

Go-To Games

STEAL THE JEWELS

EQUIPMENT: Two hula hoops, balls of two different colors (1 ball per participant)

- Place two hula hoops on either end of the playing area. Place one color of the balls in one hoop and the other color of the balls in the other hoop.
- Split group into two teams and have them stand behind their team's hoop.
- Tell the participants they are "pirates," and the balls in the hula hoops are "jewels." Each team's goal is to run over and one ball at a time, try to transfer all the "jewels" (or balls) from the other team's hoop to their own.
- A few minutes into the game, yell "freeze" and count the balls in each team's bowl. The team with the most is the winner. Ask them to lead all participants in an isolated movement (such as five squats). Play again.

HINT: Participants can only move one ball at a time. Throwing balls is not allowed.

VARIATION: For subsequent games, make a rule that no running is allowed. Everyone must travel by jumping, hopping, leaping or sliding.

PEANUT BUTTER AND JELLY

EQUIPMENT: None

- Designate three lines in a playing area—one on each side of the playing area and one in the middle. Everyone lines up on the far line. This line is "Peanut." The middle line is "Butter;" the far line is "Jelly."
- Call out the name of a line and all the kids have to run to that line.

HINT: To make the game more difficult, call out more than one command at a time. Participants ultimately run to the last name called out. (For example, participants run to the Butter line when "peanut butter" is called.)

VARIATION: Make a rule that no running is allowed. Everyone must travel by jumping, hopping, leaping or sliding.

SLIDING TAG

EQUIPMENT: None

- Three participants are “it.” This group stands staggered throughout the middle of the playing area. The rest of the participants stand at one end of the playing area.
- Participants are trying to run across the playing area past the “it” group without getting tagged. If they are tagged, they join the “it” group. Once they reach the opposite end, they turn around and when you yell “GO,” they run back across the playing area while avoiding being tagged by the “it” group.
- The “it” group can only slide back and forth to tag, they cannot move forward or backward.
- Play until everyone is tagged. Repeat game, choosing a different starting group as “it.”

VARIATION: For subsequent games, make a rule that participants who are not in the “it” group cannot run. They must travel by jumping, hopping, leaping, galloping or skipping.

LINE TAG

EQUIPMENT: Playing area with clearly defined lines (such as a basketball court or football field)

- Choose one person to be “it.”
- Everyone is only allowed to run on the lines around the gym/field. Any lines that connect will do. Participants must have both feet on the lines while running from “it.” They can jump across to another line as long as both feet land on the line.
- If a participant is tagged by “it,” they become a roadblock and must wiggle in place where they were tagged.
- Participants cannot jump over or go around the roadblock, but can turn and run another direction—they have to keep moving.
- Throughout the game, release all the roadblocks by yelling, “ROADBLOCKS FREE,” so they can run around again.
- If enough time, keep playing until everyone has a chance to be “it.”

HINT: In order for participants to be active as much as possible in this game, release the roadblocks often.

FREEZE TAG

EQUIPMENT: None

- Choose one (or more) participant(s) to be “it.” They run around tagging people. Once someone is tagged, they are frozen.
- While frozen, participants must do jumping jacks in place until they are freed by another “non-it” participant tagging them. They can then run around freely again.

OCTOPUS TAG

EQUIPMENT: None

- Select one participant to be the first octopus and have the player start in the center of the playing area.
- All the other players are fish. The fish line up at one end of the playing area. When the octopus calls out “GO,” the fish swim (run) to the other side of the playing area and the octopus tries to tag them. If tagged before reaching the other side, they become seaweed on the ocean floor. Seaweed must stay where they were tagged, leaving one foot planted as they try to also tag players running by. Any player tagged also becomes seaweed.
- Each time players reach the other side of the playing area, the octopus says “GO” again, and the players try to cross back to the other side.

HINT: To vary the game, begin with two octopuses.

HEADS OR TAILS

EQUIPMENT: Big plastic coin (or item with different sides)

- Divide the participants into two teams and have the groups stand facing each other in two lines (about six feet apart) in the middle of the playing area. One team is “heads” and one team is “tails.”
- Designate safety lines on either side of the playing area.
- Flip the coin in the air, and when it lands on the ground call out the side facing up. The team whose name is called chases the other team, who turns and runs as fast as they can to the designated safety line behind them.
- If someone is tagged by a member of the opposite team, they must join that team.
- Have everyone come back to the center, face-off, and flip the coin again.

SPOT TAG

EQUIPMENT: None

- Choose two participants to begin as “it.” They place and keep one hand on their chest and try to tag all other participants with only their free hand.
- If other participants are tagged, they must place their hand on the spot where they have been touched, whether it is on their arm, back, leg, etc. They also join the “it” team and help tag the rest of the participants.
- Once all participants have been tagged, start a new game. Try it with a variation.

HINT: Participants will be able to identify someone on the “it” team because they will have their hand on a “tag” spot.

VARIATION: For subsequent games, make a rule that participants cannot run. They must travel by jumping, hopping, leaping or sliding.