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Introducing Lots2Spot Mini School!

Lots2Spot Mini School is an engaging and colorful “listen and find” game designed to get pre-schoolers excited about learning numbers and letters. The game challenges players to “clean up” the screen as they listen to prompts, and recognize letters and numbers up to twenty.

- App Title:** Lots2Spot Mini School
- Release Date:** August 7, 2013
- Link:** <https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/lots2spot-mini-school/id676870776>
- Publisher:** HiYu2
- Type:** Education/Games
- Devices:** iPad
- Price:** \$1.99



Lot2Spot Mini School Description

Lots2Spot Mini School is an engaging and colorful “listen and find” game that teaches kids ages 2+ to recognize letters and numbers. If you enjoyed the original vocabulary-building game Lots2Spot, Lots2Spot Mini School is the next step to get ready for pre-school or kindergarten!

Children will enjoy finding letters and numbers, and “cleaning up” the screen as they listen to prompts.

Parents will appreciate how the game encourages listening and following directions. (Perhaps these skills will transfer to real life?) There are natural stop points throughout the game to allow for breaks in play, taking turns, and, oh yes, SHARING.

Each game screen includes a cute animal in the mix – which help kids to stay

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motivated (Oh boy, who will we get next? The octopus? Or the baby chick maybe?) ... and also helps to reinforce the concept of quantity as players are prompted to "Find four foxes" (for example).

Kids can practice lower or uppercase letters (or a mix of both) and numbers up to twenty.

... and if they ever get stuck, there are clues to help out. (You can also tap the text at near the top of the screen to replay the prompt, if you've forgotten what you're looking for.)

Features:

- Upper- and lower-case letters, colorfully illustrated to be both legible and engaging
- Numbers up to twenty (Equally pretty!)
- A slew of adorable animals mixed into the game to keep kids coming back
- Letters and numbers are placed randomly for a new challenge every time!
- Settings to find upper-case or lower-case letters or both
- Compatible with all iPads
- NO in-app-purchases! NO advertising, NO in-app-purchases!

Additional settings allow Mom or Dad to customize the game to match each child's learning level:

- Turn on/off colors and/or descriptors
- Turn on/off voiceover prompts for children learning to read

Lots2Spot is the second release from Hiyu2. Look for more fun games coming soon!



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Meet Jennifer and Stephanie – the founders of Hiyu2 and the creators of Lots2Spot and Lots2Spot Mini School.

They'll be the first to tell you that their perspective on games is exactly the same as their philosophy on finding a life balance: It shouldn't be all about work – you should feel like you're having fun!

Stephanie Krimmel

Stephanie is a user experience professional who loves playing games with 2 now 3-year-old B, but can't stand it when those games are ugly, or confusing, or encouraging toddlers to touch things like giant knives. You might even say she's *picky* (especially if you read her app reviews at pick-ykidappguide.com). She disagrees with Jennifer about which animal is the cutest in Lots2Spot.



Jennifer Bartlett

Jennifer is a designer by trade but her dream job is to draw cute things. Oh look, dream come true! Also while she thinks the squirrel is the cutest of all objects in Lots2spot she would probably run from one in real life. (Germs!)

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An Interview with Jen and Steph – Lots2Spot Game Creators

By Hiyu2 January 6, 2013

First of all, how did you come up with the “Hiyu2” name?

Steph: It’s actually a tie-in to my childhood. I grew up on the south end of Vashon Island in Washington State. Our ferry was named the “Hiyu”.

Jen: And there’s a Hi-Yu festival in West Seattle.

Steph: (The name) is Chinook. It means “many or lots of”, but is also refers to a gathering or a large party.

Jen: Now we both think of it as a greeting, like something you would say to your friends.

Where did the idea of creating your own game app originate?

Steph: It was an insomnia inspiration. During one sleepless night, I brainstormed seven ideas for kids’ apps! The next time we met up, I went over my insomnia-inspired kids apps list – not quite sure the ideas would fly, but Jen totally got it!

Jen: Ever since I heard Joost Elffers’ speech about killing the client (from the 1999 Aspen Design Conference) I’ve been inspired to do just that. Not literally of course, but we’ve always talked about what our dream jobs would be. I’ve always wanted to draw cute things all day!

Steph: With life and work – it should be all about doing what you love to do. That’s one of the reasons why I started working for myself a few years ago. Jennifer and I choose to work together a lot, but we don’t always get to make all the choices.

Jen: I think it’s all about what makes you happy. Make work fun. It’s so much better if your life and your work are all moving in the same direction. By starting our own joint company, we can be our own client and do what we really love to do! Of course, I have a lot of personal graphic design projects that I still need to do. But now I can be the client and the designer!

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So how did Lots2Spot become your first game app?

Jen: After we'd gone over "the insomnia list" the game concept kind of evolved from there! I have always loved video games like Frogger. I don't like violent games. I prefer games with cuteness and intelligence and something to draw you in.

Steph: Yeah, I just can't get into fighting a battle in a game. And when I play games with my daughter, I want it to be about learning and having fun and sharing experiences with her. I think they should be fun for parents to play along, but not require constant "help". Kids should be able to play the game themselves.

Jen: Kids games don't have to have a complex story or plot. They just need to be fun. And if they are learning something too – that's great.

Steph: I felt like a lot of kids' apps were missing something. I wanted them to be more something meaningful, plus fun and cute. Something a parent would want to play with a kid.

How did you decide what objects and creatures to include in Lots2Spot?

Steph: We originally thought about categories and what would be fun. A lot of organic thinking. It was so fun to get the initial drawings!

Jen: I was laughing so hard at comments she was sending back: "Something is wrong with the chicken eye" or "It's a little not quite right". But I knew what she meant.

Jen: When it came to drawing the objects – the idea of it was really appealing to me. The reality was not as easy...

Steph: Sometimes we'd get into these really heavy discussions, like: "Should it be a regular fox or an arctic fox?"

Steph: How to keep objects "safe" was a good benchmark/filter for the objects we chose. We really, really wanted to include a campfire and a cactus – but they didn't clear our filter.

Jen: At first, Steph nixed candy. Candy! Why not? But I made it look really cute with a transparent wrapper, so it passed. Somehow, I also got to include a Jellyfish. Really, no one actually has an opportunity to touch one, so we think it's ok.

Steph: Basically, if Jen made it look good enough, it passed.

Jen: I think I can still improve on the pig...

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Will all of your game names feature numbers and words?

Jen: Umm no. I think that sticking to that formula would be too hard to keep up.

Steph: But it's a fun idea!

How would you describe your work style as business partners?

Jen: We've been friends for years. Since we've worked together on so many client projects, we're pretty aligned as a team. I've found in the past that logo design is usually really hard to do for yourself. But this one has been so easy to design because it's so ingrained in who we are.

Steph: When we were working on the logo, I give her the most random feedback like "It needs a cloud" or "It needs to be wide" and she knew exactly what I meant. In a way, it's exactly what we wouldn't allow our clients to do. But it's OK because it's us!

What other ideas do you have up your sleeve?

Jen: More animals are coming. More of everything!

Steph: There are so many more (objects) we need to do! We just realized we've barely scratched the surface on camping and sports equipment!

Jen: There are lots of ways we can expand on this game.

Steph: We hope eventually it can grow with your kids.

Jen: We fully intend to create a bust of Edgar Allan Poe.

Steph: Just try to figure out where we're going with that one!

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