



'Fair Shares' is set in a small town (the DirectgovKids 'world') that you – the user – have just taken over. You are greeted with a news report announcing your arrival and how things are going to change now you control the town's finances.

You are then shown the town screen. You are told that you are in charge of all the money in the DirectgovKids world. You will raise money by asking people to pay tax and you will spend this tax money on schools, hospitals, the police force and other areas. You win the game by ensuring that all the people in the DirectgovKids world are happy.

You are asked to choose your level: Easy or Hard. In the Easy level, there are fewer buildings to run and you are given more money to spend. This is most suitable for KS1 and (in some cases) lower KS2. The harder level has more buildings and lasts twelve months rather than eight. This is most suitable for KS2 pupils. All other settings are the same in both the easy and hard levels.

The 10 areas you are asked to fund are: the police, the fire brigade, hospitals, schools, public transport, waste and sewage, parks and green spaces, museums and libraries, energy, and international relations. (In the easy level, waste and international relations are left out.)

At the beginning of the game (in both the easy and hard levels), two other areas are missing: museums and libraries, and energy. These areas are added as the game progresses. In month 2, a museum opens and in month 4, a new power station (windfarm) opens.

At the start of the game, you have 50 DGK credits to spend. You click on buildings to view last year's budget and to allocate spending for this year. At any point, you can raise and lower taxation. This gives you more money in your budget for that month. You click End month when you have decided how to spend your tax money.

Each of the eight buildings have a face or 'mood' assigned to them depending on how happy people were about last month's budget.

When you click on each building, a window opens showing you people's mood and last month's budget. You can allocate this month's spending or copy last month's. There is a 'More information' aspect as well. For extra info, you can click on the 'citizen' represented in the pop-up window, standing inside (or just outside) the building in question. They will give you an explanation of how happy (or unhappy) people are with the service they're getting.

In total, there are five indicators of mood:

1. Very sad (Crying face)
2. Sad (Unhappy face)





3. Neutral (Slightly smiling face)
4. Happy (Visibly smiling face)
5. Very happy (Laughing face)

These moods relate closely to how well you fund each area. Each area has a different baseline budget. This does not exactly match 'real-world' priorities, rather it reflects the prominence of services in local communities and encourages children to think about the way government spending changes their immediate environment.

The ideal budget for each building is listed below. This remains constant unless an 'event' takes place (see below).

Building	DGK credits
The school	8
The hospital	10
The police force (a police station)	7
The fire service (a fire station)	6
Public transport (a train station)	5
Waste and sewage (a recycling plant)	4
Parks and zoos (a park with a zoo in it)	3
International aid (embassy with EU and UN flag outside)	4
Museums and libraries (a museum)	4
Energy (a wind farm)	5

You can see how 47 (out of 50) credits is actually enough to get the weighting correct. However, part of the game would involve encouraging children NOT to spend all 50 of their credits each month but to keep some back for emergencies and unexpected events.

When the game starts, three of the buildings are very happy, two are very sad, two are sad, and one is neutral.

This states are decided in the following way:

1. Very sad: 2 credits or more below the ideal level
2. Sad: 1 credit below the ideal level
3. Neutral/ Slightly smiling: Ideal level
4. Happy: 1 credit above ideal level
5. Very happy: 2 credits or more above the ideal level

There is also a master 'Copy last month' button in the left-hand panel. This copies **all** of last month's budget in **every** building into the current month. This will help teachers who do not wish to go through all 8-10 buildings, re-allocating credits.





On pressing End month, all of your financial decisions are assessed. A news report appears. This is your feedback mechanism and it appears at the end of each month.

Up to three stories appear. These will either be:

- a) a warning story or feedback to a warning story
- b) a random event story
- c) a popularity poll
- d) a new building is opening

A warning story alerts you to impending changes in the DGK world and acts as a signal to allocate spending to a different area. These happen every two months. In the second month, the news story is about your response to the 'warning'. For example – in month 1: 'The DGK town is about to host a summer festival in the park! The Finance Officer will have to make sure there's enough money in the park budget to clean up afterwards!' In month 2, if you allocated an extra 2 credits to the park budget, 'The park festival was a huge success...' In month 2, if you didn't allocate sufficient resources: 'The park festival was a wash-out...'

In addition, one of 12 random events will have happened. These will test whether you've made wise spending decisions so far. For example, a flood or a flu epidemic. Depending on whether you've kept spending at the ideal level, the story will either be (for example): 'The DGK river has burst its banks and thousands of people are homeless' or 'The DGK river has burst its banks but the fire service were there to ensure that everything ended happily.'

Every three months, the news also starts with an update on your popularity. A poll has been taken (based on the happiness meter on the main screen) and you are told how your decisions have been perceived in the town. During the report, you see a graph – tracking your popularity over the previous 3, 6, 9 and 12 months.

In month 2 and month 4, there is a news report about a new building opening. In month 2, this is the museum and in month 4, this is the windfarm.

At the end of the news reports, two arrows/ prompts appear over the TV screen: Replay and Next month.

After the news reports, your happiness dials are shown updating. This is broken down into happiness with taxes, happiness with services, and overall happiness. Users have to try to keep all three of these scores at the 'positive' end of the sliders.

These happiness levels are calculated by looking at how much tax you are levying and how well you are sharing out the tax money between the various services.





Note that news events change each building's ideal budgetary level. That is to say, if you are warned that (for example) the police need more money and you don't raise their budget, then happiness levels decrease overall. Similarly, if there is a random event, and you don't have sufficient credits in the affected area, then your happiness levels will also decline.

At the end of the game (after eight months for the easy level; twelve months for the hard level), you are given an overall summary of your progress and achievement. You receive your final happiness scores and you are told how many credits you have remaining in your treasury.

The key learning points are also underlined onscreen:

- that governments raise money by collecting taxes
- that taxes are used to fund services in local communities
- that all grown-ups contribute to taxes by living, working and spending money
- that governments have to make difficult decisions about how to spend tax money

