



**BOOK OF
GROUP GAMES**

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AROUND THE WORLD

- Objective:** A contest involving shooting a basketball from different locations on the court, with points scored for baskets made at each location.
- Game type:** Active. A lot of movement may be required.
- Players:** 2 to 6 players.
- Needed:** Basketball hoop and basketball
- Rules:** Players take turns shooting baskets at one end of a court. Use sticks, small stones, or chalk as markers for nine different locations around the basketball hoop at varying distances from and angles to the backboard. These nine locations can be anywhere within approximately 30 feet of the basket. Players take turns shooting the ball at the hoop from the various markers. If the ball goes in, that player moves to the next marker. If the shot is missed, the next player takes a turn. On their next turn, players pick up from their last missed marker.
- Winning:** The first player to make successful shots from each marker or all of the way "around the world, wins.
- Equalizers:** To make the game fair for players of different skill levels (or different sizes) mark two sets of locations. To level the playing field, make one for big kids and one for small kids. Another method is to have the better player(s) shoot with only one hand, or with their opposite hand.

BIG MOOSE HUNTER

- Objective:** A group game for kids where the moose tries to reach the open spot in the circle before the hunter gets them.
- Game type:** Active. A lot of movement may be required.
- Players:** 6 or more players.
- Needed:** None
- Rules:** Four or more people form a circle facing in and hold hands. One person is chosen as the "moose" goes around the circle ducking in and out of the circle going under people's arms. At some point they touch a person on the head as they pass and that person becomes the hunter. The moose continues to run around the circle dodging in and out of people while the hunter must follow exactly in the moose's footsteps. The moose races for the open spot in the circle with the hunter in pursuit. If the moose arrives safely, the hunter goes into the center of the circle or the "jail" and the old moose chooses a new moose. If the hunter catches the moose before arriving at the open spot, the moose goes into the circle and the hunter becomes the next moose. Play continues until there are so many people in the middle that a circle can't be formed around them.

BROOM ZOOM

- Objective:** A group game where you dive for the broom if your number is called. Don't let it touch the ground!
- Game type:** Active. A lot of movement may be required.
- Players:** 6 or more players.
- Needed:** Broom or stick
- Rules:** The players form a large circle facing inwards. Each player is given a number. One player stands in the center keeping the broom upright by resting the palm of his hand on the top. The player in the center calls out a number and removes his hand. The player whose number is called tries to catch the broom before it hits the ground. If that player manages to catch it they take their place in the center, otherwise the original player stays in the center. The stick should only be balanced upright and not held. They must just remove their hand and not push the stick in any way.

CATCH OR HEAD

- Objective:** A fake-em-out game which will keep you on your toes.
- Game type:** Active. A lot of movement may be required.
- Players:** 2 or more players.
- Needed:** A ball - not too heavy A soccer ball works well
- Rules:** Players must line up against a wall. A chosen player goes to the front of the line with a ball. Then he or she either shouts "Head" or "Catch!" while throwing the ball to the first person in line. Whatever the person calls, the first person has to do just the opposite; if the thrower calls "Head!" the first person has to catch the ball, and if the thrower calls "Catch!" the first person has to head the ball (don't use a heavy ball or you'll hurt your head!). If the first person either misses the ball or does the wrong thing, he/she is out and the play continues. But if the person does the right thing, he/she is still in, and the play still continues. Whoever is in last wins.
- Variation:** Everyone lines up against a wall with their hands behind their backs. The chosen thrower either throws the ball or fakes throwing it. If the thrower throws the ball, the catcher must catch it. If the catcher misses, he is out. If the thrower fakes the throw, the catcher is not allowed to jerk, move, or make any move that shows that he thought the ball was thrown. If he does, he is out. Whoever is in last wins.

CIRCLE CATCH

- Objective:** Similar to dodge ball but it's every man for himself.
- Game type:** Active. A lot of movement may be required.
- Players:** 6 or more players.
- Needed:** One playground ball

Rules: Form a circle and choose a person to start. That person tosses a playground ball to someone across the room. If the person catches it, they toss it to someone else. If they drop it, they are out and sit down. Last person standing is the winner. It's a good rainy day game and nobody gets hurt.

CIRCULAR DODGE BALL

Objective: This is a sports game similar to dodge ball but played in a circle.

Game type: Active. A lot of movement may be required.

Players: 6 or more players.

Needed: Two or three playground balls

Rules: Find or mark off a circle about 40 ft in diameter. Divide into two equal teams. One team starts inside the circle and the other team spreads out around the outside. Use two or three red rubber playground balls (about 14 inches in diameter) and throw them at the players inside the circle. The team inside is allowed to run around wherever they want, but cannot go out. You can only throw the ball to hit the team inside below the waist. If a ball is thrown and hits someone above the waist, the thrower has to stop playing. If a kid in the center is hit, they become one of the players outside the circle. The game is over when only one person is left inside the circle.

CLOTHESPIN TAG

Objective: Clamp as many clothespins as possible onto the clothes of your opponents.

Game type: Active. A lot of movement may be required.

Players: 6 or more players.

Needed: Clothespins with springs

Rules: Use four clothespins for this two-person confrontation. Each player begins with two. If you can get both pins securely attached to your opponent's clothes, you get one point. If you find yourself wearing both clothespins from your opponent, take two in hand and toss the other two to your opponent. Play begins again immediately. The game continues as long as the players can stand it. The player with the most points wins.

Variations: It can be played with virtually any number of players, as long as there are plenty of clothespins. Again, start with two clothespins for each player. The goal here is simply to clamp clothespins on other players indiscriminately. First player to clamp both wins. This game is ideal for breaking the ice or relieving tension in large groups.

Another variation is elimination. Each player begins with two pins. If you get pinned with two pins you are out and must stand aside while the rest carry on. Eventually it will be down to two players and one will be victorious.

CRACK THE WHIP

Objective: Form a human whip and watch the player on the end go flying!

Game type: Active. A lot of movement may be required.

Players: 6 or more players.

Needed: None

Rules: All players line up in a long line and hold hands. The player at the front of the line is the 'head' and the player at the end of the line is the 'tail'. The head can grab the next player with both hands if they choose. The game begins when the head begins to run wildly in any direction making sharp turns and quick double backs. The line must continue to hold each other's hands as tightly as possible. The force created by the twists and turns will often send the tail of the whip flying. It may be best for the tail to hold on with both hands to keep from flying off the end. Sometimes, however, the tail will go flying no matter how hard they hold on (thanks to physics) and this is why it is best to play on the grass. Be prepared to get dirty if you play this game!

DARE BASE

Objective: A unique game of team-based tag where fast running is a plus.

Game type: Active. A lot of movement may be required.

Players: 20 or more players

Needed: None

Setup: Divide the group into two equal teams. The teams need to be as even as possible in running speed. The game is played across an open field. Each team draws a line at opposite sides of the field. Behind the line is "safe". Between the two lines, in the middle of the field, is a no-man's-land.

Rules: When the game begins, players attempt to tag each other. A player from one team (let's say team A) can only tag a player from the other team (team B) if the player from team B left their safety zone first. For example, player 1 on team A sees player 2 from team B leave his/her safety zone and run into no-man's land. Player 1 then leaves his/her safety zone to try and tag player 2. Meanwhile, player 3 from team 2 sees player 1 from team A enter no-man's land and he/she then runs to tag player 1 etc. The game is a "dare" because players from one team enter no-man's land and try to get players from the other team to dare to chase and tag them. Players can be saved by members of their own team when the person chasing them gets tagged.

Tagging: Once a player gets tagged, the player from the other team who tagged them is "safe" until he/she returns to his own safe zone. However, once that player crosses back over the safety line into no-man's land they are no longer safe. When a player is tagged two things can happen. Players can decide up front how they want to play. In version one, on, each team has a "jail", consisting of people strung out into the middle of the playing area from the safety line. As more and more players from the opposite side get caught, the "jail" line gets longer and longer, and it becomes easier for someone from their team to "rescue" the player at the end of the jail line by tagging them before getting caught. In version two, players who get caught join the other side. This version is faster to play if time is an issue.

Winning: The game ends when one team captures players from the other team.

DOCTOR

Objective: A tag game where balls 'kill' you out but a 'doctor' can heal you instantly.

Game type: Active. A lot of movement may be required.

Players: 10 or more players

Needed: Two jackets or vest for the doctors Lots of playground balls (they should be soft enough not to injure someone when thrown)

Rules: Divide the group into two teams. Each team must choose a person to be the doctor. Both doctors must wear something to distinguish them as doctors such as a hunting vest or a bright jacket. There are no out of bounds in this game. There should be at least one ball for every 3 players. Someone says 'go' and each team tries to get the other teams players out by throwing the balls at them. If you are hit you must remain where you are. The doctors can move around the playing field and heal people by simply touching them. If you are healed you are back in the game and can continue moving. Doctors can be permanently removed from the game by being hit by a ball. Once a doctor is out he/she can't be healed. The game continues until all players are out and one team wins.

Valid throws:

1. Outs cannot be made by deflection shots or shots which bounce off one person and hit another.
2. Outs cannot be made by grounders or balls which bounce off the ground and then hit a person.
3. Outs cannot be made by simply touching a ball to someone like in baseball. They must be thrown at least a one foot distance to be valid.
4. You cannot get your own team mate out.

DODGE BALL

Objective: A sports game where you try to knock other players out by throwing playground balls. This is the one we all remember.

Game type: Active. A lot of movement may be required.

Players: 6 or more players.

Needed: Two or three playground balls

Setup: The group should divide into two equal teams. Determine a playing area with boundaries on all four sides. An area the size of a standard basketball court works well. Team 1 should form two lines facing each other. There needs to be at least 50 feet of space between both halves of team 1 to give team 2 some moving room. Team 2 should scatter anywhere between the lines of team 1. Two or three playground balls are used.

Rules: Team 1 throws balls at team 2. If a player on team 2 is hit below the shoulders, they are out. If a player on team 2 catches the ball in the air but not after a bounce, they receive a free 'life'. Then, if they are hit again, the free life is used up but the player is not out. A player may not receive more than three free lives. However, the fourth, fifth, etc. time a player catches the ball, they may bring a player who is out on their team back into the game. After all players of team 2 are out, the teams switch places.

Catching variation: If a player on the opposite team catches a ball before it bounces, the thrower is 'out'.

FLYING DUTCHMEN

Objective: Reach the open spot in the circle before your opponents.

Game type: Active. A lot of movement may be required.

Players: 4 or more players

Needed: None

Rules: Four or more people stand in a circle facing in and holding hands. Two people go around the outside and when ready, tap someone's clasped hands, breaking the chain. The Dutchmen run around the circle racing against the two whose hand-clasp was broken (who run in the opposite direction). The slowest team gets to be the Dutchmen for the next round. Variations on this game are many including hopping or skipping, or perhaps in piggy-back.

FOX AND THE SQUIRREL

Objective: Not to get tagged by the person that is it.

Game type: Active. A lot of movement may be required.

Players: 6 or more players.

Needed: None

Rules: To set up, have everyone pair off and link elbows with their partner. Form a wide circle, leaving 3-4 between each pair. Choose one of the pairs to start the game. One person is the Fox and the other is the Squirrel.

The Fox chases the Squirrel anywhere in or around the circle until the Squirrel links elbows with one of the pairs. As the Squirrel links elbows with another player A in the pair, Player B of that pair becomes the Squirrel. If the Squirrel is tagged before linking up with another pair, he becomes the Fox and the Fox becomes the Squirrel.

FREEZE TAG

Objective: A game of touch tag where you get frozen in place.

Game type: Active. A lot of movement may be required.

Players: 6 or more players.

Needed: None

Rules: First the players must define a playing area such as a yard or any space with set boundaries. There is no home base in this game. Choose a person to be "it" or the tagger. Once the game begins the group scatters and the tagger chases all people trying to tag them. When a person is tagged, they are frozen in place where they were tagged and should spread their legs. They can be unfrozen by having any player who is still not frozen crawl

between their legs. If a player is tagged while crawling between a players legs, they are frozen and should stand up and spread their legs. If players step out of bounds they can be "called" by the tagger and must step back in bounds and are frozen in that place.

Winning: The game continues until all the players are frozen. Then the last person to be frozen is the tagger for the next game.

GHOST IN THE GRAVEYARD

Objective: An outdoor group game where to try to make it to homebase before the "ghost" tags you.

Game type: Active. A lot of movement may be required.

Players: 3 or more players

Needed: None

Setup: Choose a home base location. It should be something you can touch or step on. Next choose a person to be the "ghost". The "ghost" will stand on the base and count "One O'clock, Two O'clock etc. etc. up until Twelve O'clock where they yell "midnight!" While the "ghost" counts the other players hide. Then all the hiders try to run and touch or step on the homebase before the "ghost" catches you or tags you. The last person to get tagged is the next "ghost".

GO TAG

Objective: A game of touch tag where you run around a line of people facing opposite directions.

Game type: Active. A lot of movement may be required.

Players: 6 or more players.

Needed: None

Rules: All players squat in a line with every other player facing the opposite direction (thus the line will alternate - front back front back etc. The person at one end of the line will be the first runner. They may run around the line in either direction. The person at the other end will be the first chaser. They may start running either clockwise or counter-clockwise, but they may not switch directions once they start. The object of the game is for the chaser to tag the runner. The chased person may change place with anyone in line. The chaser can only push out a new runner on the back who is facing the appropriate direction. When the chaser catches the chased, the person who tagged them becomes the starting chaser for the next game.

HAND-LESS BALL RELAY

Objective: Race the clock while figuring out as a team how to pass a ball from one end of the team to the other as quickly as possible.

Game type: Active. A lot of movement may be required.

Players: 8 or more players

Needed: Ball

Setup: Before the game, write the following on slips of paper. You'll need one slip of paper for each player. If you have lots of players then simply duplicate some of the following:

1. You cannot use your hands.
2. You cannot use your hands or feet.
3. You cannot use your hands and cannot let the ball touch the ground at any time.
4. You can use only your left hand and must stand on only one foot.

If a team has more than four players, at least one member of each team should be assigned one of the above rules.

Rules: Divide the players into two equal teams and have each team stand in a line. Have the players reach in a hat or bowl and draw one out. Then explain that the object will be to figure out as a team how to pass a ball from one end of the team to the other while abiding by the rules on the slips of paper. Give the team one minute to show each other their slips of paper and develop a plan. Then when both teams are ready say go! The first team to complete the task wins!

HANG TIME

Objective: A ball throwing game for people with strong arms. How long can you keep a ball in the air?

Game type: Active. A lot of movement may be required.

Players: 2 or more players.

Needed: A tennis ball and a stop watch

Rules: One player must be the referee and know how to use the stopwatch. Players must determine a set number of throws. 5 throws is a good suggestion. The first player throws the ball in the air as high as possible and has the referee see how many seconds it stays in the air. The referee must then record how many seconds it stayed in the air. Then other players each take their turn in order. After all throws are done, add up the seconds for each player. The player with the most seconds wins.

HEADS UP SEVEN UP

Objective: This is a fun guessing game for large groups of kids.

Game type: Active. A lot of movement may be required.

Players: 6 or more players.

Needed: None

Rules: Seven players stand in front of the group. The group must sit down and put their heads down with their eyes closed. The seven in front go around and each touch one person. That person would then stick his or her thumb up. After seven people have been touched, the seven choosers go back to the front of the room. Then the seven would say "Heads up seven up" and each "touched" student gets one chance to guess which of the seven touched him/her. If they guess right then they get to change places with that person. If they did not guess right, then the same person gets to stay up do it again.

HOSPITAL TAG

Objective: A game of touch tag where you can cover your 'tag wounds'.

Game type: Active. A lot of movement may be required.

Players: 6 or more players.

Needed: None

Rules: The basic rules are the same as tag. One person is "it" and the others run. When you get tagged you may cover your "wound" with one of your hands. When you get tagged a second time, you may cover your "wound" with your other hand. The third time you get tagged, you are out. Play until only all players are tagged. The first person "out" is the next "it".

HOT POTATO

Objective: This kids game is a lot like musical chairs but with a beanbag - the hot potato.

Game type: Active. A lot of movement may be required.

Players: 2 or more players.

Needed: A beanbag or other "potato" which is light weight and can be thrown or passed around the circle

Rules: Players form a circle. One person must sit out and be the music player. A bean bag (the hot potato) is passed from player to player while the music player, who shouldn't be looking at the group just to be fair, plays a stereo, sings, whistles or claps. When the music or clapping stops, the player who has the bean bag is out and sits in the center. The last one out wins. Stops should be made frequently so the game moves quickly and players will not be out for a long period. Try to act like the bean bag is really, really hot!

HUMAN KNOT

Objective: You must untangle the human knot of arms and bodies!

Game type: Active. A lot of movement may be required.

Players: 4 to 10 players

Needed: None

Rules: Have players form a close circle. Then each player reaches out and holds two other player's hands randomly. Right hands can grab right or left hands. Left hands can grab right or left hands. Now, the group must try to untangle the "knot" without letting go. They may have to climb over arms or crawl under arms. It helps to be limber. Eventually, if correct choices are made the group can unfold into a large circle while still holding hands.

JOHNNY RIDE A PONY

Objective: Force your opponents to collapse their pony.

Game type: Active. A lot of movement may be required.

Players: Two teams of 3 to 5 players

Needed: None

Rules: One person stands with their back to a wall. Other members of the team bend down and hold onto one leg of the person in front of them like a line attached to a pole. One player at a time from the opposite team must run and leap upon the first team. Each member of the opposition does the same in turn. Object is to force the team being jumped on to collapse. Each team takes turns and the team with the most wins, wins.

KEEP AWAY BALL

Objective: A group game where you quickly pass a ball around a circle and try to keep it away from the person in the middle.

Game type: Active. A lot of movement may be required.

Players: 6 or more players.

Needed: Playground ball

Rules: Chose someone to be "it" and give them a ball. Everyone else is in a circle around "it". "It" starts the game by passing the ball to a player in the circle who throws it to anyone else in the circle. The object of the game is for "it" to either catch or touch the ball while it is being passed around the circle. When "it" intercepts the ball, the player who touched it last becomes "it".

KICKBALL

Objective: The old school playground favorite. It's basically softball played with a playground ball.

Game type: Active. A lot of movement may be required.

Players: 10 to 20 players

- Needed:** Playground ball
- Setup:** Teams usually consist of 8 or 10 players but can be as few as 4 or 5 for informal games. Games usually take place on standard softball fields with home plate and three bases.
- Innings:** There are 5 innings per game in standard kickball rules. Sometimes teams play 7 innings. All player get up to bat each inning. Innings and half-innings end when
1. The last player on a side gets out
 2. Home plate is touched by a player holding the ball. No tagging is required.
- Outs:** Players can get out by the following methods:
1. Defense catches a pop fly
 2. In a forced runner situation, defense throws the ball to and touches a base before a runner reaches the base
 3. In a non-forced runner situation, defense tags the runner before reaching the base
 4. The ball is thrown directly at the runner and hits them below the waist.
 5. Leading off and stealing bases is not allowed and results in an out.
 6. Runners who leave their bases before a ball reaches home plate or is kicked are out.
 7. Kickers also get out by missing a kick attempt (see below).
- Pitches and kicking:** Pitchers roll the ball to home plate from the pitchers mound. Kickers cannot kick the ball until it is within 3 feet of homeplate. If the kicker does not like the pitch, he/she should not attempt to kick it, and another pitch will be thrown. There are no strikeouts or walks. A kicker gets only one attempt at kicking the ball. A missed attempt or a foul ball is an out. Bunting is not permitted and results in an out.
- Safety:** In order to prevent injury and protect any defensive player attempting to make a play on a base runner, the base runner must be called out, if he/she remains on his/her feet, and deliberately, with great force crashes into a defensive player holding the ball, waiting to apply a tag. If the act is determined to be flagrant, the offender shall also be ejected.

KITTY CORNER

- Objective:** A group dodge ball game where players run from corner to corner and try not to get hit.
- Game type:** Active. A lot of movement may be required.
- Players:** 6 or more players.
- Needed:** Several playground balls and a room with corners
- Rules:** Pick from 1 to 6 people to be "it". Everyone that is "it" gets a ball (like a standard red kickball). All the "its" must stand in the center of a room which has at least 4 corners. All other players are cats. All the cats pick a corner to stand in. Someone must act as umpire and yell "cats get a corner". Then all cats run for the corner that is next. Everyone should move in the same direction so no one runs into each other. While the cats are running the "its" try to hit them with the ball. If you get hit you stand in the middle by the person who hit you. The "it" at the end with the most cats is a winner and gets to be a cat. The first cat to get hit becomes an "it".

LIFE SAVER

- Objective:** Pull your team member to safety with quick knot tying.
- Game type:** Active. A lot of movement may be required.
- Players:** 6 or more players.
- Needed:** Six pieces of 4-foot long rope per team Blanket (for indoors) or a wagon (for outdoors) Broom handle or stick
- Rules:** The object of the game is to tie the ropes together to have a rope long enough to throw to someone out about 15 feet away and pull them to safety. One player sits on the blanket or in the wagon and waits for his team to tie the ropes together using whatever knots they can fashion. Once the rope is thrown to the waiting player, he/she must tie a knot in the end while the other players tie a knot around the stick. All pulling must be done on the stick and not the rope. The first team to pull the player to safety wins.

LIONS CUB

- Objective:** This is a game where you sneak up on the lion to steal the "cub".
- Game type:** Active. A lot of movement may be required.
- Players:** 2 to 6 players.
- Needed:** A stuffed lion (or similar)
- Rules:** Select a person to be the Lion. Have the lion sit with their back to the other players at least ten feet away. Put a stuffed animal behind the lion and have the lion pretend it is his cub. Have the other players take turns sneaking up behind the Lion and trying to steal the cub. If the lion hears the person sneaking up it can roar and then turn around. If the lion has caught a player the player takes the lions place and the lion goes back to the other players. If there is no player when the lion roars the player lion remains the lion and the game starts again.

MAN HUNT

- Objective:** A game of hide and seek done in groups.
- Game type:** Active. A lot of movement may be required.
- Players:** 6 or more players.
- Needed:** None
- Rules:** Establish two separate teams with an equal number of players. Have one team be "it" and have the other team hide. The team that is "it" must find and capture all the members of the hiding team and secure them in one place so that they are all in the same place. When the game is over, teams switch sides. This game is more fun played with boys and girls.

MINEFIELD

- Objective:** A communication where you try to talk your blindfolded teammate through a series of obstacles.
- Game type:** Active. A lot of movement may be required.
- Players:** 2 or more players.
- Needed:** Blindfolds Numbers of moveable obstacles such as balls, chairs, jackets, shoes etc
- Rules:** Define a square playing space. Have the team create a list of things that are detrimental to functioning as a group such as poor communication, anger, jealousy, wrong tools, not listening etc. For each characteristic/action, throw an object into the playing space, the "minefield." Have the group choose partners. One partner is blindfolded at one end of field. The non-blindfolded partners stand at the opposite end of the field and try to talk their partners through the minefield without running into any of the obstacles. If the blindfolded partner touches an object they die and another partner must try. However, once they are blindfolded the other team can move the objects around if they choose. The team with the highest number of successful crossings wins.

PETRIFIED BASEBALL

- Objective:** A sports game similar to baseball but you can't move your feet.
- Game type:** Active. A lot of movement may be required.
- Players:** 6 or more players.
- Needed:** Volleyball
- Rules:** Divide into two teams. The rules are similar to regular baseball except that a volleyball is used (no bats!) and the fielding team may not move their feet. It is best to keep your players in close without too much distance in between each other. The hitting team hits the volleyball with their hand, and crawls around the bases. To score a point, the batter must run around the bases on feet and hands (like a dog or horse) and back to home before the fielding team gets the ball to the catcher at home. If the fielding team gets the ball ahead of the batter, he is out. After three people are out, the teams trade places.

POISON SNAKE PIT

- Objective:** A team building game where you must work together to get across.
- Game type:** Active. A lot of movement may be required.
- Players:** 2 or more players.

Needed: Bandanas

Rules: Divide the group into two teams. Stake out an area at least 15 feet or 20 feet across. This is the snake pit. Tell the group that the pit is too wide to go around. They will have to cross! Hand each group two or three bandanas and tell them the bandanas repel snakes and they will be safe as long as they don't step off the bandanas. Make sure for the first pass that neither group has enough bandanas to cross. They should come up just short. Don't mention that they can't work together. Usually they will just assume since you divided them into two groups that you expect them to compete. The truth is the only way they can cross is to work together. Have them rethink their strategy and try again as two groups working as one.

POM POM

Objective: A game of tag where you race between safety zones.

Game type: Active. A lot of movement may be required.

Players: 6 or more players.

Needed: None

Rules: A square or rectangular playing area is chosen and boundaries are set on two sides of the square or rectangle. It should be a fairly big space around 50ft by 50ft. Someone is chosen to be "it". All players except the person who is "it" begin behind one of the boundaries on either side. "It" goes to the middle of the playing area. When everyone appears ready, "it" calls, "Pom pom!" That is the cue for everyone to leave their safety area behind the boundary and to run across the playing area to the other boundary. All players MUST run across during each round. "It" tries to tag as many people as possible. If a player is tagged, she/he joins "it" in the middle to help. The game ends when all players have been tagged. The last player to get tagged becomes "it" for the next round.

PRETZEL STRAW RACE

Objective: Pass a pretzel from player to player using only a straw! A relay race game.

Game type: Active. A lot of movement may be required.

Players: 6 or more players.

Needed: Straws Pretzels

Rules: First divide your group into two teams. Each team will need to be lined up facing the forward. Then take a bunch of straws and give each player one. The player at the beginning of the line gets the pretzel. This should be the twisted pretzel, not the pretzel sticks! Before you begin, everybody puts the straws into their mouth and then the captain (first person in each line) puts a pretzel on his/her straw. The object is to pass the pretzel from team member to team member using only the straw, no hands allowed! The first team to pass it down to the end of the line wins. If the pretzel falls on the floor then you must start at the beginning again.

RED LIGHT GREEN LIGHT

Objective: Try to spy anyone moving during a red light!

Game type: Active. A lot of movement may be required.

Players: 3 or more players

Needed: None

Rules: This game is best played outside or in a large room. The group should determine a start line and a finish line. One person is chosen as the "traffic cop". The rest of the players form a line at the start line about 15 to 20 feet away from the "cop" who is at the finished line and who has his back turned away from the group. The "cop" then says "green light" and the group slowly (or quickly) moves forward. At any time the cop can say "red light" and turn around. If he sees anyone still moving, they are out and the game continues. It is important that the "cop" say "red light" BEFORE they turn around to give the players a second to react. The last player not spied moving gets to be the "cop". Or if one of the players reaches the traffic cop and touches them, they get to be the next traffic cop.

RED ROVER

Objective: Break through the line formed by your opponents.

Game type: Active. A lot of movement may be required.

Players: 6 or more players.

Needed: None

Rules: Players are divided into two teams and line up facing each other about 25 to 50 feet apart. Each side takes turns calling "Red Rover, Red Rover, let (insert name) come over." At that signal, the player whose name is called, runs from his line and tries to break through the line of opponents, who have all joined hands. If he breaks through, he can take one opponent of his/her choice back with him to his team. If he does not break through, he must join the other team. The team to add all the other players on its side first, or which has the most players at the end of a designated time period, wins. When one team is down to only one player, the game is officially over.

ROUNDAABOUT

Objective: This is a running game of tag where you quickly change directions.

Game type: Active. A lot of movement may be required.

Players: 6 or more players.

Needed: None

Rules: The leader must first mark off a circle or square around which the players will run. This can be an obstacle (such as a car or shed) or perhaps just some cones placed on the ground. Players stand in a circle facing the same direction spread out by a least three feet. When the leader says "Go" everyone begins running around the circle (or square). Players must always pass on the outside. Each player tries to pass the person ahead and tag them as they pass. Tagged players are out. When the leader calls "Switch", the players must reverse direction. This turns the tables on the fast runner who is just about to overtake another player. Play until only one player is left.

SCOUT IN THE AIR

Objective: A game of ball tag where you attempt to hit other player with a ball from a long distance.

Game type: Active. A lot of movement may be required.

Players: 3 or more players

Needed: Playground ball

Rules: The group first assigns each player a number starting with 1. The group then must choose a thrower. The thrower throws the ball high into the air and yells "Scout in the air number X". X represents any number of any players. While the ball is in the air, the rest of the players scatter in any direction away from where the ball will land. The player whose number was called must try to catch the ball. If it bounces once or twice that's OK. However, once the player has control of the ball he/she yells "Freeze!" and the rest of the group all freeze in their spot wherever they are. Then the thrower takes 3 steps towards any player and throws the ball, trying to hit the chosen player. If the ball hits the player, the player gets a letter "S" (the first letter in S-C-O-U-T). If the thrower misses, then the thrower gets a letter "S". The thrower then throws the ball in the air again and the game starts again. The game continues and players continue to add letters (S-C-O-U-T) until players acquire all five letters "Scout" (gets hit or misses a throw 5 times) putting them out of the game. If the thrower hits a player putting them out of the game, the thrower chooses the next thrower. The game continues until only one person remains.

SEVEN UP

Objective: This is a fun guessing game for large groups of kids.

Game type: Active. A lot of movement may be required.

Players: 10 or more players

Needed: None

Rules: This is a game for a large group. One person must be the 'host' and cannot play. In a classroom setting, the 'host' is the teacher. Someone in the group is chosen to be the 'chooser'. Everyone puts their heads down on their desks and extends one thumb. Then the chooser goes around touching the thumbs of six people. If a person's thumb is touched, they go to the front of the room. When all six chosen people are up front, the chooser yells "Seven up!" Then everyone raises their heads and has to guess which of the seven people is the real chooser.

SHARKS AND MINNOWS

Objective: The game is a game of tag where you swim quietly.

Game type: Active. A lot of movement may be required.

Players: 4 or more players

Needed: Swimming pool

Rules: This is a swimming pool game. A person is chosen to be the 'shark'. They get out and stand on the side of the pool facing away from the other players. The other players are called 'minnows'. They are lined up in the pool on one side near the shark. The group must then pick a category. This can be anything such as colors, kinds of animals, states, deserts, brands of candy, flavors of ice cream etc. For example, if the chosen category is flavors of ice cream, each minnow picks a kind of ice cream (but they don't say it out loud). After everyone has made their choice, the shark begins saying different flavors of ice cream (or states or animals etc.). When the flavor that a minnow has chosen is yelled by the shark, he/she swims/moves to the other side of the pool as quietly as they can. Sometimes more than one minnow will have chosen the same thing. Now comes the fun part. If the shark hears any minnow moving then they can jump or dive into the pool and try to tag them. If they are successful, then the minnow that was tagged becomes the shark. Otherwise the shark stays the same. However, if the shark turns around and everyone is still touching the side of the pool, it is considered a foul and the shark must do ten push ups or do a cannonball or whatever the group decides.

SNAKE IN THE GRASS

Objective: A game of touch tag where you must slither on your stomach.

Categories: Groups, Tag

Game type: Active. A lot of movement may be required.

Players: 6 or more players.

Needed: None

Rules: Determine the tag area and make the area fairly small. One person is the snake, who lies on the ground on his stomach. Everyone else gathers fearlessly around to touch him. When the leader shouts "snake-in-the- grass" everyone runs, staying within the bounds of the snake area, while the snake, moving on his belly, tries to tag as many as he can. Those touched become snakes. The last person caught is the snake starter in the next game.

SPONGE RUN

Objective: Two teams compete to fill a bucket with water by handing off a sponge.

Game type: Active. A lot of movement may be required.

Players: 6 or more players.

Needed: Four buckets, two sponges and some water

Rules: Divide into two teams. Give each team an empty bucket and a bucket filled half way with water. The buckets should be off equal size and filled the same amount. Place one member of each team a distance of 20 feet from the rest of the team with the empty bucket on the ground at their feet. The rest of each team should line up facing their teammate 20 feet away with the filled bucket at their feet. The object is to move as much water as possible in a pre-determined amount of time (usually 90 second or 2 minutes). When you say, "go", one member of each team (let's call them #1) fills the sponge and races to the empty bucket and empties it. #1 then hands the sponge to the team member standing there (#2) who then runs back to the waiting team. #2 then hands the sponge to #3 who then dips the sponge and runs to the other bucket and empties it. They then hand the sponge to #1 who runs to the team and hands it to #4 etc. etc. The team who accumulates the most water wins.

SPUD

Objective: A game of tag with a playground a lot like Horse.

Game type: Active. A lot of movement may be required.

Players: 3 or more players

Needed: Playground ball

Rules: The group must choose a thrower. The thrower then counts to 10, out loud. As they count, the rest of the players scatter. When the thrower reaches 10, the rest of the group all freeze in their spot. Then the thrower takes 4 giant steps towards any player and yells "S-P-U-D", one letter for each step. Then the thrower throws the ball, trying to hit the chosen player. If the ball hits the player, the player gets a letter "S". If the thrower misses, then the thrower gets a letter. That person then becomes the thrower. The game continues and players continue to add letters until players acquire all four letters SPUD (gets hit or misses a throw 4 times) putting them out of the game. If the thrower hits a player putting them out of the game, the thrower chooses the next thrower. The game continues until only one-person remains.

Variation: All players form a circle and count off (they must remember their number.) One player is chosen to be "it" and is given a playground ball. S/he throws the ball high up into the air and calls out another player's number. Everybody runs away except for the player with that number. S/he must run to the ball. When s/he gets the ball, s/he calls, "Spud!" very loudly. Everybody must freeze when they hear, "Spud!" Then, the player with the ball can take two big steps towards any player and throw the ball at him/her. If that player is hit by the ball, s/he becomes "it." If not, the player who called "Spud!" is "it."

STICKY FINGERS

- Objective:** A game of touch tag where you get stuck wherever you get tagged
- Game type:** Passive. Little or no movement is required.
- Players:** 6 or more players.
- Needed:** None
- Rules:** This is a good playground tag game. Select one player to be "Sticky". Start the game by saying "This is a stick up!" as players scatter around the playground. When "Sticky" tags a player, the tagged player must place a hand on the place touched while still continuing to run. As more and more players become stuck on themselves, sticky has a better chance to totally immobilize one player. When both hands of a player are stuck, the third touch sticks him or her with being the next "Sticky".

STUCK IN THE MUD

- Objective:** A game of touch tag where you get frozen in place.
- Game type:** Active. A lot of movement may be required.
- Players:** 6 or more players.
- Needed:** None
- Rules:** First the players must define a playing area such as a yard or anything with set boundaries. In this version of tag, one person is "it" and attempts to tag any of the other players, but when they touch someone, that person is "frozen" in place. They cannot move and must stand with their feet apart. The only way they can become unfrozen is if another person crawls under their legs. Play continues until all the players are frozen. Then the last person to be frozen is "it" for the next game.

THREE-LEGGED SACK RACE

- Objective:** A relay race where you have a partner, a sack and three legs!
- Game type:** Active. A lot of movement may be required.
- Players:** 4 or more players
- Needed:** Pillow cases, burlaps sacks, garbage sacks or comparable
- Rules:** Have the group divide into pairs. Each pair will need a sack or pillowcase. Determine a starting line and a turn back line. Each pair must keep at least one foot inside the sack or pillowcase at all times during the race. Otherwise they will be disqualified. Each team must figure out the best method to keep the sack or pillowcase on and move quickly. The object is to run as a team to the turn back line and back first. It may help to tie the sacks etc. around people's legs or you may make the untied sack or whatever part of the game.

TIPPING HORSE

Objective: A sports game involving shooting a basketball from different locations on the court and allows tipping.

Game type: Active. A lot of movement may be required.

Players: 2 or more players.

Needed: Basketball court Basketball

Setup: Determine the area within which the players can shoot. It should be clear what is out of bounds. Shots can be made from anywhere within the agreed upon area. It is also important that all players agree whether trick shots are allowed and whether there are air ball penalties.

Scoring: Being a tipper doesn't mean you're safe from getting letters. If a tipper attempts to make a tip and misses, the next player in the turn cycle may attempt to tip the ball. If they are successful, the unsuccessful tipper is penalized with a letter.

Multiple letters can be given out in a single turn of Tip Horse, so you must pay attention to your turn and who is getting letters for different errors. Here is a listing of the ways in which players are penalized with letters.

1. Any air ball shot is penalized with one letter. An air ball is defined, at our house, as a ball that fails to touch the rim or backboard or go through the hoop. Any part of the backboard counts. The net does not count. Air ball does not count on tips. In other words, if you attempt to tip a missed shot and you miss the hoop and backboard, you will not be penalized with a letter. Tipping is good and should be promoted as it makes play exciting.
2. Any missed shot after a player has established a set shot. This means that if player 1 has made a shot and player 2 misses their attempt to make the same shot, they are penalized with a letter.
3. Any successful tip results in a penalty letter to the previous shooter.
4. Going out of turn results in a penalty letter.
5. Tipping the ball when it is not your turn results in a penalty letter.
6. Intentionally interfering with another player's turn results in a penalty letter.

So, following these rules, you can see how a single player might be penalized with three letters in a single turn. For example, player 1 establishes a shot, player 2 misses the shot with an air ball, and player 3 catches the air ball in the air and tips it into the basket (1 letter for the missed shot + 1 letter for the air ball + 1 letter for the tip).

We allow trick shots that call for multiple actions. For example, one of the 'House' shots is that we throw the ball from behind the basket over the top of the backboard, let the ball bounce once, catch it in the air and shoot a basket before landing on the ground.

Tip order: If a player attempts to make a tip and it rolls off their hands, the next player may grab the ball immediately, so pay attention to your turn relative to tips. This is where most people lose out in that they forget their tip turn.

Calling shots: Shots can be called such as 'Backboard', 'Swish', and 'Ground'. This means that the ball must be, respectively, shot off the backboard, only be allowed to touch the net, and shot by bouncing the ball off the ground. If a player calls one of these shot and makes the basket but fails to cover the call, the ball is tippable. For example, if a player calls 'Backboard' and the ball bounces off the rim and goes through the hoop, never touching the backboard, the next player may catch the ball through the hoop and tip it in.

TOILET TAG

- Objective:** A game of touch tag where you can't tag someone squatting in a toilet position!
- Game type:** Active. A lot of movement may be required.
- Players:** 6 or more players.
- Needed:** None
- Rules:** Choose a tag area such as a front yard and determine boundaries etc. and a jail area. Then choose a 'tagger'. The tagger attempts to tag players while they run or stand within the defined area. If a player is tagged they go to the jail. During the game players can squat down like a toilet forming a safety area. While in this position a player cannot be tagged. Players can only stay in the toilet position for a limited amount of time, usually 5 or 10 seconds. This should be determined prior to playing.
- Winning:** The game ends when the tagger has captured all players.
- Variations:** In another version, there is no jail and any player who is tagged instantly becomes the next tagger. There are no tag backs in this version.

TURTLE TAG

- Objective:** A game of touch tag where you can't tag someone while on their back like an upside down turtle!
- Game type:** Active. A lot of movement may be required.
- Players:** 6 or more players.
- Needed:** None
- Rules:** Choose a tag area such as a front yard and determine boundaries etc. and a jail area. Then choose a 'tagger'. The tagger attempts to tag players while they run or stand within the defined area. If a player is tagged they go to the jail. During the game players can lay down on their backs like a stranded turtle forming a safety area. While in this position a player cannot be tagged. Players can only stay in the turtle position for a limited amount of time, usually 5 or 10 seconds. This should be determined prior to playing.
- Winning:** The game ends when the tagger has captured all players.
- Variations:** In another version, there is no jail and any player who is tagged instantly becomes the next tagger. There are no tag backs in this version.

WALL DODGE BALL

- Objective:** Dodge ball with a wall!
- Game type:** Active. A lot of movement may be required.
- Players:** 3 or more players
- Needed:** A playground ball and a wall
- Rules:** This requires a long wall or side of a house and a big rubber playground ball. Chose someone to be 'it'. All the players line up against the wall. 'It' stands about 10 to 15 feet away and throws the ball at the wall in an attempt to hit a part of someone's body. If they do, then that person is "it" and must now throw the ball. The strategy may be to throw hard and fast but it is usually better to throw softer and more accurately.
- Scoring:** If you want to keep score you can give each person a certain number of hits, let's say three, and when a player is hit three times they are out. Eventually when you get down to two players, they trade off and take turns trying to hit each other until one is out. The last one standing is the winner.

WHATS THE TIME SCOUTMASTER

- Objective:** A game where "Mother may I" meets "Tag".
- Game type:** Active. A lot of movement may be required.
- Players:** 3 or more players
- Needed:** None
- Rules:** Players must choose someone to be the 'Scoutmaster'. The Scoutmaster stands with their back turned to the others at a distance of 20 or 25 feet away. The others call out, "What's the time Scoutmaster" and the Scoutmaster turns to face the others and shouts out a time, for example "10 o'clock!" The others would then take 10 steps toward the Scoutmaster. The group will take the same amount of steps toward the Scoutmaster as the amount of hours in the Scoutmaster's time. e.g. 3 o'clock = 3 steps, 7 o'clock = 7 steps etc. The Scoutmaster will then turn his back to the group again for them to yell "What's the time Scoutmaster" (He looks at the group only when he shouts the time). When the group gets close to the Scoutmaster, the next time the group yells "What's the time Scoutmaster" the Scoutmaster says "Midnight". Then the Scoutmaster runs after the group who run as quickly as possible back to the start line, and the Scoutmaster tags as many of the group as he can catch. All those tagged join the Scoutmaster and the game begins again. Game continues until one person is left and they are the winner. If no one is tagged then the Scoutmaster has to do it all over again.

ZOOM

Objective: Be one of the final two winners left in the circle.

Game type: Active. A lot of movement may be required.

Players: 6 or more players.

Needed: None

Rules: The object of Zoom is to be one of two winners. The game is played by everyone sitting in a circle, facing in. One person begins by saying the word "zoom" and turning to face the person on either her right or left. The person "zoomed" can do one of two things. First, turn his head and look at the next person in the circle and say "zoom", thus continuing in the same direction. Second, he can make a brake screeching noise (hrrrr--or something) and look back toward the person who just "zoomed" her (or perhaps braked her), thus reversing the direction of the zoom. The game must go rapidly and with rhythm. If someone messes up--looks the wrong direction, says the wrong thing, or hesitates--they are out and the circle closes in. The game continues until there are only two left.

CAPTURE THE FLAG – traditional rules

From the 1947 Scoutmaster's Handbook, pp 447-8:

Space - Large

Type - Strenuous

Teams - Half Troop

Formation - Informal

Equipment - Two Signal Flags

Each team has its own territory in which its Scouts are free to move as they please, but on which opponents enter at their peril. A boundary line such as a brook or a trail, etc separates the territories. The enemy may capture any Scout crossing this line.

The teams assemble close together at a starting point near the center of the line, each team in its own territory. On a signal the teams proceed to set their flags at any point within 200 steps of the starting point. The flags must be visible, although it is permissible to place them as inconspicuously as possible.

After three minutes another signal is given for start of game. The object now is to enter the enemy's territory, capture the flag, and carry it across the line into home territory without being caught. Scouts may be posted to guard the flag, but not get nearer than 50 feet to it, unless an enemy Scout goes within the 50-foot circle. They may then follow him.

Grasping him long enough for the captor to say "Caught" three times may capture any Scout found in the enemy's territory. When a Scout is captured he must go with captor to the "guard house" - a tree or rock from the boundary line.

A prisoner may be released by a friend touching him, provided the prisoner at that time is touching the guard house with a hand or a foot, whereupon both return to their own territory. If the guards catch the rescuer before he touches the prisoner, he, too, must go to the guardhouse. A rescuer can rescue only one prisoner at a time.

If the flag is successfully captured, it must be carried across the line into home territory. If the raider is caught before he reaches home, the flag is set up again at the point where it was rescued and the game as before. If neither side captures the enemy's flag within the time agreed up on (say, 1/2 hour) the game is won by the team with the most prisoners.

New Ideas

Hidden Flag

Allow each team to hide their flag out of sight. Before starting the game allow a scout from each team to be shown where the flag is. He must describe accurately, to his team, where the flag is. This requires that the scout be very observant.

Get Out of Jail Free

All team members caught in the jail can be set free when a single teammate touches the jail. BUT, they do not have free passage back to their territory.

Jail Break

If the game begins to stall, allow the judges to yell "Jail Break." At this moment all players in both jails are free to escape.

Orienteering Skills 1

Leaders hide flags and give 2 starting points for each team along a base line. Teams are split in two and sent to the starting points. At the starting point each group is given a compass bearing to their OWN flag. Each group follows its bearing - if they do it correctly the flag will be near where the bearings cross. Once each team locates its flag they will also find a map with bearings to the "enemy flag" which was left there. The game then proceeds as usual. *(Contributed by Mike Mullen, Troop 6, Boston Minuteman Council).*

Orienteering Skills 2

Give both teams maps with starting points marked and bearings, and let them work it out on the map rather than having to actually walk the bearings. *(Contributed by Mike Mullen, Troop 6, Boston Minuteman Council).*