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Spot the difference games also known as Find the Difference Games have a long history. They have been a staple of newspapers and activity books for decades, entertaining the young and old. The premise is always quite simple, you are shown two pictures both of which are slightly different and you must spot the differences. The number of differences varies, but 5 is a common amount.

These difference games are entertaining, but in the past when they were simply printed it meant that once a person had found and circled the differences in a book, that game could not be played again. Fortunately for those who want to challenge their friends and family they can play spot the difference games online. These games usually include a clock telling you how long you have taken to solve a puzzle, and of course that means you can challenge others to try and solve them quicker than you. Another side benefit of these online find the difference games is that with a quick search of the internet you can find images in just about any category you like, you can find cartoon Spot the Difference Games for children or more challenging ones based on fine art pictures, science fiction or anything that you can think of. The greatest advantage of computer based versions is that they often contain a hint button that will show you a single difference if you are stuck.

For those of you who want to more quickly complete spot the difference games there are several types of differences that the creators of these games can use to try and flummox you.

1. Color changes - the objects in both images are the same except for a subtle change in color.
2. Objects are removed – some objects or items are simply removed. These are harder to spot than color changes.
3. Objects and items are tweaked so they are a little bit different – an example of this might be an image of a squirrel. The squirrel in both images looks similar except in one image its tail is longer. These differences are the hardest to find.
4. Finally depending on the designer – the larger object or change the easier it is to find the differences.

So how can you make it easier to find those differences when you play?

1. A classic technique is to simply scan along both images, going back and forth from left to right and gradually going down the picture. This technique works well for color changes and finding removed objects but isn't quite as useful for tweaked items and objects.
2. Spot the difference game designers often try to hide differences in corners, which makes sense as our eyes are usually drawn to the center of an image.
3. Tweaked objects are difficult to find. It's best to focus on following the contours of an image spot them.

With these tips you should find it a lot easier to complete spot the difference games quickly.

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