## Shape Glossary

- The shapes in this glossary are generally ordered from familiar to less familiar, so they are in the suggested order for teaching shapes to young children.
- Examples and non-examples of each shape offer ideas for more or less challenge.
- Non-example shapes closely resemble example shapes, but do not have all the properties of the shape, so they would not be safe to jump on.


## Familiar Shapes

## Circles

How to describe circles:

- Perfectly round all the way around - Closed shape with no openings - No straight sides and no angles
Examples


## Triangle

How to describe triangles:

- 3 straight sides and 3 angles
- Closed shape with no openings
- Can be all different sizes and directions

Teacher tips:

- Do not say, "like a piece of pizza."
- A triangle with one right angle ( $90^{\circ}$ angle, such as the example triangle in the upper left corner of the left box below) is called a right triangle.
Examples


## Square

How to describe squares:

- Four straight sides that are all of the same length and four right angles
Examples


## Rectangle

How to describe rectangles:

- Four straight sides and four right angles

Teacher tips:

- A right angle is a $90^{\circ}$ angle.
- Do not say, "two long sides and two short sides."
- A square is a rectangle because it has four straight sides and four right angles.



## Pentagon

How to describe pentagons:

- Five straight sides and five angles
- Closed shape with no openings


## Teacher tips:

- Any closed shape with five straight sides is a pentagon.
- A five-sided shape with all sides of equal length (such as the example shape in the upper left corner of the left box below) is called a regular pentagon. If all sides are not of equal length, the shape is called an irregular pentagon.
Examples


## Hexagon

How to describe pentagons:

- Six straight sides and six angles
- Closed shape with no openings

Teacher tips:

- Any closed shape with six straight sides is a hexagon.
- A six-sided shape with all sides of equal length (such as the example shape in the upper left corner of the left box below) is called a regular hexagon. If all sides are not of equal length, the shape is called an irregular hexagon.
Examples


## Rhombus

How to describe rhombuses:

- Four straight sides that are all of the same length and four angles
- Closed shape with no openings

Teacher tips:

- Exactly two pairs of parallel lines (lines/sides that never cross).
- If the four angles are all right angles, the shape is also a square.
Examples


## Trapezoid

How to describe trapezoids:

- Four straight sides and exactly one pair of parallel sides and four angles
- Closed shape with no openings

Teacher tips:

- Exactly two pairs of parallel lines (lines/sides that never cross).
- If the four angles are all right angles, it's also a square.
- A trapezoid with one right angle (a $90^{\circ}$ angle, such as the example trapezoid in the upper left corner of the left box below) is called a right trapezoid.

| Examples | Non-Examples |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |

## Parallelogram

How to describe parallelograms:

- Four straight sides whose opposite sides are of the same length and parallel and four angles
- Closed shape with no openings

Teacher tips:

- Exactly two pairs of parallel lines (lines/sides that never cross)
- All squares, rectangles, and rhombuses are also parallelograms.
Examples


## Quadrilateral

How to describe quadrilaterals:

- Four straight sides and four angles
- Closed shape with no openings

Teacher tips:

- Squares, rhombuses, rectangles, parallelograms, trapezoids, and all other four-sided shapes are quadrilaterals.


