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# Recreation Director's Handbook

A guide for recreation  
delivery in Aboriginal  
communities



2008

Manitoba 

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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# PROGRAM IDEAS

There are unlimited activity possibilities for your recreation program. Offer a variety of options. Be creative. Have fun and try new things. Remember, people usually only ask for what they know. Spice it up a bit and remember it takes time for new ideas to catch on.

This section includes tips for making teams and being creative with equipment, thoughts for theme days, as well as a collection of games and other ideas.

*"You can learn more from a person in an hour of play, than a lifetime of conversation."  
-Plato*



## TIPS FOR MAKING TEAMS

To avoid the potential nastiness that arises when players pick their own teams, consider forming teams based on the answers to the following questions.

- ◇ Clasp your hands and fold your thumbs. Is your right or left thumb on top?
- ◇ Which leg do you put in your pants (shorts) first?
- ◇ When you tap your foot to music, do you use the right or left foot?
- ◇ Do you print or use cursive when you write a letter?
- ◇ Using your index finger as a pencil, draw a profile of a dog. Is the dog facing right or left?
- ◇ With which eye do you give a spontaneous wink?
- ◇ Can you roll your tongue? Can you turn your tongue upside down?
- ◇ What is your astrological sign?
- ◇ After a store purchase, do you count your change or not?
- ◇ Do you pick up pennies from the ground or ignore them?

## SOME IDEAS ABOUT EQUIPMENT

**SMALL BALLS:** (Softball, tennis ball, ball of sponge, wood, paper, rags, sand or beans.)

You can use them to:

1. Throw for distance or accuracy.
2. Pass - forward, backward, under, over, around, from player to player.
3. Be batted with the hand, stick or block.
4. Be kicked, bounced, dribbled, carried, rolled to a marker, into a hole, between obstacles, or against a wall.
5. Teach the fundamental skills of catching and throwing.

**LARGE BALLS:** (Soccer, play balls, volleyballs, basketballs).

**Note:** Rubber is best for outdoor use. Basketballs and volleyballs should never be kicked.

You can use them to:

1. Roll between obstacles, at targets or markers.
2. Pass, over, around, under, from player to player.
3. Kick, dribble, bounce, for accuracy at, through, or around targets or markers.
4. Carry or juggle while moving.
5. Throw into boxes, cans, barrels, pails or baskets or through hoops and tires.
6. Bat with the hand.



### **OLD TIRES OR HOOPS:** (Metal or wooden)

You can use them to:

1. Roll for speed or accuracy while stationary or moving.
2. Skip or to perform other stunts.
3. Serve as targets, at or through which objects are thrown while the hoops are stationary or rolling.
4. Serve as obstacles in a race.
5. Roll so that they come to rest over stakes or on a marked-out area.

### **ROPES:** (Sash cord or clothesline)

You can use them to:

1. Jump over or skip.
2. Spin or throw as a lasso.
3. Serve as obstacles in races.
4. Act as starting, finishing lines, poison lines or markers.
5. Play tug of war.
6. Serve as nets. (Hang small pieces of paper or cloth from the rope).
7. Serve as crossbars when weighted at both ends.
8. Play tetherball.

### **PAPER BAGS OR SACKS:**

You can use them to:

1. Serve as masks or blindfolds.
2. Blow up and burst during races.
3. Wear as hats and be knocked off by a roll of newspaper.
4. Set as handicaps in races. (When worn on the feet).



Learn to use what you have.

## CHILDREN'S PROGRAMMING- DOS AND DON'TS

### DOS

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Over plan  
Encourage  
Recognize individual differences  
Be patient  
Be respectful  
Everyone participates  
Listen  
Short and simple games  
Be interesting  
Be creative  
Be prepared  
Remember quiet time  
Safety first  
Fun  
Pay attention  
Consider age factors  
Join in  
Positive reinforcement  
Visual demonstration  
Group input in setting rules  
Speak at their level  
Repeat instructions  
Time for questions  
Singing/storytelling  
Be responsible  
Act on rules right away  
Group decisions on activities  
Give 100% in everything you do  
Touch heads when numbering for teams  
Make everyone a winner.

### DON'TS

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Avoid running programs too long  
Avoid ridiculing or criticizing  
Avoid too much competition  
Avoid being mean/harsh  
Avoid screaming  
Avoid any form of abuse  
Avoid swearing  
Avoid breaking promises  
Avoid leaving them alone too long

# SPORTS AND GAMES-POINTS TO REMEMBER

- ◇ Plan ahead
- ◇ Arrive with twice as many games
- ◇ Start with old and then try new
- ◇ Name that game
- ◇ Explain - demonstrate
- ◇ Play it
- ◇ Alternate pace
- ◇ Start even when there are few participants

## THINGS TO AVOID:

- ◇ Too much competition
- ◇ Two vigorous games in a row
- ◇ Elimination games
- ◇ Favoritism
- ◇ Gender teaming
- ◇ Repeating games too often

## LEARN TO:

1. Modify game - to fit ages, space and time.
2. Add a new regulation for excitement.
3. Make up games - it's fun and profitable.

## GAMES

### ANIMALS, ANIMALS!

**PLAYERS:** 4+

**EQUIPMENT:** animal cards

**TIME:** 10-15 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** Animals, Animals! is a good game for helping people develop deeper rapport with animals. There are two ways to play the game. The first version, using animal pictures, is playful and makes a good beginning for an outdoor session. The second is more serious, often profound, and creates great empathy through observation of live animals.

#### **Animals, Animal! Version 1.**

This version can be played with all kinds of hilarious variations. To begin, explain that you'll pass out animal picture cards and that the players should keep 'their' animal's identity secret. After you pass out the cards, have the players act out their animals' typical behavior, one 'actor' at a time.

If you have a large group, you might want to ask for 8 or 10 volunteers to 'perform' for the others. In such a situation, you can place a variety of picture cards on the ground and let each player choose the animal he feels best able to imitate.

When an 'animal' comes 'on stage', tell him to visualize his animal in his/her mind first, and then capture the animal's essence in a still pose. After holding the pose for eight seconds, tell him/her to move around like the animal. To end the performance, the actor can make the animal's sound, warbling, braying and so on.

The other players guess what the animal is. It is very important to let the player finish the 'act' before calling out names. To help the group restrain their eagerness, tell them you'll wave an arm when it's time to start guessing. If a player can't mimic the animal's call very well, or if quickly runs out of movements, let everyone begin guessing a bit sooner.

The animals you choose should be easily identifiable, with well-known physical characteristics and movements. Some perennial favorites are: bear, bat, penguin, gorilla, turtle, owl, leopard and heron.

### **Animals, Animals! Version 2**

If you play *Animals, Animals!* At a zoo, farm or wilderness area, be sure to take advantage of opportunities to let the players see real, live animals, it'll whet their interest in observing them closely. They'll learn more, and it'll also increase their empathy for 'their' animal.

If the players are old enough, send them out alone to look for an animal they find especially interesting. If some of the players feel unsure of themselves outdoors, or if they're new to nature games, send them out in teams of three.

I remind the players that dragonflies, lizards and butterflies are animals too, and that they're much easier to observe than bobcats or eagles. Some groups have a hard time relating to small animals like insects. But if there aren't any large animals in your area, you could give the players a choice of imitating other natural phenomena, such as grass, rocks and trees.

Tell the players to observe the animal's movements, sounds, rhythms and physical characteristics carefully. If they're inclined, they can also silently ask the animal to reveal its inner essence and beauty.

Tell the players that after they've observed their animals, they should imagine they are the animal and try to move and think like it. Tell them this is a perfect time to practice their 'act' because they'll be alone and able to study the animal in real life. Feeling a close bond with the animal will make it easier to act their role convincingly.

Before sending the players out, you might want to play *Animals, Animals!* with pictures.



# BACK STABBERS

**PLAYERS:** 8+

**EQUIPMENT:** enough laundry pins for every person to have three.

**TIME:** 10 –15 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** You will need about 50 spring-loaded laundry pins, wooden or plastic. They cost maybe two to four cents apiece. If the pins come in different colors, that's a bonus for eventual team designation. You can spray paint the wood pins to achieve the team colors needed.

Hand out three pins of any color to each participant. Indicate that players are to try and get rid of their pins by clipping them onto the clothing of any other player, who will also be trying to do the same. As soon as a player legally gets rid of all three clips, he jumps up and down, simultaneously shouting that he has accomplished this, and if anyone is listening, that person is eventually recognized as the winner.

## Rules:

- Only attachments of clips on the backside are allowed;
- Clipping or entangling hair is a non-no;
- If a clip stays on for 5 seconds, it is considered a legal clip;
- If a clip spontaneously falls off before 4.00 seconds have elapsed, it must be picked up by the clipper for another try. Clips on the floor cannot be stepped on to cancel their spring-loaded capacity, i.e., conveniently smooshed;
- Clippers may not run their clipped body against another person, or the wall, or whatever in order to dislodge a legal clip;
- Clothing cannot be grabbed to slow down a running player, or to facilitate a clip;
- Boundaries must be compassionately set to prevent long-distance running by the fast few;
- Do not be overly strict about rule enforcement, except the rule about inappropriate placement of the clips (no crotch-shots);
- Everyone must wear a loose fitting shirt or sweater.

## Team Clip:

Essentially the same rules as before, except:

- Players operate in teams of three;
- A team must collectively get rid of all their clips. If one player on a team gets rid of all her clips, that empty-handed person must help her teammates rid themselves of the remainder, until all nine pins have been legally set.

## BALL AND HOOP

**PLAYERS:** any number

**EQUIPMENT:** 2 round pieces of cloth per person, 1 leather thong per person, 1 stick or hanger per person, thread, material for stuffing, twine, needles, scissors

**TIME:** 10 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** Sew and stuff the cloth pieces to make a small ball. Sew one end of the leather thong into the ball. If you are using the stick, bend it into a circle and fasten with twine. Tie the other end of the leather thong to either the wooden circle or the hanger.

To play, hold the game in one hand. Attempt to wind the ball around the hoop by moving the arm up and down and back and forth. Once the ball is wound up, reverse the procedure to unwind it. To change the difficulty of the task, vary the length of the leather thong or the size of the hoop.

## BLINDED PARTNER WALK

**PLAYERS:** 6+

**EQUIPMENT:** Blindfolds (handkerchiefs or other non-see through fabric).

**TIME:** 15 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** This can be done many different ways. Either the whole group can be blindfolded with a seeing leader or half the group or only a few can be blindfolded. The group must rely on each other to make it through an obstacle course or along a walk.

Other situations can also be added. Members of the groups can be without the use of legs, arms or speech.

## BLINDFOLD SOCCER

**PLAYERS:** 8+

**EQUIPMENT:** blindfolds, soccer ball

**TIME:** 20 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** Have players get into pairs, with one of the pair blindfolded. Only the blindfolded players can make physical contact with the ball. The sighted player can only offer verbal directions. Members of the pairs are not allowed to purposefully touch one another. Normal game contact is all right, as long as touching is not of a directional type, i.e., pushing a blindfolded player toward the ball.

There are no goalies. This rule will make sense once the action begins. If the ball is kicked beyond the sidelines, a referee will kick the ball back into play. Do not allow and constantly warn against high kicks. No one knows when a kick is coming, so encourage a side-of-the-foot movement. Limiting high kicks is essential for safety of the players.

# BLOB

**PLAYERS:** 10+

**EQUIPMENT:** none

**TIME:** 15 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** The Blob begins innocently enough as a mere individual playing a game of tag. As soon as s/he catches someone, s/he joins hands with them. Now s/he's part of the Blob, too, and they both set out hand-in-hand in search of victims. Everyone the Blob catches (only the outside hand on either end of the Blob can snatch at players) joins hands with it and becomes part of the lengthening protoplasmic chain. (You'll have to agree on boundaries for this game; some people will go to any lengths to avoid meeting with an untimely end at the hands of the primordial slime). The last remaining player is the new blob.

# BONE GAME

**PLAYERS:** any number

**EQUIPMENT:** 1 rib bone per person, 1 piece of thighbone (cut crosswise) per person, 1 piece sinew per person, scissors

**TIME:** 10 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** Attach one end of the sinew to the large end of the rib bone. Attach the other end of the sinew to the thighbone.

To play, hold the rib bone in one hand with the thighbone hanging down. Swing the arm up and attempt to catch the thighbone on the end of the rib bone.

To change the difficulty of the task, vary the length of the sinew or the diameter of the bones.

# BRITISH BULLDOG

**PLAYERS:** 6+

**EQUIPMENT:** none

**TIME:** 20 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** The playing area is a rectangular open field with well-defined boundaries. One person stands in the middle and is the bulldog. Everyone else stands on one end outside the boundary. When ready, the bulldog yells, "British Bulldog, one, two, three." Everyone must run from one end of the field to the other. The bulldog must grab people, lift them off the ground, and yell, "British bulldog, one, two, three." Each caught person then becomes a bulldog also. Eventually everyone will become a bulldog.

**Variation:** Instead of lifting people off the ground, the bulldog can simply hold on while yelling.

## BULL IN THE PEN

**PLAYERS:** 8+

**EQUIPMENT:** none

**TIME:** 10 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** The players get in a circle with one player in the middle. The player in the centre of the circle (or pen) is the bull that tries to escape. The players forming the pen chant, "Bull in the pen and s/he can't get out". The bull tries to break out of the circle by running against the arms of the players forming the circle. Ducking under, or jumping over the arms of the players is not allowed. When the "bull" breaks through, the player to the right of the break becomes the bull.

Care should be taken when choosing to play this game that all of the players are of equal size.

## BUTTON GAME

**PLAYERS:** 6+

**EQUIPMENT:** 1 large button/washer/rigatoni per person, 1 long piece of twine, scissors

**TIME:** 15 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** Cut a piece of twine for each person. Thread the button or washer or rigatoni onto the piece of twine. Tie the ends of the twine together with the smallest knot possible.

To play, have all the participants sit in a tight circle on the floor with their knees up, and their feet pointing into the centre of the circle. Place the twine under the knees. Have the guesser stand outside of the circle with their eyes closed until given the signal to open them. The participants in the circle begin to pass the object from hand to hand around the circle. The guesser attempts to guess who has the button and which hand it is in. An important part of the games is to trick or pretend to pass the object even if it has not reached you.

## BUTTON-BUTTON

**PLAYERS:** 5+

**EQUIPMENT:** button

**TIME:** 10 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** Get all players sitting in a circle. One child is chosen to be 'it' and must hide her/his eyes. Another child goes to each player and pretends to drop a button into his or her hands. One child does receive the button. All children pretend to have the button when the child that is 'it' opens his/her eyes. S/he has three guesses to find out who has the button. Change the person who's 'it' and the person who passes the button.

# CAMERA

**PLAYERS:** 4+

**EQUIPMENT:** none

**TIME:** 20 -30 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** One player takes the role of photographer, and the other plays the camera. The photographer guides the camera, who keeps his eyes closed, on a search for beautiful and interesting pictures. When the photographer sees something s/he likes, s/he points the camera's lens (eyes) at it, framing the object s/he wants to 'shoot'. Then s/he presses the shutter button (see below) to open the lens.

It's important that the camera keeps his/her eyes closed between pictures so that the 3 - to 5-second exposure will have the impact of surprise.

Encourage the photographers to be creative in choosing and framing pictures. Tell them, "You can make stunning photographs by taking shots from unusual angles and perspectives. For example, you can both lie down under a tree and take your picture looking upward, or you can put your camera very close to a tree's bark or leaves. Try looking down into a flower, or panning the horizon. Be open to the opportunities of the moment."

I suggest that children 'press the shutter button' by tapping the camera's shoulder. A second tap tells the camera to close his/her eyes. For the first picture, it may help to say 'open' with the first tap, and 'close' with the second.

Show the players how to pan the camera - i.e., move it slowly with the shutter held open, like a movie camera. While panning, they may keep the shutter open longer than five seconds, since the movement will hold the camera's interest. Suggest that they also pan vertically - for example, starting at the base of a tree and slowly moving up the trunk to the highest branches, then into the sky.

The photographers can prepare their cameras for the next picture by telling them which lens to use. For a picture of a flower, tell the camera to choose a close-up lens; for a sweeping scenic panorama, a wide-angle lens; and for a far-away object, a telephoto lens.

Take time to talk to the group about the elements of creative and beautiful pictures, otherwise they may end up with pictures of deer scats or the insides of trash cans. This is especially important with small children. It's also very important to encourage the photographers and cameras to talk only when it's unavoidable. Explain that silence creates pictures that have greater impact for the camera.

You may need to take time to show the group how to guide their 'blind' camera's hand and gently pull an arm in the direction you want to go.

Tell the photographers they'll have about 10 minutes to take pictures, and then they'll trade roles. It works well to tell the photographers to take a certain number of pictures (six to ten is fine), and then trade places with their partners. With these rules, everyone will finish at about the same time.

After everyone has played both roles, give each player a 3 x 5 index card and tell them, "Remember one of the pictures you took when you played camera. Develop it by drawing it, and give it to the photographer."

# CAT AND MOUSE

**PLAYERS:** 10+

**EQUIPMENT:** none

**TIME:** 10 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** The players form a circle holding hands. One player is chosen to be the mouse and stands inside the circle; another player is chosen to be the cat and stands outside the circle. The cat tries to catch the mouse. The players in the circle hold hands very tightly as the cat will try to break through the arms to get at the mouse. If the cat is successful, then the circle opens to let the mouse get through. When the mouse is caught, both players can rejoin the circle and select two new players.

# CLAYDOUGHNARY

**PLAYERS:** 6+

**EQUIPMENT:** play dough for each group

**TIME:** 10 –15 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** Provide each small group of three to six players with a small container of play dough.

Each group selects a modeler. The leader gives a topic to these collected members of each group. You can establish as many groups as you can afford containers of play dough. The modelers scurry back to their respective groups, grab the pre-warmed chunk of dough and attempt to sculpt or model the word or phrase that all the other modelers are also attempting to squeeze into a recognizable shape. The first team to shout the correct answer is the winner for that round. Another moldable word is then offered to a new group of eager listeners, and off they go for round two.

Some categories might include: Famous places – Grand Canyon, Great Wall, Golden Gate Bridge, Eiffel Tower, Taj Mahal, Great Sphinx, Mount Rushmore, etc.); Things around the house – compact disc player, lawn mower, bicycle, vacuum cleaner, etc.); Animal kingdom – python, kangaroo, dolphin, flamingo, giraffe, etc.). Make up your own categories for even more fun.

# CREEPY CRAWLER RACETRACK

**PLAYERS:** any number

**EQUIPMENT:** margarine container per player, poster board, 2 cups

**TIME:** 20 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** Any insects that can't fly are appropriate. Hand out containers such as margarine tubs with small breathing holes punched in plastic tops, and send players to find insects. To be eligible to race, players must be kind to their little bug friends.

To make the creepy crawler racetrack cut a 12-inch circle from poster board. Color in the centre, and draw a line around the circle every three inches to mark the bugs' 'progress' down the track. At the start of each race, place two competitors under a cup in the centre of the circle. As you ring a bell, the player lifts the cup. Use a stopwatch and record the time when one of the pair crosses the outermost line.

# CROWS AND CRANES

**PLAYERS:** 10+

**EQUIPMENT:** None

**TIME:** 15 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** Divide the players into two teams. One team is called the Crows, the other is the Cranes. A centre line is marked and a goal line is made around 25 feet back from it on both sides. Each team picks a side and lines up at the centre line. (The teams can be lined up around 3ft apart from each other.) When the leader calls out Cranes, the Cranes turn and run back to their own goal, while the Crows chase them. Any Cranes that are tagged, must join the Crows. And when the leader calls out Crows, the Crows run back to their goal line, while the Cranes chase them. Any Crows caught join the Cranes team. The team that captures all the players of the other team wins.

# DEER EARS

**PLAYERS:** 5+

**EQUIPMENT:** cloth tail, blindfold

**TIME:** 20 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** Choose a quiet setting for Deer Ears, away from roads, loud creeks, one with plenty of forest litter. "Have you ever wondered why a deer's ears are so big?" The instructor asks.

Have each person cup their hands behind their ears to simulate a deer's. Without changing his or her tone of voice, the instructor asks, "How many think I'm speaking louder now?" The apparent change in volume is fairly dramatic.

One player is blindfolded and will kneel in the forest like a deer grazing at night. The rest of the players will become predators, wolves or cougars. The predators must start the game at least 15 metres away from the deer. When given the signal to start stalking, players slowly and silently begin pursuing their prey. If the predators get close enough to the deer to snatch a cloth 'tail' from the deer's back pocket, then the deer is dead. But if the deer hears it coming and points in the predator's direction saying 'starve' then that player is out of the game.

Now a deer can't be so paranoid that it stops eating and flees with every little movement it hears, or it would probably starve itself. So to make the situation more realistic, the deer will only be able to point and shout 'starve' as many times, as there are predators (plus two extra).

The successful predators are those who make their advances while the deer is distracted in another direction. The successful deer are constantly alert to sound from any direction. Be sure to keep the deer's ears exposed when tying the blindfold. Small branches resembling deer antlers tied to the head of the deer adds a realistic touch to the game and seems to assist in the role-play

## DICE

**PLAYERS:** any number

**EQUIPMENT:** 1 bowl per person, 6 wooden discs per person, 1 chart of symbols, 1 pencil per person, sandpaper

**Optional:** paint, paintbrushes, varsol, paper towels.

**TIME:** 15 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** Smooth discs with sandpaper if necessary. Using a pencil, mark one symbol on one side of each disc (1-6).

To play, place discs in the bowl. Toss all of the discs out of the bowl and attempt to catch as many as possible. To obtain your score, add up the symbols on the dice, which were caught in the bowl. To count score for younger children, just add the number of dice caught in the bowl.

## DON'T BE DISCOURAGED

**PLAYERS:** 10 or more

**EQUIPMENT:** Wrapped Presents

**TIME:** 15 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** Divide into groups of five. Each group must open a present only using one finger per person. First group to finish wins.

## DOWN DRAGON

**PLAYERS:** 10+

**EQUIPMENT:** Two rags or handkerchiefs

**TIME:** 15 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** Split the group into two parts (or more). Line them up with their arms around the waist of the person in front of them. Stick a rag or handkerchief in the back pocket of the last person. The goal is for the front person of one group to get the 'tail' of the other, while the tail of the group tries to avoid getting caught.



## DOX – EN – EYE

**PLAYERS:** 8+

**EQUIPMENT:** straight stick

**TIME:** 15 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** The game begins with two equal-sized teams sitting and facing each other about ten metres apart. One member from each team comes forward to compete for the Dox-en-eye, a straight stick one metre long. The game begins with one team pounding the ground with the stick, shouting, 'Dox-en-eye, dox-en-eye, send us Shirley.' Shirley must immediately turn stone-faced, get up, get the stick and return to their seated position without smiling. The opposing team can do everything and anything (except touch the person). If the person called smiles or laughs, they join the other team. Another person is then called. If the person called gets the Dox-en-eye stick successfully back to the team from which they came, that team then does the calling. The game continues until everyone is on one team.

## EENY-EINY-OVER

**PLAYERS:** 6+

**EQUIPMENT:** ball

**TIME:** 20 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** All you need is a large building – a church works well – and a medium-size ball. The game begins with two teams, one on each side of the building. One team has the ball and throws it over the building while yelling, "eeny-einy-over." The throwing team then runs around the building and tries to tag players on the receiving team. Tagged people join the other team. The receiving team tries to avoid being tagged, of course, and also can throw the ball at players on the throwing team. Anyone who gets hit switches teams. Players are safe when they reach the other side of the building. The game ends when everyone is on the same team.  
Variation: Players are safe only when they do a complete revolution of the building.

## ELECTRICITY

**PLAYERS:** 5+

**EQUIPMENT:** none

**TIME:** 10 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** In the water, players form a circle holding hands. The electricity travels through a hand squeeze. The leader starts the electricity by squeezing the hand of the person next to him/her. As the electricity travels around the circle, the players duck under the water. When the electricity comes around for the second time, the players stand up, one by one.

## FEET OFF GROUND

**PLAYERS:** 10+

**EQUIPMENT:** none

**TIME:** 15 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** A player cannot be tagged as long as his/her feet are off the ground. Sitting on an object, hanging from a tree branch and on your back with legs in the air are all legitimate safeties

## FIVE FOOT BANANA PEEL

**PLAYERS:** 5+

**EQUIPMENT:** garbage bags, bananas, towels

**TIME:** 15 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** On the command "go", your team of five tries to peel a banana with their feet. First team to finish wins.

## FLYING DUTCHMAN

**PLAYERS:** 8+

**EQUIPMENT:** none

**TIME:** 15 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** The group forms a circle and holds hands, with one pair remaining outside the circle. Holding hands, the couple on the outside walks the perimeter of the circle. They choose a point in the circle to break the handhold of two people. When that happens, the outside couple runs around the circle in one direction while the couple whose handhold was broken, runs in the opposite direction. The couple that loses the race back to the open spot is 'it' for the next round.

## FROG IN THE MIDDLE

**PLAYERS:** 3-6 per group

**EQUIPMENT:** none

**TIME:** 10 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** Get the group in a circle, with one player in the middle. One child is chosen to be the "frog". The frog squats on the floor or ground. All the other children form a ring around the frog. Any player can try gently to push or pull the frog. When this happens, the frog tries to grab that player without rising from the floor. If the frog is able to grab him/her, then that player becomes the frog and the original frog takes a place in the ring.

Slapping and hard shoving are not allowed. Players must push or pull gently and carefully.

# GIANTS, WIZARDS AND ELVES

**PLAYERS:** 10+

**EQUIPMENT:** none

**TIME:** 15 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** Each team stands in a safe zone (about 10 feet from a centre line) and decides on a character to be as a team (giant, wizard or elf). After choosing their character, each team stands at the centre line, facing each other with hands behind their backs. On a given signal (e.g. the count of three) the whole team acts out their character.

**ELVES** squat down and imitate pointed ears by holding two fingers up by your ears (similar to making bunny ears). Make "Eeeking" noises while doing this.

**GIANTS** stand on tip toe, arms raised in a frightening posture making growling / roaring sounds.

**WIZARDS** stand normally but with arms outstretched as if casting a spell. Make appropriate spell casting noises.

Each character can win against one character or lose against the other. Theoretically, Elves shoot Wizards: Elves win. Wizards frazzle Giants: Wizards win. Giants squash Elves: Giants win.

If your team is the winner, you chase the other team back to their safe zone. Those you tag join your team. The team with the most players in the end is the winner.

# GET TO KNOW A LEAF

**PLAYERS:** any number

**EQUIPMENT:** leaves

**TIME:** 20 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** Each person has a dead leaf. Tell them to examine it very carefully. Each person tells a short, life story about their leaf giving it a name, telling where it came from and how it got to be there. Then the leader takes all the leaves and tosses them gently and has the group try to find their own leaf.

Most can find theirs - then talk about how many stories there are in a forest.

## GREY GOOSE

**PLAYERS:** 5- 15

**EQUIPMENT:** none

**TIME:** 10 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** Children stand ready to jump into the water. The leader calls out "grey goose" and all the children jump in. To challenge the children, the leader tries to fool the children into jumping early by using similar sounding words. (Grey gophers, grey goblins, green goose, etc.) In shallow water, this game could be played like Crows and Cranes.

## HEADS UP 7-UP

**PLAYERS:** 14+

**EQUIPMENT:** none

**TIME:** 10 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** Seven volunteers stand in the front of the room with the rest of the group facing them, sitting on chairs or the floor. The rest of the group must have their heads down and eyes shut. The seven volunteers must each tap one person in the group and return to the front of the room. When all seven volunteers return to the front, the group may look up and try to guess who tapped them.

**Variation:** If the person guesses correctly the person who tapped them must say something about themselves. If they are incorrect the guesser must say something about him/herself

## HIDDEN BALL OR MOCCASIN GAME

**PLAYERS:** any number

**EQUIPMENT:** 4 pieces of corduroy/person, 3 white beads /person, 1 green bead /person, 1 large piece of cotton /person, 1 cotton tie /person

**TIME:** 20 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** One person hides one bead under each of the corduroy pieces. The other player attempts to guess where the odd coloured bead (green) is hidden.

Start with 20 counters each and score as follows:

- ◇ If the guesser finds the odd bead on the first guess, s/he loses 4 points.
- ◇ If the guesser finds the odd bead on the second guess, s/he loses 3 points.
- ◇ If the guesser finds the odd bead on the third guess, s/he wins 3 points from his opponent.
- ◇ If the bead remains under the fourth piece of material, the guesser loses 4 points.

The player has won all of the counters wins.

# HORSES-KNIGHTS-CAVALIERS

**PLAYERS:** 6+

**EQUIPMENT:** tape player and an open area

**TIME:** 10 to 15 minutes.

**DESCRIPTION:** Form two circles, one inside the other and facing each other. Across from each person is his or her partner. Once the music starts each circle starts walking around in the opposite direction. Once the music stops, the caller will call one of the commands: Horses where one partner sits on the other like a horse; Knights – one partner sits on the other's lap; and the last command is Cavaliers where one partner picks the other up. This game goes on until there is only one group left.

# HUMAN BLOB

**PLAYERS:** 8+

**EQUIPMENT:** none

**TIME:** 15 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** This game is more interesting with larger groups, but can be played just as well with smaller ones. Divide the group into two teams and have each team stand close together to form a solid circle or big dot in front of the leader. This is the starting position. The leader then calls out a shape. The teams then race to form a solid shape out of their bodies on the floor. They should all sit or lie down to let the leader know they are finished. After the round, the teams should go back to the starting position. Start easy with basic shapes like square and triangle. Then increase the difficulty, using letters or numbers. Finally, use complex shapes like, North America, a dog or human being.

# HUMAN FOOSBALL

**PLAYERS:** 14+

**EQUIPMENT:** tape, rope or chalk, and ball

**TIME:** 30 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** Play this game crossways in a gym. Divide the area in half and make boxes for the kids to stand in, in the form of a foosball table. If you are not familiar with a foosball table, the middle two lines face one another and are on opposing teams. Behind them is the opponent's line, reducing the number in the line to less than are in the middle lines, and they are facing the goal they are kicking toward. Behind them are their opponents facing the other goal trying to block their kicks. Do this down till you have one goalie.

A box is drawn on the wall that the ball must be kicked into to score a point. It is best if you use a light dime store type ball so it doesn't hurt as much if (when) you get hit by the ball. It also sails wildly when kicked. It is best if shoes are taken off and played in sock feet to protect every ones shins.

Have a referee roll the ball between the two opposing middle lines. Then the kicking begins, no arms are allowed to hit or catch the ball. Players must stay in their assigned boxes and only move side to side to kick or block the ball. If the ball is kicked out of bounds or to a dead spot that no one can get to without getting out of their box, the referee rolls the ball down the middle again to restart the point.

After each point everyone rotates one spot giving everyone a chance to play at every position.

# HUMAN SCISSORS/PAPER/ROCK

**PLAYERS:** 10+

**EQUIPMENT:** none

**TIME:** 15 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** This is the human size version of rock, paper, scissors. Be sure to have defined end zones. To begin, each team huddles and decides on which play to run - either rock, paper or scissors. Then the two teams meet in the center of the playing area. If your team's symbol wins, you chase the other team back into its end zone. Those people who get caught change to the other team. The game ends when everyone is on the same team.

Remember:

- ◇ Rock crushes scissors (wins) and gets covered by paper (loses).
- ◇ Paper covers rock (wins) and gets cut by scissors (loses).
- ◇ Scissors cut paper (wins) and get crushed by rocks (loses)

## I DRAW A SNAKE UPON YOUR BACK

**PLAYERS:** any number

**EQUIPMENT:** none

**TIME:** 10 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** The children sit in pairs, one with his/her back to the other. The child facing the other child's back draws a snake and chants, "I draw a snake upon your back and guess which finger did it?" The other child then turns around and tries to guess. When she succeeds, the players switch positions.

## JUNK YARD TRAVERSE

**PLAYERS:** 4+

**EQUIPMENT:** Unmounted tires, milk crates, boards and other acid-resistant junk. (Try to include types of junk that can be torn or cut apart so that the participants have the choice of making those kinds of truncated decisions.)

**TIME:** 20 -30 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** This is a group problem solving activity (fun for carnivals). The group must move themselves and their anti-acid resistant junk (props) from one safe area to another while not directly touching the ground (boiling acid pit)

The distance negotiated should be significantly longer than the distance of all the acid-resistant junk laid out in a line-- at least 50 yards. This will, of course, necessitate passing junk from the end of the line to the new beginning. If you don't think the players can stretch the materials at hand that far, make more junk available. Everyone should be able to choose, from the plethora of available stuff.

# KICK THE CAN

**PLAYERS:** 4+

**EQUIPMENT:** a can, and enough room to kick a can and not break something and enough hiding places.

**TIME:** 30 minutes to several hours

**DESCRIPTION:** Kick the Can may be played on asphalt, concrete, dirt or grass. It's important to have some clear areas and some good hiding spots. A central base, usually about six feet in diameter, is chosen and marked. This is referred to as the 'home base'.

Someone is chosen to be 'it'. Someone else gets the right to kick the can. After the kicker kicks the can, all the players scatter and hide. The person who is 'it' retrieves the can, counts up to some agreed-upon number (20, 50 or 100), runs back to the jail and yells 'freeze'.

'It' then goes out to find the players. If 'it' sees someone, s/he goes back to jail, picks up the can, taps three times and calls out, "I see Joey behind the blue car". If Joey is indeed behind the blue car, he must come out and now stay in the jail area. If the person is not Joey, s/he doesn't need to come out. When all the players have been seen and caught, a new person is chosen to be 'it', usually the first person that had been caught. If Joey was behind the blue car and moved to avoid being called out, he is still considered to be caught.

Caught players may be freed from the jail if one of the other players not yet caught rushes to the jail and either: 1. tags the players to set them free; 2. kicks the can before 'it' returns to the jail and calls out the can-kicker's name. Once again, when the can is kicked, 'it' runs, picks it up, counts to a specified number and goes out searching for the other players.

Instead of seeking out a specific spot and hiding until found, players may continuously move around and try to evade 'it', or to free the other players.

The can may be filled with stones or marbles to make a louder sound when kicked.

# MICRO-TRAILS

**PLAYERS:** any number

**EQUIPMENT:** magnifying glass/player (if available)

**TIME:** 30 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** First each player collects 10 sticks, 10 – 15 centimeters long and tags them with a 'special' marker. Everyone gets a pocket magnifying lens (if available) to help focus on some of the smaller features of the landscape.

A trail may be about 5 feet in diameter with the sticks marking the special-interest 'stops', a tiny fungus; a shell; a fallen pine cone; a small spider web; some lichen growing on a little twig; and so forth. Each of the 'stops' points out something to be looked at from ground level.

There are two 'ground' rules: You cannot use the bottoms of your feet on a trail; and 'go slow as a slug!'



## MODERN MACHINERY

**PLAYERS:** 10+

**EQUIPMENT:** none

**TIME:** 15 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** The group is split into as many groups as possible (five people each). They are handed a slip of paper with a modern machine written on it. They are told beforehand not to tell any other group members what machine they are, the others must guess. They are given five or so minutes to go off and devise how they will, as a group, depict a particular machine. They are allowed to make noises and motions and every group member must be a part of the machine. All groups are brought back together and asked to present their machine while the other groups guess what they are.

**Helpful Hints:** Machines to use include typewriter, washing machine, car, bike, etc.

## MR. MARS

**PLAYERS:** 5+

**EQUIPMENT:** none

**TIME:** 20 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** All the children stand at one end of the field while one child- Mr. Mars, stands facing them. The group of children call out: "Mr. Mars, Mr. Mars, can you chase us to the stars?"

Mr. Mars calls back, "not unless you are wearing the colour \_\_\_\_\_"

All those wearing that color, must run past Mr Mars to home base without being tagged. The one that is tagged becomes the new Mr Mars.

## NAPAWAGON

**PLAYERS:** 14+

**EQUIPMENT:** 1-6" stick or piece of dowelling, spruce boughs, twine, scissors, knives

**TIME:** 20 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** Sharpen the end of the stick/dowelling with the knife. Cut a notch into the unsharpened end if desired. Tie a bundle of spruce boughs together with the twine. With another piece of twine, attach the bundle of boughs to the sharpened stick (the length of this twine may vary).

To play, hold the sharpened stick in one hand so that the bundle of boughs is hanging down. Swing the arm so that the bundle of boughs swings upward. Attempt to catch the bundle of boughs on the sharpened end of the stick. To change the difficulty of the task, vary the length of the twine.

## PLEASE HELP ME PACK

**PLAYERS:** 10+

**EQUIPMENT:** none

**TIME:** 10 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** The leader introduces themselves and informs the group that they need some assistance to pack for a trip, picnic or vacation. Participants are to say their name and the name of an item that may be taken on the trip. The item must start with the same letter as their name. For example, Peggy: polka dot shorts, Lisa: lollipops, John: jelly beans.

**Some variations:** Use first or last names or alphabet items. Instead of packing a suitcase pack a vehicle, plane or train.

## PLEASE, PLEASE SMILE

**PLAYERS:** 5+

**EQUIPMENT:** none

**TIME:** 15 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** Everyone is seated in a circle with a volunteer standing in the middle. The volunteer leans down to the person of his or her choice, looks at them deep in the eye and says, "Honey, if you love me, would you please, please smile?" The recipient of this proposal simply replies, "Honey, I love you, but I just can't smile." That's easy - except that the participant CAN-NOT SMILE, smirk, turn up the corners of their mouth, or snicker. And the volunteer in the middle can't touch the recipient in any way - but can do anything else. The volunteer continues until someone smiles, and then trades places with the person who finally smiles.

## RABBIT RUN

**PLAYERS:** 15+

**EQUIPMENT:** coloured kerchiefs, 6-8 branches, numerous celery and carrot sticks

**TIME:** 30 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** Choose a large playing field for this exercise and mark off two end zones at least 50 metres apart. Now mark out six to eight small circles (approximately one metre in diameter) throughout the field of play. Brightly colored survey tape or even colored kerchiefs work well for this purpose. These are the rabbit burrows or holes, any time a fleeing rabbit jumps into one of these 'holes' he or she is safe.

Next, scatter throughout the field six to eight branches pruned from trees or scrub brush. This serves the rabbits as camouflage. Anytime a rabbit player freezes holding a piece of this brush, the rabbit is completely camouflaged and the predators can't see it.

Finally, position two staff members at opposite ends of the field– one holding carrot sticks and the other holding celery sticks as rewards for successful rabbits.

Now that the field is set up, divide the group and explain the rules. One-quarter of the players will become predators – fox, lynx, coyote or wolf. The remaining 75 per cent will be the rabbits. Divide the rabbit players into two groups and position them to start at opposite ends of the field. The object of the game for rabbits is to cross the field as many times as possible, collecting one celery stick or one carrot stick each time they reach an end zone. They can avoid predators by hopping into a hole or by camouflaging in a freeze position holding the brush. However, only one rabbit player at a time can occupy a hole or camouflage position, and they must vacate the protected position as soon as another rabbit approaches their place of refuge.

Any rabbit on the run that is caught by a predator is dead, i.e. temporarily out of the game, and must go to sit along the nearest end zone. Predators are free to develop hunting strategies as a group but they can only tag moving rabbits.

Now the catch in this game that makes life interesting for both the predators and the rabbits is the possibility of rabbit 'breeding'. Anytime a male and female rabbit player both make it to the same end zone, and each holds two celery and two carrot sticks, the rabbits 'reproduce' and any 'dead' rabbits waiting in that end zone are immediately reborn into the game.

## READY-AIM

**PLAYERS:** 6+

**EQUIPMENT:** blindfolds, lots of soft throwables

**TIME:** 10 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** Divide people into pairs. Give each pair one blindfold and two soft throwables. Define an appropriate boundary for the number of players – not too big.

Each pair has a sighted person – who cannot touch any throwables – and a blindfolded partner – who throws, retrieves and tries to avoid being hit by the throwables. The sighted person can give unlimited verbal instructions but may not physically assist the blindfolded partners.

The goal for each pair is to throw an object and hit a blindfolded player from another two-some. If a hit occurs, the two partners swap roles and immediately resume action.

## RELAY- DIZZY STICK

**PLAYERS:** 6+

**EQUIPMENT:** one broom stick/team

**TIME:** 10 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** Take a broom stick and hold it above your head. Staring at the end of the stick spin around 15 times as fast as you can. Toss the stick down and run back to tag the next person in line. Vary number of spins according to age.

## RELAY- SECRET

**PLAYERS:** 10+

**EQUIPMENT:** list of 'orders'

**TIME:** 10 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** Players divided into teams of five to eight. The leader has arranged beforehand a list of various things to be done by the members of the team.

No. 1, may run up and find that she must shake hands with everyone on her team;

No. 2, finds he must untie everyone's shoelaces;

No. 3, that she ties them up again;

No. 4, that she hops around her team; and so on, till everyone has carried out a secret order.

## RELAY- WHIRLWIND

**PLAYERS:** 5+

**EQUIPMENT:** none

**TIME:** 10 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** On 'Go', the first player, running in a clockwise direction, encircles his/her team. On their return to the head of the line, the second player joins on, holding the first player around the waist, and together they encircle the team. The third, fourth, fifth players, etc., join in turn, each time the first player passes the front of the team. After the last player has joined on, the team makes a complete circle, and assumes its starting position. The first team to resume its original formation scores.

# SARDINES

**PLAYERS:** 5+

**EQUIPMENT:** None

**TIME:** 30 minutes to several hours

**DESCRIPTION:** This game is much like hide and seek but in reverse. One player goes out to hide while the other players count to 100 and then they go in search of the hider. If one of the players finds the hider, s/he sneaks away so the others don't see them and joins the hider. As the other players spot the hider, they too join them. If they are hiding in a small area, they will all crowd together like sardines. They wait until the last person finds them.

# SCAVENGER HUNT

**PLAYERS:** 10+

**EQUIPMENT:** List of objects to find for each group.

**TIME:** 30 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** Divide into groups of five or more. Each group has a list of objects to get and a time limit to be back. The winner is the team to collect the most objects or accumulate the most points if there is a point value placed on each object.

# SCROUNGE AROUND

**PLAYERS:** any number

**EQUIPMENT:** list of things to find

**TIME:** 30 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** Each participant receives a "scrounge around list" and sets out to see what they can find. Some things may be brought back, others drawn or just remembered. Participants present their findings to the group.

Find something that:

- ◇ Looks like it had a hard winter
- ◇ Reminds you of a good friend
- ◇ Is heart shaped
- ◇ Would be home for an elf
- ◇ Reflects your mood right now
- ◇ Came from another planet
- ◇ Is hopeful/cozy
- ◇ Reminds you of your childhood
- ◇ Reminds you of a positive quality of yourself

# SNOW SCULPTURE

**PLAYERS:** 6+

**EQUIPMENT:** Jello Mix

**TIME:** 30 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** Divide into teams of three to five. Decide on an object and make it. Use the jello mix for color. Usually sculptures are then judged.

# SOCK WRESTLING

**PLAYERS:** any number

**EQUIPMENT:** none

**TIME:** 15 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** Create a ring on the ground. Everybody takes their shoes off and sits around the ring. The idea of the game is for players to remove a sock of their opponent/s. It can be played one on one, or with several (4 or 5) players in the ring at the same time at the start. Players who lose a sock have to leave the ring.

# SPEED RABBIT

**PLAYERS:** 6+

**EQUIPMENT:** none

**TIME:** 10 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** The leader stands in the centre of a circle. His/her job is to point to a person in the circle and say either: 1. elephant; 2. rabbit; or 3. cow. The signified individual and the two people to that person's immediate right and left must perform a specific set of actions before the centre person can count to 10. If the actions are not done correctly or in time, the offending person (one of the three) must take the place of the leader in the circle. If done right, the leader points to another person until someone eventually screws up.

**Elephant:** The person pointed to: 1. Extends his/her right arm forward, palm down, hand lightly cupped; 2. Brings the left hand under the arm+ to pinch the nose; 3. Flaps the right arm up and down as in flapping their trunk; 4. The two players to the right and left of the flapping trunk must flap their 'ears' by waving their hands next to their ears. All this happens simultaneously before the count reaches 10.

**Rabbit:** 1. Centre person hops up and down; 2. Person to the right stomps his/her foot, person to left stomps his/her foot.

**Cow:** 1. Centre person interlaces fingers of both hands and presses both palms out away from his/her body, resulting in both thumbs pointing to the ground. 2. Side people must grab a thumb and mime a milking motion. Makeup your own series of sounds and motions for a dog (lifting leg), skunk, etc.

## SPOKES

**PLAYERS:** 9+

**EQUIPMENT:** ball or object

**TIME:** 15 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** Divide players in teams of 5 players (can be less or more) with each team standing in line legs apart, facing the middle where the object is placed. Number each member of the team from the middle outwards so that all the 1's are nearest the centre. When a person's number is called out they have to: leave their position, run around the outside of the star to the back of their team where they then have to tunnel/crawl through their team members legs to reach the ball/object first.

## SPIES LIKE US

**PLAYERS:** any number

**EQUIPMENT:** body paint, charcoal, grass, newspapers

**TIME:** 30 minutes to several hours

**DESCRIPTION:** After doing some warm-up activities and explaining to the players that they are going to go on a 'spying' mission later, get the players to camouflage themselves with the body paint and charcoal. They can also cut eyeholes out of newspaper and use these to spy. Give different groups different missions to fulfill. You may wish to set things up so that they have something to see, like who is working in the band office. You yourself should dress up as a spy. You may want to have spy name codes, a secret hideout, maybe some secret gadgets or some "bad guys".

## STAR WARS

**PLAYERS:** 10+

**EQUIPMENT:** lots of nerf balls or soft throwable objects, 2 sponge sticks, 2 frisbee's

**TIME:** 20 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** Set up galactic boundaries to create two large areas, each occupied by an army. A line separates the two areas and as many Nerf balls (or soft throwable objects) as you can gather (the more the better) are placed on the dividing lines. These balls are death stars, which will soon be hurled through space.

One player in each army is designated a Jedi Knight, Luke of the Rebels and Darth of the Empire. Each Knight is armed with a light saber (sponge stick) and each has a star base that is indicated by a Frisbee or other marker in their army's territory.

At an agreed-upon signal, the game begins. Both armies rush to the dividing line, gather as many death stars as they can and begin hurling them at the opposing army. If one hits a player,

the player is frozen immediately, imprisoned in a time warp. Only the player's Jedi Knight can rescue them. S/He must leave their star base, hopping on one foot and touch them with the light saber in order to bring them out of the time warp and back into the game.

If the intended target catches a thrown ball, the thrower is frozen and must wait for help from their Jedi.

As long as the Jedi Knights are at their star bases, they are safe. However, should one be hit by a death star while traveling to free a fellow teammate, they are both frozen for good. Protection of the Jedi Knights is therefore imperative.

## STATUES RACE

**PLAYERS:** 6+

**EQUIPMENT:** none

**TIME:** 15 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** First, set up a starting line and goal line about 100 yards apart. One of the players acts as the leader. The leader closes his/her eyes and counts to "eight" out loud. As the leader counts, the other players run towards the goal. At the count of "eight", everyone must stop running and hold any position they are in when "eight" was called. These "statues" are usually very peculiar looking. At "eight", the leader opens their eyes. If s/he sees anyone move, that player is sent back to the starting line and must begin over again. Everyone else stays as is and the leader repeats the counting and sending back. This continues until one player reaches the goal and becomes the winner.

## STATUES

**PLAYERS:** 4+

**EQUIPMENT:** none

**TIME:** 15 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** Select one child as a buyer and one as the owner. The buyer hides his/her eyes. The owner takes each child in turn by the arm and swings them around, then lets them go. The swung child freezes as soon after the swing as s/he can. The buyer enters the store pretending to be interested in buying a couple of statues. The owner shows the statues to the buyer one at a time. The statue, when turned on, acts out the figure s/he feels s/he represents (fighter, dancer, gardener, etc.). The buyer chooses two statues s/he prefers. Players take turns being the buyer and the owner.



## SUPER-HERO DRESS UP

**PLAYERS:** 4+

**EQUIPMENT:** Any clothes you can find (the funnier the better)

**TIME:** 15 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** Make groups of five. Each group is going to create the world's greatest super hero. One person is dressed-up using whatever is available. Another person must explain what powers the various articles of clothing give.

## TAG- CLOTHES PIN

**PLAYERS:** 10+

**EQUIPMENT:** Clothespins and rope

**TIME:** 15 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** Mark off a play area of at least 40 ft by 40 ft by putting rope on the ground. All players receive 5 clothes pins, pinned to the back of their shirts. The object is to try to capture clothespins from someone else's back without losing yours. If you capture a clothespin you go down on one knee while pinning it on your back. While you are on one knee, you are safe. If you go out of bounds you lose a clothespin. The person with the most clothespins wins.

## TAG- EVERYBODY'S IT

**PLAYERS:** 6+

**EQUIPMENT:** none

**TIME:** 10 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** All participants can tag anyone. If you are tagged you must freeze. Anyone can free a tagged person by 'high-fiving' them. Participants choose to either tag people, free people or try a combination of both.

## TAG- FROZEN

**PLAYERS:** 8+

**EQUIPMENT:** none

**TIME:** 10 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** Two or more people are 'it'. They try to tag as many as they can. When a player is tagged, s/he must stand still, but can be thawed if touched by a free player. The object of the game is for the 'its' to freeze the entire group.

## TAG- HOOK ON

**PLAYERS:** 8+

**EQUIPMENT:** none

**TIME:** 10 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** Couples are in a scattered formation and are standing with inside arms linked. There is a runner and the person who is 'it'. To escape, the runner links arms with one of the partners and the other must run in his/her place.

## TAG- POISON

**PLAYERS:** 5+

**EQUIPMENT:** none

**TIME:** 10 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** The same as Basic Tag, except that 'it' must keep one hand on the spot where s/he was tagged.

## THE LAVA PIT

**PLAYERS:** 6+

**EQUIPMENT:** 20 paper plates, scotch tape

**TIME:** 20 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** Make up a story that the group is being chased and they need to get across a field of hot lava. Give each group paper plates explaining that when they step on these plates they will not sink into the lava. (Give each team about 1/3 the number of plates as people). The group must figure out how to get the entire group from Point A to Point B (both marked by scotch tape on the floor), from one side of the Hot Lava Pit to the other. Only one person can be on a plate at a time, and the plates must be picked up and moved. Shhh...The key to the game is that only part of the team will be able to cross the field at a time and one person will need to work their way back across the field to help the rest of the team across.

## THREE DEEP

**PLAYERS:** 6+  
**EQUIPMENT:** none  
**TIME:** 15 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** Partners are arranged in a double circle, facing inwards, and with two or three feet between each couple. Two players are selected to run, one to be chased and one to be 'it'. The runners may run in and out, around and across the circle, but may not run between partners. Whenever the person being chased stops in front of a couple with their back to them, the rear member of the couple runs in her/his place. If the runner is tagged, s/he becomes 'it' and chases the previous "it".

## TRIBAL SCULPTURE

**PLAYERS:** 5+  
**EQUIPMENT:** none  
**TIME:** 10 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** The group is instructed to use only themselves as building blocks to make an animal that must move. Everyone in the group must move in the sculpture. Variations: design a machine that moves or create a sculpture of the seasons.

## TWO DEEP

**PLAYERS:** 6+  
**EQUIPMENT:** none  
**TIME:** 15 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** As in Three Deep, except that players form a circle and the runner finds a substitute by stopping in front of one player who then takes his/her place.

## TWO TRUTHS AND A LIE

**PLAYERS:** any number  
**EQUIPMENT:** none  
**TIME:** 10 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** The group sits in a circle, and the leader asks everyone to think of two statements about themselves which are truth and one which is false. The leader may begin, "I have three brothers but no sisters. My favorite sport is hockey and I love peanut butter." The group must guess which statement is the lie. As soon as the deceit is uncovered, the next person in the circle begins.

## ULTIMATE

**PLAYERS:** 8+

**EQUIPMENT:** Frisbee, posts to mark out limits of pitch area.

**TIME:** 30 minutes to 1.5 hours

**DESCRIPTION:** A fun energetic game for two teams, which as the name suggests uses a flying disk (or Frisbee) as the 'ball'. Play in a large field, using a smaller space with fewer players. In its simplest form the rules are:

'Kick off' is either by players from opposing teams trying to catch the Frisbee thrown in by the referee or leader. Or by opposing teams deciding on the toss of a coin, in which case teams start from their goal area.

Players may not move when in possession of the Frisbee.

Interception or tackles are by 'tag' touch at which point the player holding the Frisbee must drop it. Goals are scored by a player catching the Frisbee while standing in the goal area of the opposing team.

Goals may not be scored by opposing players picking up a Frisbee that has landed in the goal.

After any goals are scored. The scoring/attacking team retires to their own half of the pitch and the defending team starts from their goal area.

## WHAT TIME IS IT MR. WOLF

**PLAYERS:** 4+

**EQUIPMENT:** none

**TIME:** 15 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** All the children line up behind a leader. The leader pretends to be a wolf leading the little sheep away from home a line placed anywhere on the playground). The children follow the wolf asking, "What time is it Mr. Wolf?" He or she answers giving any time of the day. However, when he says, "Dinner time", the wolf turns and chases the sheep trying to tag them before they can return home. The sheep that are tagged become Mr. Wolf's helpers.

## WHO SAID THAT?

**PLAYERS:** 5+

**EQUIPMENT:** rope

**TIME:** 15 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** Tie a rope around the whole group, loose enough so there is no discomfort, but tight enough so that no one can easily turn around inside the hoop. The group must move across a room or an open field. If the rope is tied properly, some will need to walk backwards, some sideways, etc.

As the group moves to their goal each person must tell something very unique about themselves. Examples might be as follows: "I like peanut butter and pickle sandwiches," or "I have six toes." When the group has negotiated the required distance, they attempt to recall everything that was said and determine who said it. The person who made the statement cannot reveal their identity until the group consensually agrees. Then the individual either confirms or denies.

## WIZARDS AND GELFLINGS

**PLAYERS:** 10+

**EQUIPMENT:** none

**TIME:** 10 –15 minutes

### DESCRIPTION:

In the universe (as defined by the boundaries of this game actually), there are two forces at work. Each force is represented by a unique species of beings. As is often the case when two species co-exist, there is tension and competition.

The first species is the Wizards. Wizards tend to be pretty serious because they are always thinking – creating spells, calculating formulas, analyzing experiments, chanting ancient rituals etc. They like their work a lot and don't like to be distracted.

On the other hand, Gelflings live to have FUN. They frolic, fantasize, sing, dance, and merrily enjoy themselves without a care in the world. Well, almost not a care. They must watch out for the Wizards. Wizards have a fixated mindset about Gelflings. See a Gelfling, freeze it! Now! Wizards constantly try to freeze Gelflings by touching them with their magic ball/wand/orb.

As soon as a Gelfling is frozen, it immediately reacts to the suspension of its ability to frolic by emitting the Universal Gelfling Distress Call: A very high pitched wail "Help Me, Help Me, Help Me..." A physical motion emphasizes this distress call. Use a fist with the thumb extended up, raising and lowering it into the palm of your other hand – the universally recognized Gelfling symbol for 'help'. This call repeats itself over and over until at least two Gelflings surround their frozen partner, join hands and hug that person calling out, "Go free, little Gelfling, go free." At this joyful juncture, the frozen Gelfling is free to frolic once again.

The challenge in this activity is to find the proper balance between seriousness and fun. Too many Wizards, the game ends quickly and the Gelflings feel overwhelmed. Too few Wizards, the Gelflings get bored and the Wizards need CPR. Experiment with your group, but 2-3 Wizards for about 15 – 20 Gelflings seems to be an appropriate ecological starting point.

One last suggestion: Allow the Wizards to change their identity. Any time they get tired of chasing Gelflings, they can tag a Gelfling and then give them the Wizard's magic ball. The Gelfling is immediately transformed into a Wizard, the Wizard into a Gelfling. This technique has been proven to prevent major stress breakdowns in Wizards.

# WOLF PACK TERRITORY

**PLAYERS:** 9+

**EQUIPMENT:** 3 different scents

**TIME:** 30 minutes

**DESCRIPTION:** Wolves maintain rigidly controlled territories by urinating at key scent markers on their range perimeters. As no two wolves have the same scent, these boundaries are easily distinguished. To simulate this situation for humans, use different smelling oils, perfumes, shampoos etc.

Using three different scents, secretly mark out the edges of the three make-believe wolf territories. Large rocks, fallen trees, open earth patches, or tree trunks all make for likely scent sites. Do not overlap the wolf territories when laying out the boundaries; ideally, all packs should be in distinct view of one another while playing the game. A total circumference of 50 metres is usually adequate for each pack's territory.

There should be only one or two scent markers for every participant playing the game, and none of the players should have any idea that the area has been marked out beforehand.

Divide the players into three equal-sized packs, and scent the ankle of the largest boy in each group. Have the packs get familiar with their pack scent by sniffing the ankle of their alpha male. Some discussion of the wolf's highly organized social structure, centering on a dominant male and dominant female might be in order. "A dominant wolf holds its tail high, stands stiff-legged and bristles its mane. In its presence, a subservient animal cowers on the ground with its ears back, or stands with its tail between its legs." Encourage the participants to act out their social positions, then kneel and rehearse howling as a pack so that each individual is familiar with the distinct call of his or her group.

Give careful instructions to each pack to search out the edge of their territory by sniffing. When an individual wolf has located the correct scent, they are to kneel at that site and howl until all other members in their pack are doing the same at a scent marker of their own. If an individual gets confused trying to locate their scent marker, they must search out their alpha male to get another sniff of his ankle.

When all players of a pack have located a scent marker and are kneeling and howling wildly, the alpha male will now be able to determine the centre of his territory. All wolves in the pack are to immediately join him there for a great community howl. The first pack howling loudly in unison from the exact centre of their range will be declared the dominant pack.

## THEME DAYS

Theme Days can be used to tie activities together and to create interest and motivation. Theme days are primarily for children. You may select a name for your day like “Black Beard Day or “Captain Hook Day’ to help create curiosity and interest. Some other ideas are backwards day, Halloween, jungle day, nature day, monster day, space day, beach day, zoo day, fairy day, Robin Hood day.

An extension of theme day is to plan a story line that unfolds over the course of the day. This would usually involve characters, theatrics, and a program that is aimed at permitting the participant to solve a problem or reconcile a conflict. Special event days that run story lines instead of simply theme, often involve a fair amount of preparation. They can also be very rewarding and fun. Plan ahead and be creative.

**Note:** Story lines and plots are great ideas however can be unsuccessful in a drop in setting, where the children come in late and miss much of the story line.

### Some ideas:

**Scarlet Scoundrel** has stolen an important piece of equipment or the keys to a building. The staff brings the Aqua Avenger to train the children to become super heroes so they can catch the Scarlet Scoundrel. Once they catch her they ask her why she did it. She has no fiends and wanted to play too. The children befriend her.

**Rufus the Ruthless** has sprayed poison potion on the trees in the area. The trees will die in 24 hours unless we can find the antidote. We go to Griff the Wizard who give us a recipe. We assemble the ingredients and put it into the river or spray the trees. Oh, no, Rufus the Ruthless lied about the potion he used—it was the “Green Spoiler”, no the “Tree Terminator”. We return to Griff, but he has no antidote. The staff call on Captain Ecology to educate the children about trees. At the end of the day, Captain Ecology explains that the only antidote that will work is for the kids to take the “Friends of Trees” oath and to do this truthfully, they needed to learn about trees. Rufus returns and the kids tell him about trees; he realizes trees are good and necessary and also takes the oath.

**Captain Hook** comes stumbling into program, tired and thirsty. The evil pirate Power Muncher has sunken her ship and captured her crew. Captain Hook needs a new crew in order to save the community from the evil pirate who will take over and find the buried treasure. What will Captain Hook do? With a little initiative from the staff, the children offer to be the new crew.

The children must go to pirate training school. A good pirate must first of all look like a pirate. The group could make telescopes, hats, or eye patches. For a crew to be successful they must be able to work together. Activities could include the human know, five legged relay race, or some other co-operative activity. The captain’s crew must also be sneaky, so play Steal the Kings Jewels. The training could also include an obstacle course for endurance. After completing each part, the kids receive a piece to the treasure map. The new crew takes a pledge; and the hunt for the treasure is on.

The evil pirate beats them to the treasure, so they set a trap for Power Muncher, who loves peanut butter sandwiches. They bombard him with wet sponges and take the treasure back. Power Muncher is so mean because he has never had any friends and nobody shares with him, so the kids share their treasure.

Find a time capsule on Tuesday or Wednesday. It says to open it one hundred years from a given date—and that just happens to be Saturday! The capsule contains instructions to create a time warp from the future. The group does certain activities so that the seals on the envelope can be broken. The envelope contains a map and asks a question.

Each group goes to their location as indicated on the map and finds objects that answer their question. All groups meet and assemble objects. The staff places the objects into the time warp machine with a person as indicated in the instructions.

We accidentally put the objects in reverse order. This reversed the time warp and someone from the past arrives instead of someone from the future. This person tells history of the region, cultural activities and legends as they were told one hundred years ago. At the end of the day, the person returns into the time machine to change back. We bring the original person home.

## MORE RESOURCES

Numerous resources exist that can also be of benefit to you. Some to consider are:

- ◇ **Teamwork and Teamplay** by Jim Cain & Barry Jolliff
- ◇ **Quick Silver** by Karl Rohnke & Steve Butler
- ◇ **Organic Crafts: 75 Earth-Friendly Art Activities** by Kimberly Monaghan
- ◇ **Good Earth Art** by MaryAnn F. Kohl and Cindy Gainer
- ◇ **The Kids' Nature Book: 365 Indoor/Outdoor Activities & Experiences** by Susan Milord and Susan Williamson
- ◇ **Primitive Skills and Crafts: An Outdoorsman's Guide to Shelters, Tools, Weapons, Tracking, Survival, and More** by Richard Jamison and Linda Jamison
- ◇ **Rediscovery: Ancient pathways, new directions : a guide to outdoor education** by Thom Henley
- ◇ **Youth Leadership in Action: A Guide to Cooperative Games and Group Activities** by Project Adventure
- ◇ **Roots, Shoots, Buckets and Boots: Activities To Do in the Garden** by Sharon Lovejoy
- ◇ **Everyone Wins!: Cooperative Games and Activities** by Josette and Ba Luvmour C
- ◇ **Cooperative Games and Sports: Joyful Activities for Everyone** by Terry Orlick
- ◇ **The Game and Playleaders Handbook** by Bill Michaelis, Ph.D. and John M.O'Connell
- ◇ **The More the Merrier- leading playful activities with large groups** by Sam Sikes, Faith Evans and Chris Cavert