Team trivia night: host script

Read the welcome aloud, then follow the run of show. Change the timings to fit your room.

Welcome script

> **“Welcome, everybody. Tonight is four rounds of ten questions, plus a short final round. Teams of up to five, one person writes. Every answer comes with a source, and I will read it out so we can settle arguments fairly. Phones stay in pockets: if someone looks something up, the table owes the room a groan. I will read each question twice and give you about thirty seconds. At the end of a round, swap sheets with the table on your left. One point for each right answer. Ties are settled by a closest-number question. Ready? Round one.”**

Run of show (about 90 minutes)

TIME	WHAT	LENGTH
0:00	Welcome and rules	5 min
0:05	Round 1 (easy warm-up)	12 min
0:17	Swap, mark, scores	6 min
0:23	Round 2	12 min
0:35	Swap, mark, scores	5 min
0:40	Round 3: true-or-false lightning round	10 min
0:50	Break and tally	10 min
1:00	Round 4 (hard)	14 min
1:14	Swap, mark, scores	5 min
1:19	Final round and tiebreaker; winners	11 min

Reading questions well

- Read the question twice, slowly.
- For multiple choice, read all four options.
- Say “final answer” when time is up.
- Read the answer and its one-line fact.

If someone disputes an answer

- Read the source line from the key.
- If the source is clear, the answer stands.
- If a question is unclear, throw it out and give everyone the point.
- Move on. No debates during a round.

Checklist and variations

Everything to gather, and a few ways to change the game.

Before the night

- Pick four or five rounds. Print one question sheet per team and one answer key for you.
- Pens for every table, a scoreboard, a timer or bell.
- Print the TRUE and FALSE signs for the lightning round.
- Print the large-print sheet if anyone has trouble with small type.
- Small prizes, and one for last place.
- Test the screen if you use host mode on the web page.

Setting the room

- Tables for 2 to 6 people. Mix ages on each team.
- Put the scoreboard where everyone can see it.
- Keep the answer keys face-down and away from tables.
- Check that the back row can hear you. Use a microphone only if you need one.

Ways to change the game

Bonus round

Before the final round, each team may bet 1, 2 or 3 points on one question. A right answer wins the bet. A wrong answer loses it.

Kids and grown-ups

Give kid teams Round 1 and adult teams Round 4. Or mix: every team must have at least one person under 12 or over 65 and ask them first.

Open questions

Build a round with the Open format on the web page. Teams write short answers. Accept any answer that means the same thing.

Video-call trivia

Share your screen in host mode. Teams write answers on paper and hold them to the camera when you say “show”.

Scoring

- One point for each right answer. No negative points.
- Ties after the last round: use the tiebreaker sheet. The closest number wins. If still tied, the closer answer to the second tiebreaker wins.
- Post the scores after every round. Round the night off with a short thank-you and the next date, if there is one.

Team answer sheet

ROUND ____ · TABLE ____

Team name _____ Score _____ / 10

MULTIPLE CHOICE: CIRCLE ONE

1	A	B	C	D	2	A	B	C	D
3	A	B	C	D	4	A	B	C	D
5	A	B	C	D	6	A	B	C	D
7	A	B	C	D	8	A	B	C	D
9	A	B	C	D	10	A	B	C	D

OPEN QUESTIONS AND TRUE OR FALSE: WRITE THE ANSWER

1	_____	2	_____
3	_____	4	_____
5	_____	6	_____
7	_____	8	_____
9	_____	10	_____

Scoreboard

POST IT WHERE EVERYONE CAN SEE

TEAM	R1	R2	R3	R4	FINAL	TIE	TOTAL

TRUE

HOLD UP FOR TRUE

FALS

HOLD UP FOR FALSE

Two truths and a lie: write-in slips

CUT APART · ONE PER PLAYER

Write three statements about yourself: two true, one false. Make the lie believable. Stay with light topics, and keep out health, family trouble and money. Prompts: a place I have been, a skill, a job I have had, a food, an animal, the first thing I bought.

Name _____

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

THE LIE IS # ____

Name _____

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

THE LIE IS # ____

Name _____

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

THE LIE IS # ____

Name _____

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

THE LIE IS # ____

Name _____

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

THE LIE IS # ____

Name _____

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

THE LIE IS # ____

Name _____

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

THE LIE IS # ____

Tiebreaker questions

CLOSEST NUMBER WINS

Cut or copy one question for the tied teams. Each team writes a number. The closest wins, even if over. Use the next question if they tie again.

1. **In what year did Neptune complete its first full orbit since being discovered in 1846?** _____
2. **How many bones does a typical adult skeleton have?** _____
3. **In what year was the first computer mouse prototype built?** _____
4. **In what year did construction begin on the first Oval Office in the White House's West Wing?** _____
5. **In what year was the 27th Amendment, first proposed in 1789, finally ratified?** _____
6. **How many rooms are in the White House residence?** _____

Host key

1. 2011. Neptune was discovered in 1846, but one trip around the Sun takes 165 years. It finished its first full orbit since its discovery in 2011.
NASA SCIENCE: NEPTUNE: FACTS

2. 206. A baby is born with about 300 bones. Many of them fuse as the child grows, leaving most adults with 206.
NIAMS (NIH): HEALTH LESSON: LEARNING ABOUT BONES

3. 1964. Bill English built the first computer mouse prototype at SRI in 1964. Its patent called it an "X-Y Position Indicator for a Display System."
SRI INTERNATIONAL: THE COMPUTER MOUSE AND INTERACTIVE COMPUTING

4. 1909. Construction of the first Oval Office began in the summer of 1909, and it was ready for President William Howard Taft by October of that year.
WHITE HOUSE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION: THE HISTORY OF THE OVAL OFFICE - WHITE HOUSE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

5. 1992. The 27th Amendment was first proposed in 1789 but was not ratified until 1992, more than 200 years later.
NATIONAL ARCHIVES: THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES' ROLE IN AMENDING THE CONSTITUTION

6. 132. The White House has 132 rooms and 35 bathrooms spread over 6 levels, plus 412 doors and 28 fireplaces.
THE WHITE HOUSE: THE WHITE HOUSE BUILDING

Large-print question sheet

QUESTION 1

Which British band drew 73 million viewers to its first Ed Sullivan Show appearance?

(A) The Rolling Stones

(B) The Monkees

(C) The Beatles

(D) The Beach Boys

QUESTION 2

Which company introduced the Walkman portable cassette player in 1979?

(A) Panasonic

(B) Motorola

(C) Sony

(D) Atari

QUESTION 3

In what year did Disneyland open in Anaheim, California?

(A) 1935

(B) 1955

(C) 1965

(D) 1975

QUESTION 4

How many cameras filmed I Love Lucy in front of a live audience, a method that became standard for sitcoms?

(A) One

(B) Eight

(C) Three

(D) Five

Large-print sheet, continued

QUESTION 5

What was Rubik’s Cube called when Erno Rubik first built it?

(A) The Puzzle Block
(B) The Color Brick
(C) The Magic Cube
(D) The Hungarian Box

QUESTION 6

According to the U.S. Postal Service, what does ZIP stand for in ZIP Code?

(A) Zone Information Protocol
(B) Zonal Inbox Plan
(C) Zoning Improvement Plan
(D) Zoned Item Processing

QUESTION 7

Which toy starred in the very first television commercial ever made for a toy?

(A) Slinky
(B) Lincoln Logs
(C) Barbie
(D) Mr. Potato Head

QUESTION 8

What was the name of the computer the Census Bureau received in 1951 and calls the first commercial computer?

(A) ENIAC
(B) The Apple I
(C) The IBM 360
(D) UNIVAC

Large-print answer key

HOST COPY

1. C. The Beatles. The Beatles' first appearance on The Ed Sullivan Show, in February 1964, drew 73 million viewers.

PBS: DECONSTRUCTING THE BEATLES

2. C. Sony. In 1979, Sony introduced the Walkman, a portable cassette player that let people carry their own music around.

WIKIPEDIA: WALKMAN

3. B. 1955. Disneyland in Anaheim, California, was dedicated on July 17, 1955, and opened to the public the next day.

WIKIPEDIA: DISNEYLAND

4. C. Three. I Love Lucy was filmed with three cameras in front of a live audience, a method that became the standard for TV situation comedies.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS: THE CAST, CREW, AND SET - I LOVE LUCY: AN AMERICAN LEGEND

5. C. The Magic Cube. Hungarian teacher Erno Rubik built his first cube puzzle in 1974 and called it the Magic Cube. After it reached stores in 1980, buyers snapped up 100 million within two years.

THE STRONG NATIONAL MUSEUM OF PLAY: RUBIK'S CUBE | NATIONAL TOY HALL OF FAME | THE STRONG

6. C. Zoning Improvement Plan. ZIP stands for Zoning Improvement Plan. The five-digit ZIP Code was launched in 1963 to help the Post Office handle growing amounts of mail.

U.S. POSTAL SERVICE: INTRODUCTION OF THE ZIP CODE - U.S. POSTAL FACTS

7. D. Mr. Potato Head. Mr. Potato Head starred in the first TV commercial ever made for a toy. It helped Hasbro earn more than $4 million in just the first few months.

THE STRONG NATIONAL MUSEUM OF PLAY: MR. POTATO HEAD | NATIONAL TOY HALL OF FAME | THE STRONG

8. D. UNIVAC. The Census Bureau calls UNIVAC the world's first commercial computer. It received one on March 31, 1951, built with more than 5,600 vacuum tubes.

U.S. CENSUS BUREAU: 1960 UNIVAC