

# What Do You Need to Know to Gamify Your E-Learning

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I hear a lot of people ask about gamifying [their e-learning courses](#). And the examples they show are usually simple games modeled after shows like [Jeopardy](#) or [Wheel of Fortune](#). Those are fine and have their places in e-learning, especially for quick knowledge checks. But they're not the same as [gamification](#).

In today's post, I'll share a few simple things to help get your brain muscles going.

## What Do You Need to Know?

When it comes to building the courses in an [authoring tool](#), you basically need to know how to use variables. Variables allow you to track and evaluate the user to provide relevant feedback, scoring, tokens, and all the other things that make up gamified e-learning courses. And once you know how to work with variables, you can build all sorts of things.

Here are some resources to learn more about variables:

On April 19, I'm also hosting a workshop where we [learn about variables in the context of building a few common gamified elements](#). It's a great way to learn more.

## Learn More About Gamification

You can do a search and read all sorts about gamification especially now that it's also a buzzword. Essentially you are taking game concepts and applying them to a non-game context. As you play games, ask what about the game is compelling and what similar element could work in your next e-learning course.

I think the greater challenge in building gamified courses is less in constructing the mechanics and more in building a narrative that integrates gaming psychology. Building things in the authoring tools is relatively easy compared to understanding what to build.

Here are three good books on gamification.

## What Can You Build in Your E-Learning Course?

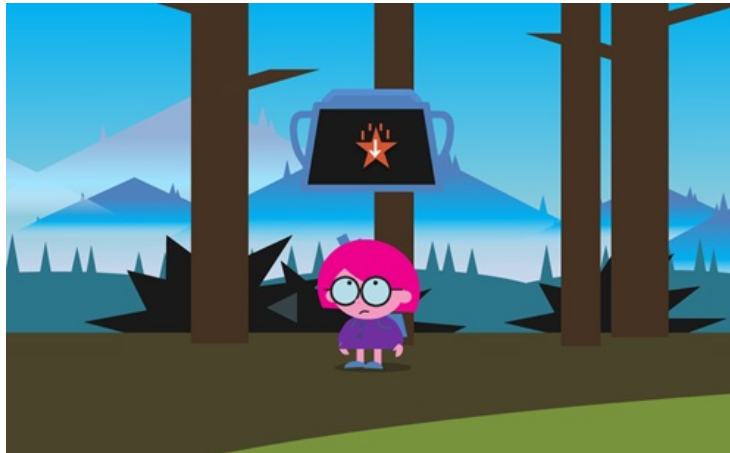
When it comes to authoring the courses outside of a management system where you can track multiple users and build things like leaderboards, you're confined to simple game elements such as:

- Timers
- Personalization
- Progress meters
- Tokens
- Rewards management
- Scoring
- Autonomous navigation

You can make some very compelling courses that instructive and engaging. However, there's a lot more to gamification than these simple elements above. How do you motivate learners and create the right tension between boredom and failure? Make sure you invest the right resources and develop a good strategy. Otherwise, your

gamified course will transform from game to gimmick.

If you're not quite sure where to get started, check out some of the [cool examples in the community](#). They'll give an idea of some of what you can do with the authoring tools. Here are three nice examples:



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And there's nothing wrong with starting simple. If all you need is a Jeopardy-style quiz, then [download this free file](#). It's a great way to work with a context you know. But make a commitment to learn more about variables and start to add some of those gaming elements above to your courses. And if you can, [join us in the April 19 workshop to learn more about variables](#).

