



## Ask Marilyn

By Marilyn vos Savant

As children, my siblings and I often settled a disagreement with a game called "Evens and Odds." In this game, one side is assigned "evens" and the other is assigned "odds." Then, on the count of three, a representative of each side reveals a number of fingers from zero to five. If the sum of the two numbers is even, the "evens" win; if the sum is odd, the "odds" win. Is this method fair? Or do the "evens" have an advantage?

—Andy G., Cedar Hill, Mo.

The game is fair. One might guess that the "evens" have an advantage because the sum of two even numbers is even and the sum of two odd numbers is even, too. Only an odd number plus an even number will yield an odd sum.

But there are two ways to get an odd sum: (1) an odd plus an even, and (2) an even plus an odd. So there are twice as many odd sums as you might think.

"Evens and Odds" is a nice game. The odds are even!

### MARILYN SAYS ...

Do you ever avoid speaking a word because you're not sure how to pronounce it? Or—worse—are you mispronouncing words unknowingly? Here are a few common words people often get wrong:

**chic, mauve, nuclear, slavish, zoology,**

To hear the correct pronunciation from Marilyn herself, call **\*\*PARADE** from your mobile phone. That's **\*\*727233**.

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