is the only book that gives a solid mathematical treatment of this game. Using a range of ideas, from counting to geometry, the authors answer most of the questions you would ever want to ask about SET. Humorous and conversational, this book is a pleasure to read."--Arthur Benjamin, author of *The Magic of Math: Solving for x and Figuring Out Why* "In *The Joy of SET*, the material is interesting and fun to read. I loved it."--Tanya Khovanova, Massachusetts Institute of Technology About the Author Liz McMahon and Gary Gordon are professors of mathematics at Lafayette College. Hannah Gordon is a SET Grand Master and is studying health and nutrition. Rebecca Gordon teaches mathematics at Newark Academy. As a family, the coauthors have played SET together for more than twenty years.