contrast cards and play

Our visual development is complex and over time we can see objects, light & colour, movement, depth, discriminate objects against different backgrounds. Information from our eyes travel along many different structures in our eyes to the visual cortex in our brains where the brain interprets the information and gives it meaning, all within milliseconds of seeing it.

Our vision is the least developed sense at birth, due to receiving very little stimulation in the womb and there are lots of things that we can do to help our little one develop their vision.

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When our little ones are born, they don't yet have control over the muscles that work their eyes, oculomotor control, so by playing in a visual way not only are we helping these muscles, we are giving their eyes interesting things to see, interpret and discriminate.

These contrast cards have been designed to stimulate the visual abilities of your baby and you can use them to encourage healthy sensory development. The contrast sheets can be printed out and cut into separate cards and we've given lots of options of dark images on a light background, light images on a dark background and some abstract shapes and recognisable ones too so that you can talk to your little one about them. They are a great basis for play with a newborn baby.

Always make sure that your baby is within eyesight and arms reach when carrying out activities and have fun talking through the cards with your little one to add an auditory element to the activity too.

Repetition is really important with visual play, your baby needs a lot of time and practice to get precise and accurate with their visual control.

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A few ideas for using the cards -

1. fix a card next to your changing table to distract and occupy your baby while you are cleaning them, change the cards regularly so that they continue to find them of interest.

2. Attach them to a mobile to stimulate attention, visual tracking and encourage them to co-ordinate their eye movements.

3. use them as a tummy time activity. The contrast cards are an excellent way to keep baby occupied while you have them doing tummy time.

4. use them to stimulate movement, moving the position of the card means that they have to move their eyes and head to see them, strengthening muscles and tracking. Make sure that if you are moving the card that you are doing so very slowly to keep interest and allow for your little one to co-ordinate gross movement and their eye control.

Have lots of fun and do share photos of using the cards in the Facebook group - we'd love to see them!

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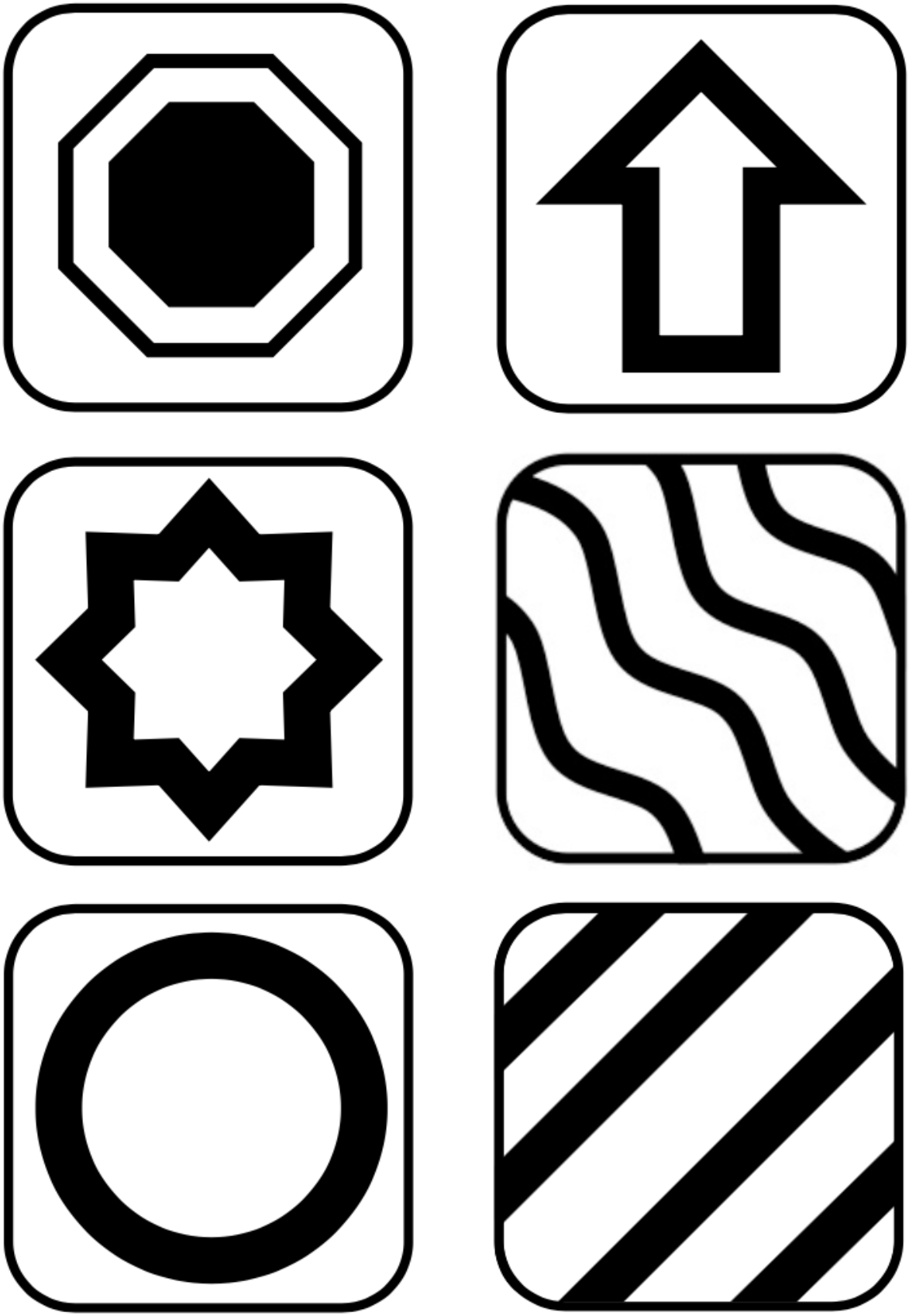

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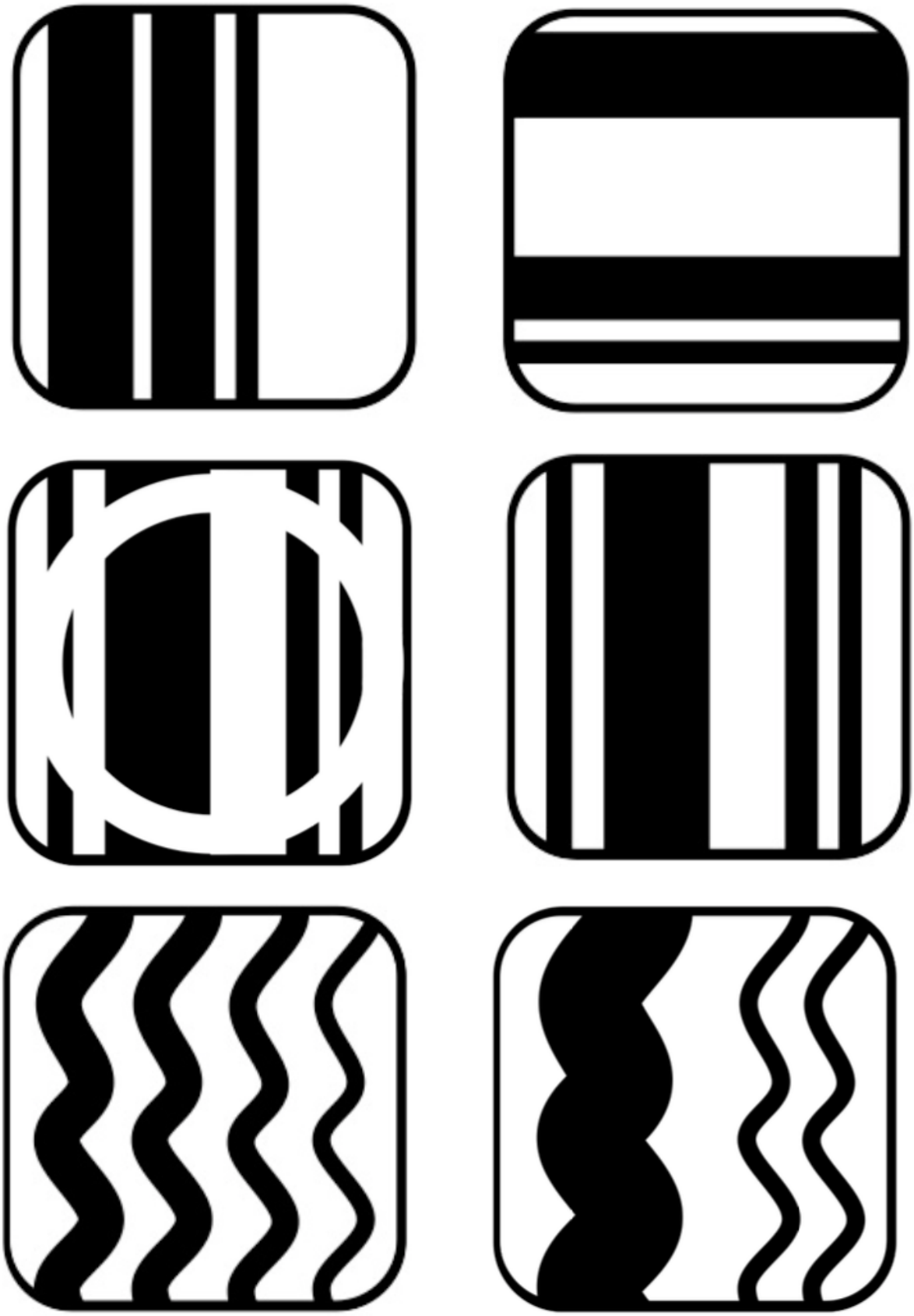

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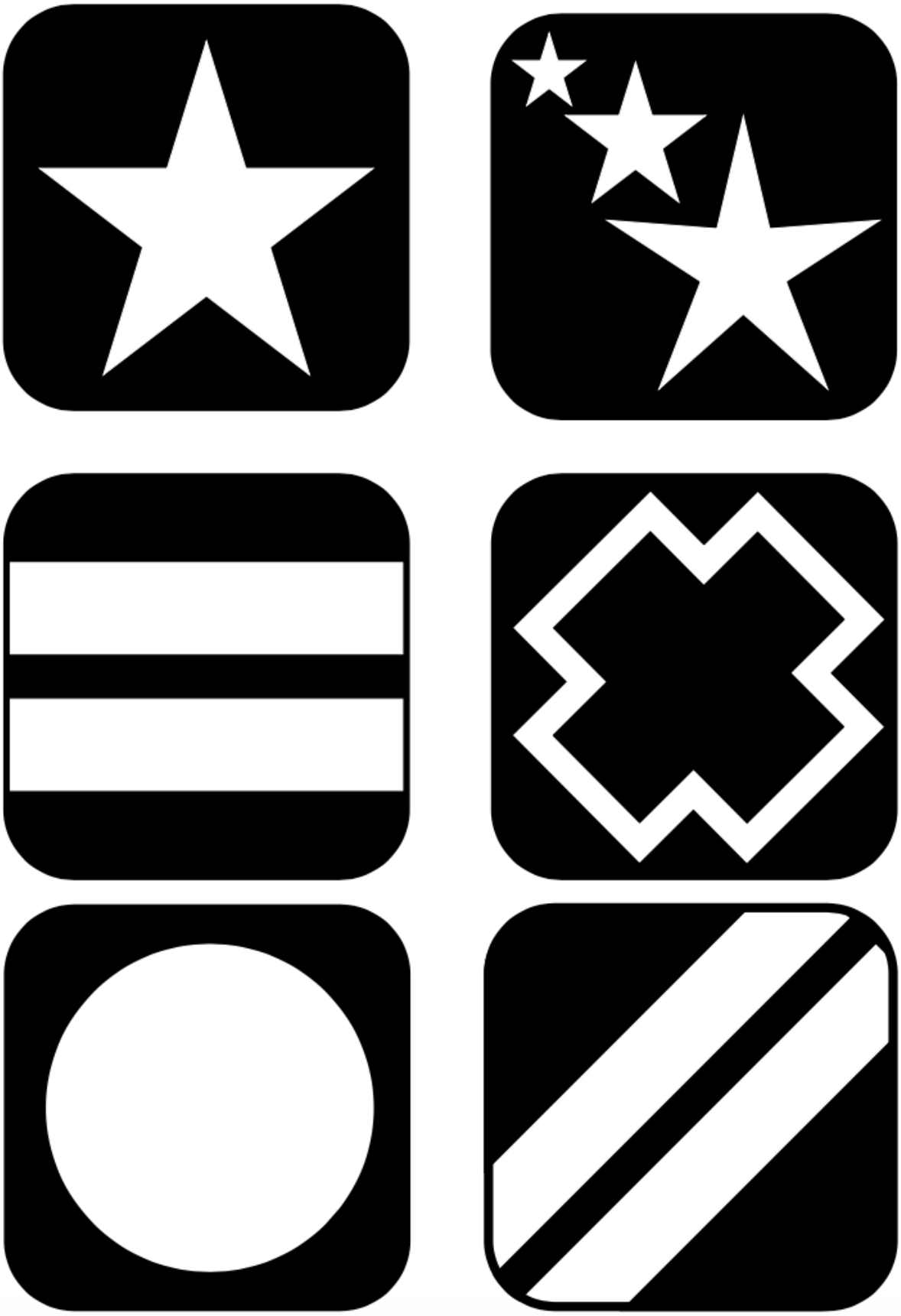

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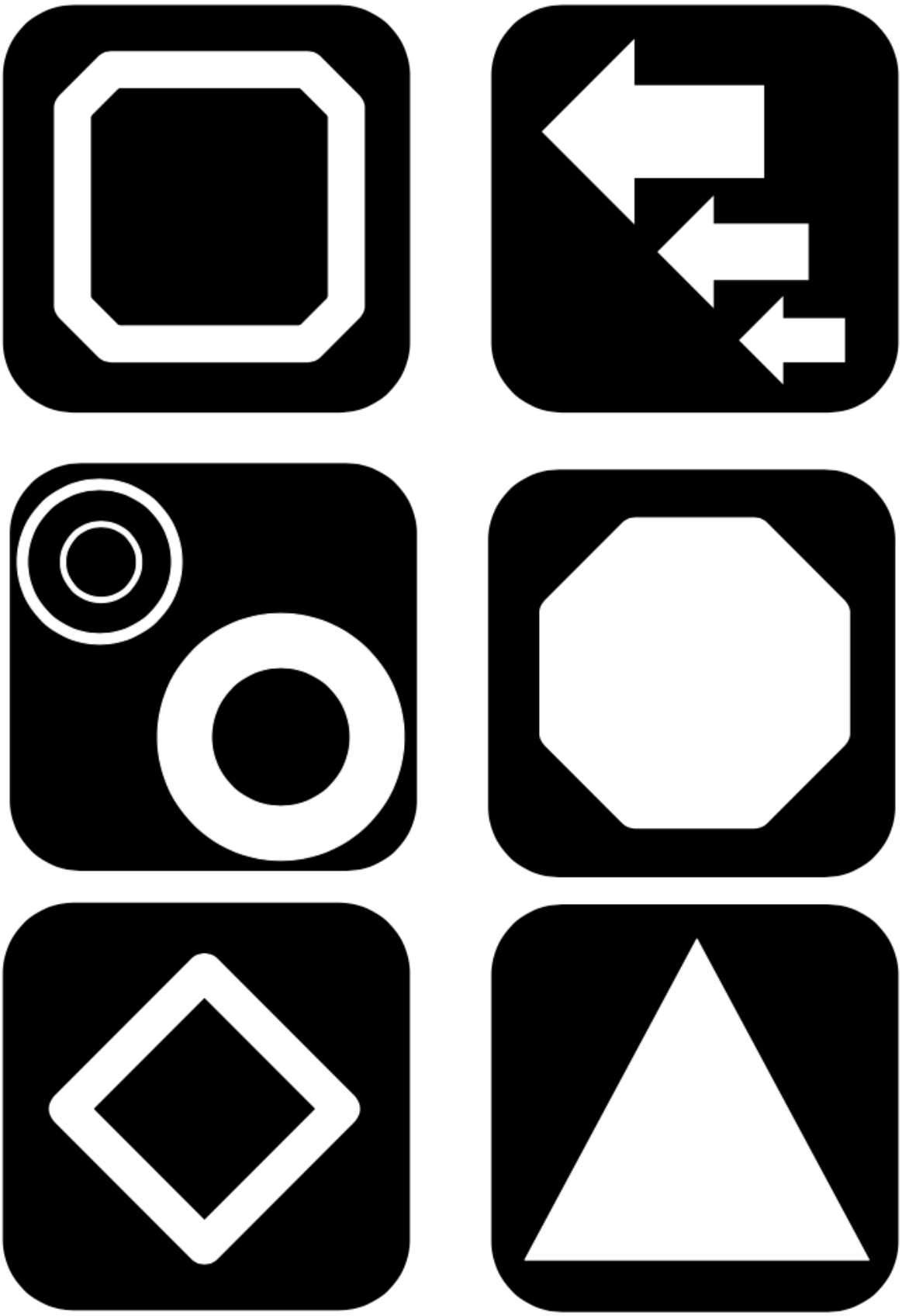

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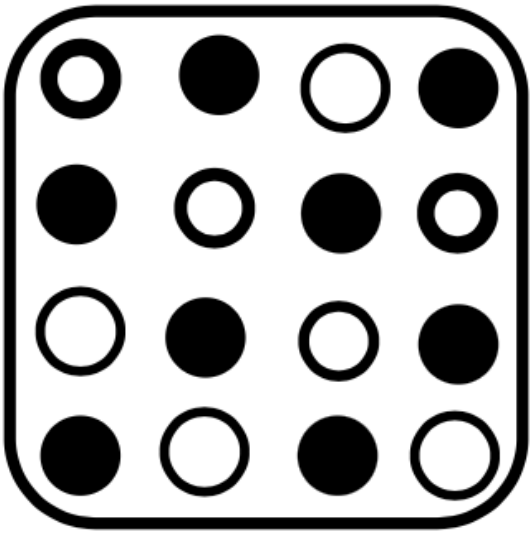

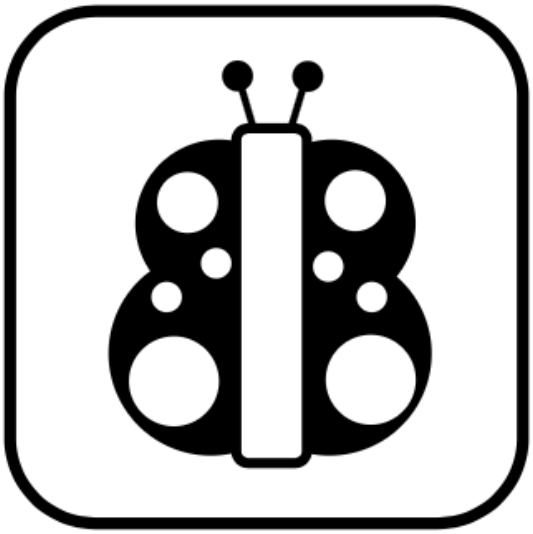

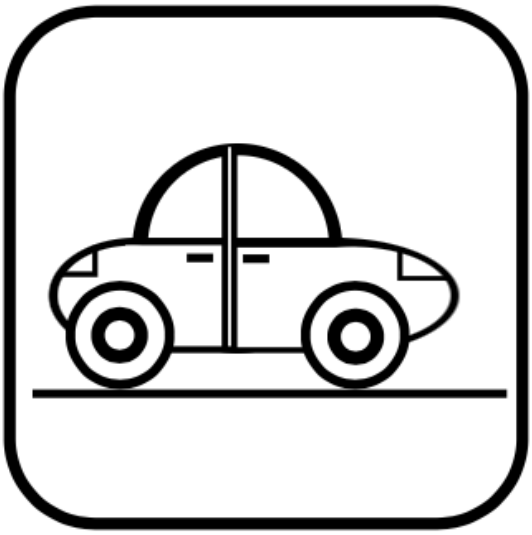

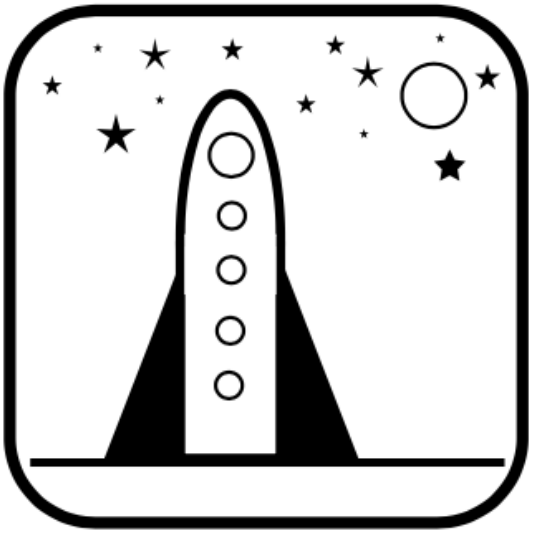

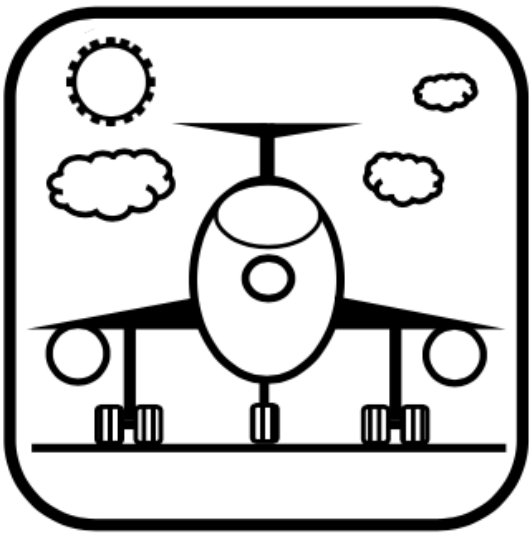

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