

- **Backwards Day.** The campers are told when they get up (and its raining) that this will be backwards day! For breakfast (only) they dress backwards by putting clothes on backwards.

Breakfast itself becomes supper, and dessert is served first. The daily schedule may be turned around also. [r.]
- **Talent Night.** Starting at lunch, each cabin should plan on presenting some talent for a special evening program. The schedule may need to be adjusted accordingly. Keep it a talent night rather than a skit night.

There are always a variety of singing groups and solos, but what about other talents like art, story-telling, impressionists, instrumentals, or some special demonstration? [Sr.]
- **Table Game Time.** This can be part of the Progressive Games Party (#5) or a special time in the dining hall or recreation room. The camp will need to have a large number of games available like Clue, Sorry, Monopoly, Checkers, Chess, Pit, UNO, and so forth. [A]
- **The "Big Challenge".** Hold a challenge contest. Who can do the best imitation of a cow or other

animal? Who can wear the most hats? Who can stack the blocks the highest? Who can eat the pie the fastest? Who can do the most push-ups? Who can roll the egg the farthest? Who can do the most push-ups? A staff brainstorming time will turn up many more possibilities. [A]

- **Kangaroo Court.** Hold this mock court trial after a meal. The offense can be a trivial event or a created one: Sleeping during chapel, sneezing at breakfast, not singing, peaking during grace, growing white hair during camp, and so forth.

Be sure the one chosen to put on trial can take it in good humor. The sentence can be just as silly as the offense: eating with a blind fold on, walking the plank into the pool, singing a solo, or some stunt. [A]

- **Counselor Charades.** The campers act out what certain counselors act and look like. The others try to guess what counselor or staff person is being represented. [A]

- **Skit Day.** If the rain will not quit, plan for a skit day in the middle of the afternoon. Each cabin should create a skit while in the cabin or tent and then all the camp meet together to see them. [A]

5 Rules for Success in Leading Games

First, plan in advance. Be ready for any activity. If it is paper and pencil, have the materials ready BEFORE introducing the game.

Second, read your group of campers. Some groups will really enjoy one activity while another group will show no interest in it. The more you understand your campers, the better you will be able to choose the activities that they will enjoy.

Third, if you are going to play a game, never tell them what you are going to do. Just take them one step at a time. For example, if your game requires their sitting in a circle, start like this:

Camper: "What are we doing?"

Counselor: "Since it's so wet outside, we're going to have a special activity right here. Now, count off starting with Mary. Now that we have an order for sitting, see if you can copy this motion and rhythm." You are into the game called "Ready Rhythm".

Fourth, if the game involves someone being "it", beware lest younger players try to fail so that they can become "it". If this becomes a problem, change the rules of the game.

Fifth, understand before starting just how YOU are going to lead this game and what the rules will be. Many games have variations and different ways to play, but only ONE way can be used. You choose that way and stick with it, even though several campers might have other ways to play the game.

➤ **Treasure Chest. (Game Box)** Before camp starts, create a game box. This is a special surprise box that is opened in front of the campers **ONLY WHEN AND IF** it rains. They will be praying for rain!

Inside that box are ideas, table games, paper and pencil games, special stunts, and ideas for a good time. Many of the things that follow could be put into the box. For added anticipation, tell them about the box the first night of camp, but have a padlock on it. This box can only be opened in case of an emergency called rain! [Dr.]

➤ **Craft Time.** Be sure to have ready one or several craft projects that everyone can do. Work with your craft director to plan what to do on rainy days. **KNOW** what projects your cabin group will do, where to get the materials, what it will cost, and how to direct the activity toward success.

5

Paper and Pencil Games For in The Cabin

The following list of activities* is a continuation of chapter 4, but these could also be used in a larger group. Be sure to have plenty of pencils or pens and paper handy.

➤ **Name Acrostics.** Put your name down the left side of the paper. For each letter of your name find...

✓ another name that starts with that letter.

✓ a Bible name that starts with that letter.

✓ something you can find in camp that starts with that letter. [A]

➤ **Word Creation.** On a large card or in large print on paper, post a word or words so all can see. At the "go" signal, each camper tries to create as many words as he can from the letters in those words. Use a Bible name like Bethlehem or even the name of your camp. [A]

* (The letters at the end of each activity relate to the following code: A=all ages ; Jr.=grade school age ; Sr.= junior and senior high age ; G = recommended for girls only ; B = for boys only.)

➤ **Connect the dots.** Give each camper pencil and paper and have them make a grid of dots like that in the appendix. Campers pair off in two's or three's for this game. Each player takes a turn connecting two dots (no diagonals). When a player can close a box (complete the fourth side), he puts his initial in that box. The game ends when all the dots are connected to form boxes. The player who has the most initialed boxes is the winner. [Jr.]

➤ **Getting to know You.** See the game under ALL CAMP ACTIVITIES. This game has many variations. Create one that will fit your cabin group and have the camp office make the copies.

➤ **KNOW IT ALL.** Each player is given a pencil and full size piece of paper. Across the top of the long-wise side of the paper have them print a word such as A C O R N. The counselor now calls out "Animals" and each player writes down the names of as many animals as he can in each column with the first letter of the animal matching the column letter. For example, alligator and albatross is the A column. Each player receives a point for each animal PLUS a bonus point for each animal that no one else listed. Other categories could be flowers, birds, Bible characters, names, cities, and so forth. [A]

6 Active in-Cabin Games For Small Spaces

The following list of activities* will help your younger campers get some of the wiggles out. Even older kids get tired of too much sitting around. Plan ahead because some of these do require props.

➤ **Simon Says.** Everyone stand in a row in the cabin. The leader faces them or is at one end of the cabin. He tells them to do something like "put your hand on your head", or "touch your toes". If he precedes it with "Simon Says" then everyone is to do it. If he leaves "Simon Says" out of the command in order to trick the players. Anyone who obeys when he should not, sits on a bunk until the next games. [Jr.]

➤ **Penny Candy Hunt.** Have all the campers hide under their blankets/sleeping bags. Quickly hide 30+ pieces of penny candy in the cabin. After those in the top bunk stand on the floor, say "Go" for a fast and wild hunt. [Jr.]

* (The letters at the end of each activity relate to the following code: A=all ages ; Jr.=grade school age ; Sr.= junior and senior high age ; G = recommended for girls only ; B = for boys only.)

➤ **Cooperative Spelling.** From your Treasure Chest take out two sets of cards with letters. Each set is identical. Divide the cabin group in two equal teams. (Do this primarily by intelligence levels.)

Each team member holds ONE letter in front of him. You have a list of words that these letters could spell on a 3 x 5 card. When you give the word, it is a contest to see which team can spell the word first. The players must shuffle around until the word is spelled out by facing you with their cards in front of them. [Jr.]

➤ **Balloon Stomp.** If you have adequate room in the cabin (be careful of sharp bed corners!), blow up a balloon for each camper and tie it to his ankle. At the "go" signal, each one tries to stomp and break all the other balloons. [Jr.]

➤ **Balloon Volleyball.** If your cabin space allows this game, tie a string high across the middle. Divide the campers into two teams. Play volleyball with a balloon by using the string for a net. [A]

➤ **Indian Wrestling.** There are several variations of this. Use the ones that are SAFE in your group living context:

☞ **Hand wrestling.** Stand on the floor with line

between contestants. On the signal they reach out and shake hands, then each tries to pull the other over the line.

☞ **Arm wrestling.** Both contestants sit on opposite sides of the table or lay flat on the floor. With elbows down, clasp hands. Each tries to push the other ones hand to the ground.

☞ **Leg wrestling.** Both lay flat on the back, next to each other, in opposite directions, hip to hip. The inside leg is raised on the count of 1,2, and 3. On 3 the legs are locked at the knee joint and each tries to pull the other over. Be sure to have some kind of cushion or mattress under the boys. [Jr. & B]

➤ **Back to Back Stunt.** Divide the cabin group into pairs. They sit on the floor back to back, lock arms at the elbows, and attempt to stand up together. After they practice this and can do it, combine two pairs to make it a foursome! If they can do it, add more! [Jr. & B]

➤ **Soccer. (Rainy Day Style)** Arrange the beds in the cabin so that campers can sit on the beds and form two lines, facing each other. Each side is a team. With their legs extended, they should be able to just touch the other sides toes. At each end of these two parallel lines is a goal (a chair). Drop a

ball (playground or nerf) in the middle. The objective is for each team to try to kick the ball into their goal **WHILE HANDS ARE CLASPED BEHIND THE BACK** and all teammates remain seated. [r.]



➤ **Cooperation.** Rearrange your beds in the cabin so they form a channel just 19 inches wide down the middle of the cabin. It will probably only require two beds on each side for this game.

Line the players up between the beds. Number off. Emphasize that each player must keep his number. For younger players (or those who get confused easily) tape the number on each one.

The objective is now to reverse the order of players so that number 10 ends up where number 1 is now, and all players are in numerical order. **NO ONE** can step on the beds or use them as a help in any way! The player in the middle would end up

right where he started.

After this is accomplished once, repeat it and try to beat the clock. There is a time penalty (add seconds to the score) for anyone who uses the beds.

[A]

➤ **Hit the Can.** Arrange the set up on this game to fit your cabin or living space. It can be played between two lines of bunk beds.

Put a large trash can (3 feet high, if you can get one) in the middle. One team (half of the cabin group) lies on their backs with their heads to the can. The other team stands behind a line about 10 feet away (closer for younger campers). You can set this up so everyone is one side of the can, or you can split it so there are two lines, each 10 feet away from the can.

The team on the floor each has a paper bat (rolled up newspaper). The team behind the lines have a pile of newspapers to make into paper balls.

At the "GO!" signal, one team makes paper balls and tries to hit the can. The other team is trying to bat them away. The team on the floor must keep shoulders to the floor.

Set a two minute limit, count the number of baskets made and then reverse the teams. This game is good for several rounds, but do not wear it out. [A. Jr. & Sr. B]

- **Pass It On.** Form a circle by sitting on the edge of a couple of beds. Give everyone some object from the cabin (shoe, ball, book, broom, etc.). At the signal, everyone pass the object to the right. Keep everything moving at one time. When someone drops an object, he is out, **BUT NOT HIS OBJECT.**

Soon there will be many more objects than people. The last one in the game is the winner. Counselor, be alert as to **WHO** dropped it, the passer or the receiver. [Jr.]

- **Scoop.** Use the same set-up as **PASS IT ON**, but number each player. Using a large lid or other disk object, spin it in the middle of the group and call out one number. That person must pick up the lid before it stops spinning, and the person calling the number must try again. If the person called did not get the lid in time, then he is the new "it". [Jr.]

- **True or False.** Use the same set-up as **PASS IT ON**, but have two teams facing each other. Each team is numbered off (i.e. 1 to 5). At each end of the isle is a chair. One is marked **TRUE** and the

other is marked **FALSE.**

The counselor reads a question, and then he calls a number. If the answer is **TRUE**, the two players with that number should race for the **TRUE** chair and so forth. Each team gets a point for the correct answer **IF** the teammate gets to the chair first.

Before playing this game, have a list of questions ready. These can come from the Bible or from the Bible lessons and chapel talks during this week at camp. [Jr.]

- **Room Scavenger Hunt.** Have ready two identical lists of things that can be found in the cabin. Divide the group into two and give each a list. At "go" each team must bring the counselor each item on the list. First team to find it all is the winner.

For the older campers, make the list more difficult such as a tooth (from a comb) or a picture of Lincoln (from a penny). [A]

- **Hot Potato.** Use any object, even a couple of balled up **CLEAN** socks. The object is for each person to pass the "potato" as quickly as possible to some other person. The game ends when the timer

9 because of the fast decision making required. [A]

➤ **Pantomime.** Pantomime verbs, Bible characters, stories. Be sensitive to the desires of your group. Some kids love it and some hate it. If you love it, this activity may do well. [A]

➤ **This is my Nose.** The leader or "it" stands in front of the group and points to some part of his body but calls it by some other part. The player who is addressed by the leader must point to the part of his body named by the leader, but he must call it the part to which the leader pointed.
Example: Leader points to his foot, "This is my head. 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10". Camper points to his head and says "This is my foot" before the leader counts to 10. [r.]

➤ **Zip Zap.** Campers sit in a circle. One stands in the middle. He points to someone and says, "Zip 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10!" Before he reaches ten, the one sitting must give the name of the person on their right. If he says "Zap...", then the name of the person on the left must be given. If the one sitting does not do it correctly, then he becomes "it". [r.]

➤ **Knots.** In your Treasure Chest have a set of ropes for each camper. Use these to practice knot

➤ **Name That Tune 1.** If you are good at singing or playing an instrument, hum or play the first measure of familiar songs. It is a contest to see who can guess the song first. If they don't get it, do it again and add a measure.

Use many songs that have been sung at camp and other well familiar hymns. Do NOT use secular songs. [A]

➤ **Ready Rhythm.** Sit in a circle (on the edge of the lower bunk beds?). The leader starts the rhythm by slapping his hands on his thigh, then clapping once, then snapping right fingers, then snapping left fingers. Repeat thigh, clap, right, left.

After everyone is with him in repeating this rhythm, he says his own name when snapping his right fingers, and then he says another person's name when snapping his left fingers. The person named must do the same thing — say his own name on the right snap and another person's name of the left.

If a player whose name was called does NOT keep the rhythm by naming himself and another player, he rotates to the end. All the players move up a seat. The objective is to get to the #1 seat. This game is NOT recommended for children under

▶ tying. Most boys will enjoy the challenge. A chart of knots and how they are made would be helpful. [Jr. B]

▶ **The Living Mirror.** Two campers at a time face each other. The one does the action and the other must be the mirror and do exactly the same, but reversed, as in a mirror. Special recognition to the team that can do it the best. [A]

▶ **Who Am I.** Put a sign on each person's back with the name of a person. Each person asks Yes and No questions of everyone else to try to guess what name is on his back. This game can be repeated with names of food and so forth. [A]

▶ **Who's the Leader.** One person is sent out of the room. Everyone is seated in a circle. Another person is chosen (by the counselor) as the leader. The leader is going to lead the group in a series of actions (clapping, stomping, winking, waving, etc.). When the "it" person comes back into the group, he must guess who the leader is as the leader leads the group in these different actions. [Jr.]

▶ **Fast Counter.** Pair the campers off in two's. The counselor can fill it to make it even. Each pair stand facing each other with hands behind their backs. At the signal, both quickly put their hands in

front of their face with a number of fingers up. A closed fist is zero.

The first of the pair to give the correct total number of fingers on all four hands is the winner. The best in two out of three is the winner. Then have the winners and losers pair up. Keep going to reach a champion **FAST COUNTER.** [Jr.]

▶ **You're Hot.** One person is "it" and must hide in the corner or under his covers while someone else hides an object in the cabin. When ready, "it" starts looking for the object. When he moves closer to it the whole group hums a song louder, and if he moves away from it, they hum softer and softer. Choose a song that is sung often in camp this week. The object is to see who can find the object the fastest, so time each player. [Jr.]

▶ **Do You Have The Power.** There are a number of games that deal with knowing the inside secret. For these games, at least two people must know the secret. One leaves the room, something is chosen, the one who left comes back in and can guess what was chosen after a few questions are asked.

▶ **Black Magic:** The one asking questions points to a black object just before the chosen object is asked.

9

BREAKING THE ICE: How To Play 16 Getting Acquainted Games (GAGs)

GAGs—Getting Acquainted Games—are games you can use to introduce children to you and to each other. Start the kids playing as soon as possible after they arrive at camp.

1. **UpBall.** In addition to being tremendously fun, this is a great game for building cooperation and teamwork. The ball should be a beach ball, or (even better) the soccer-ball-sized light plastic play-balls sold in supermarkets. With younger children, use a balloon instead of a ball. To play, stand in a circle. All the players play together, against a common opponent: Doctor Gravity. The object of the game is to hit the ball, keep the ball in the air, and NOT to let the ball hit the ground. When the ball hits the ground the round is over and you start a new round. Count each time you hit the ball as 1 point, and see how many points you can get. One player may hit the ball no more than three times in a row. The ball may be hit by any part of your body. Play on a big grassy field, with lots of room to run.

2. **Introducing.** Divide the group into teams of two partners. Make sure that the partners have not met before, or do not know each other very well. For three minutes, partner 1 tells partner 2 all about himself. Then partner 2 must tell the whole group all about partner 1 (for 30 seconds). After all the partner 1s have been introduced, the partner 2s tell partner 1s about themselves, and partner 2 tells the group all about partner 1. Use a watch with a timer to keep things moving along.

3. **Pick Yourself Up.** Divide the group into teams of two partners. Partners sit on the ground, turn back-to-back (touching each other), then lock their arms. The object of the game is to stand up together. After this round is finished, make the teams into 3 players, and try again. When 3 players are done, try 4 players, then 5, and so on up to 10 players together. It gets more difficult (and more fun) as you add more people to the group. Try a variation where the players sit down, face forward, hold hands, and try to (simultaneously) pull each other up.

4. **Trust Walk.** Participants pair up into teams (partners) of two. One partner is blindfolded, the other is not. Players hold hands as the seeing partner leads the blindfolded partner on a walk through the woods. All seeing players should follow the counselor (leader). During the walk, the seeing player talks continually, telling the blindfolded partner to step over this and watch out for that. Before the walk, the counselor should map out the walking course to make sure that the trail is challenging enough, but not too dangerous for the age levels of the players. After the walk, reverses the roles—put the blindfold on the previously seeing partner; and now the partners walk again. After both partners have walked, hold a brief discussion to talk about what the players were thinking and feeling on the trust walk.

5. **Peanut Butter.** Number of Players: 6 to 100. Age of Players: 6 to 100. The playing area is a large grass field, completely empty of obstacles and dangerous objects (*Beginning version*): Divide the group into two teams with an equal number of players (there is an extra player, let him help you as a guide). One team is the "Peanut!", the other team is the "Butter!". All players meet in the middle then close their eyes; eye should remain closed during the entire game. (An alternative to eye-closing is blindfolds. The counselors mix the players so that the team members are not standing beside one another. At the counselor's announcement, the players (with eyes closed) take a few steps forward. The counselor blows a whistle, then the Peanut team-members shout "Peanut!" over and over again. Meanwhile, the Butter team-members yell "Butter!", and keep on yelling "Butter!". Each player yells, then listens for the sounds of his teammates. When he hears a teammate, he walks to him (eyes are still closed) and joins hands. "Peanut team wins if they get all their "peanut" players to hold hands before all the "butter players join together. During the entire game the counselors walk in circles around the throng. If an eyes-closed player begins to stray too far, then the counselor points him toward the hub of activity.

Intermediate version. Same game, except instead of Peanut! and Butter!, the teams are named (and shout out) "Giggle!" and "Jiggle!"

Advanced versions. Make three teams named Giggle!, Jiggle!, and Wiggle!. Or, make four teams who shout simultaneously: "Giggle! Jiggle! Wiggle! Squiggle!"; or shout "Futter! Butter! Nutter! Mutter!"

6. **Rubber Blubber.** A variation of Peanut Butter. Give each child in the large group a partner. The object of the game is to (blindfolded) find your partner. The only words you are allowed to say are either "rubber!" or "blubber!"

7. **Giant Caterpillar.** Ten kids (or 20 or 30 or 100) lie down on the grass on the backs, like 10 kids sleeping right beside each other in a bed. Shoulders must touch shoulders with no space in between. The 1st kid rolls over onto kid beside him, and keeps rolling over the bodies of the other kids until he gets to the end of the line. The 2nd kid rolls over; then the 3rd; and so on. Lots of grunting and groaning and "C no, here comes Big Bill!" adds fun to this game.

8. **Sneaker Mountain.** Number of Players: 6 to 1,000. Age of Players: 6 to adult. Play on grass. Everyone takes off their sneakers and mixes them into a mountainous pile. Divide the group into two teams; then stand on the starting line, about 100 yards from the pile. At the blow of the whistle, all the players rush to the mountain, search for the sneakers, and put them on. When a player gets his sneakers back on he dashes back to the starting line. The first team to get all their players back to the starting line with sneakers on, wins. *Variation 1.* Increase the fun by adding other events: after putting on the sneakers the player must crawl backwards on all fours, and so on. *Variation 2.* Instead of racing against each other, race against Time. The counselor uses a stopwatch to time how long it takes. Players help each other to find their sneakers.

9. **Balloon Mashing.** For this game you will need balloons, and string cut into pieces about 18 inches long. Give each player a piece of string and a balloon. Each player ties one end of the string around her ankle, then ties the other end of the string around the lip of the blown-up balloon. At the whistle, players run around and try to step on other person's balloons, while preventing their own balloon from being stepped on. Chaotic but fun!

10. **Meeting of the Minds.** This game is one of the quickest and most fun ways to get to know each other. It works best with a medium-sized group of anywhere between 6 and 24 kids. To play, stand together in a circle on the grass. The counselor asks a question (see the question list below), and the kids shout the answer. The object of the game is to get into groups as quickly as possible. Kids who shout the same answer must get into a group with one another. Kids who are the only one to answer must get in a group together consisting of all the kids whose answers are unique.

As soon as the groups are formed, the counselor asks the next question and then the groups must break up again into different groups. The faster you play, the funnier it is.

Question List for MEETING OF THE MINDS. 1) Your name? 2) City you live in? 3) Ever been to this place before? 4) Do you know anyone here? 5) What school grade are you in? 6) On a scale of 0 to 100, how much do you like school? 7) What is your favorite thing to do? 8) What's your second favorite thing to do? 9) Your third favorite thing to do? 10) How many sisters do you have? 11) How many brothers do you have? 12) What pets do you have? 13) Your favorite wild animal? 14) Your favorite dessert? 15) Your least favorite food? 16) What is your favorite book? 17) What is something you can do very well? 18) What is something new you would like to learn how to do? 19) Name something you want to do here. 20) Name another thing you want to do here.

11. **Martian Sun Dance.** Ask the group to form a large circle, with everyone holding on to one another around the shoulders. The leader should demonstrate the dance, then get back into the circle and join in. To dance, start with your feet together, touching each other. Take the to-the-right steps by stepping to the right with the right foot, then step (rightwards) with your left foot to touch your right. The steps are:

- 4 steps to your right, as you shout "Right! Right! Right! Right!"

- 4 steps to your left, as you shout "Left! Left! Left! Left! Left!"
- 2 steps to the right, shouting "Right! Right!"
- 2 steps to the left, shouting "Left! Left!"
- 1 step to the right, "Right!"; 1 step to the left, "Left!"
- 1 step to the right, "Right!"; 1 step to the left, then shout "HEY!"
- 4 steps to the right (and begin the dance again)

Dance the dance either with everyone's arms around their neighbors' shoulders; or with all arms straight down at the sides and the all the shoulders pressed tightly against other shoulders. Everyone must be (physically) close to make this dance work. Make up your own chants to match the rhythm of the steps.

Advanced version: instead of shouting "right" and "left", make up another word for this. For example: Right is "Bleep!" and left is "Bloop!"

TWO-MINUTE GAMES

When time is short, or when a shy child is talking less than a giraffe with laryngitis—then often you can fill the time with fun, or open a rapport by playing two-minute games.

12. **Slaphappy.** For two players. The camper starts by placing his two hands out in front of him, palms up. The counselor (or second player) places his two hands, palms down, on top of the camper's hands. The object of the game: the slapper (the player who holds his hands underneath) tries to slap the hands of the slappee (the player with his hands or top). The player with his hands on top tries to pull his hands away before getting slapped.

After each attempt, players reset their hands in the original position, then play again. The players switch (slapper becomes slappee, and vice versa) whenever they want to.

13. **Falling Buddies.** Play this game on soft ground, or with a gymnastic mat behind you. Two counselors stand behind the camper. The camper stands straight up, then, keeping his body straight, falls backward. The camper must not try to break his fall by putting his foot behind him. The counselors catch the camper before he hits the ground.

14. **Levitating Arms.** The child, with his arms straight down at his sides, stands facing you. You grasp the child's wrists and hold them against his thighs, to prevent the wrist from moving. Tell the child to push both arms (not with all his might) so that the right arm tries to swing sideways to his right, and (simultaneously) the left arm tries to swing sideways to his left. The child will not be able to move the arms because you are holding them. Begin counting to 60, by "One mississippi ... two mississippi ..." and so on. When you get to 30, tell the child to push a *little* harder; a little harder than that at 40; harder at 50; and for 5 seconds (from the count of 55 to 60) to push as hard as he can. Now tell the child: "Stop pushing and relax your arms completely." When the child stops pushing, let go of his wrists. The child's arms will rise "by themselves", and feel like they're mysteriously floating.

15. **Rock-Paper-Scissors.** Before you start playing together with your kids you may need to choose who's it, choose who goes first, or pick team captains. Two games to begin your games are Rock-Paper-Scissors; and Dragon-Unicorn (See # 16). To play, each player places one hand behind his back, then shouts: "One, two, three ... CLASH!". At the word "CLASH!", the players throw their hands in front of them.

Players may throw:

- A Rock, made by a closed fist;
 - A Paper, made by an open hand;
 - A Scissors, made by placing the first two fingers into the shape of a "V".
- The Rock defeats the Scissors (You say, "Rock breaks Scissors."): the player who threw the Rock gets one point. The Scissors defeats the paper ("Scissors cuts Paper."): the player who threw the Scissors gets one point. The Paper defeats the Rock ("Paper covers Rock."): the player who threw the Paper gets one point.

If both players throw the same item, then play the round over again. Play a best out of five set: the winner is the first player to get three points.

16. **Dragon-Unicorn.** The idea is exactly the same as Rock-Paper-Scissors (see # 15), but Dragon-Unicorn is slightly more complex. To make your Dragon, put out your open hand with your palm upward and all five digits showing, like a waiter waiting for a tip. Your Unicorn is one lone finger. Put out four fingers to make your Mermaid; three fingers for the Knight; two fingers for the Serpent. To play a round of Dragon-Unicorn, the players gather close together and place their hands behind their backs. Everyone counts together: "Three, two, one, CLASH!"—then each child throws out his hand. Each player may show any number of fingers he chooses: five fingers (Dragon); four fingers (Mermaid); three fingers (Knight); two fingers (Serpent); one finger (Unicorn).

With two players playing, the winner is the creature with the highest amount of fingers, EXCEPT: the Unicorn (who always loses to Mermaid, Knight, and Serpent) always defeats the Dragon. See the Mythology Tag chart on page 48, for a summary of who beats who.

When more than two players are playing, then after the kids have thrown their hands into the middle, take out all duplicate (and triplicate, and quadruplicate, etc.) creatures. (If ten children are playing and four kids throw Dragons, and two kids throw Knights, then take out all the Dragons and Knights.) After you take out the duplicates, compare hands of the children who remain.

If a Unicorn and Dragon appear in the same round with other creatures, then the Unicorn always wins. For example: if five kids are playing, and they throw out the five creatures (Dragon, Mermaid, Knight, Serpent, and Unicorn)—then the Unicorn wins. Why? Because the greedy Dragon first gobbles up the Mermaid, Knight, and Serpent—then the Unicorn and Dragon remain, and the Unicorn wins.



Ready Set GO! How To Play Active Outdoor Games

Children need to play. Play creates instant friendship and enthusiasm. Active play and imaginative play are the ways in which children become friends with one another, learn about the world; strengthen their bodies; develop their minds and imaginations; and celebrate the pure joy of being alive. The child who learns to play well will learn the meaning of cooperation, joyousness, and intensity—everything she will need to accomplish great things throughout her life.

Here are three ways to get the games going that will give you and your group the most freedom and the most fun.

1. **PRE-GAME BRIEFING.** Explain to your group that in playing, the only things that matter are COOPERATION and FUN. Explain that playing to win is far less important than playing for the sheer joy of playing. The counselor should briefly share this idea with the kids, then make sure that he himself sets an excellent example.
2. **LET THE KIDS CHOOSE WHAT TO PLAY.** The counselor should give the kid some ideas, let the kids come up with their own ideas, then let the group vote for which game they want to play. Voting is completely democratic: the children have one vote apiece, and the counselor has one vote.
3. **LET THE KIDS RESOLVE THEIR OWN PROBLEMS.** Do you want to help to create self-reliant children? Then let kids make the rules, and let kids work things out when problems and conflicts arise. The counselor should intervene only:
 - When absolutely necessary, which means: intervene if a child is hurting himself or another person.
 - When the kids ask you. When children try but absolutely cannot agree, they may ask you to help work things out. Make a fair and objective decision; or suggest the compromise called a "do-over" where they re-play the disputed action, or start again.

The remainder of this section explains how to play the games that kids love best: active games in the open air.

Chart of 20 Great Active Games

Use this chart as a quick reference to find which game is right for your group, based on the number of players you have and their ages. To decipher the symbols: a "0" in the Equipment row means that no equipment is needed to play; "fb" means flagbelt; a "tc" means traffic cones; an "x" means other; "B" means ball; "D" means a plastic disk. An asterisk (*) after the game means this is an original game or variation never published before.

GAME	How Many	Equipment	Ages	Page
1. Spring Tag	6 to 30	0 or fb	all	46
2. Rock-Paper-Scissors Tag*	6 to 30	0 or fb	all	46
3. Four-Square	5	tc	all	46
4. Four-Square Squared*	6 or more	x	all	46
5. Capture the Flag	6 or more	x + fb	9 +	46
6. Scoring Keep-away*	6 or more	B	9 +	47
7. Banana Bandanna	4 to 24	x or fb	9 +	47
8. Diaper Tag	6 or more	0	all	47
9. Mythology Tag*	10 to 30	x	9 +	48
10. Invisible Freeze Tag*	8 or more	B	9 +	49

How To Make Flagbelts

FLAGBELTS are standard equipment for many exciting outdoor active games. They can also be used as blindfolds; or as waistbands to identify which players are on which team. Make flagbelts out of a white bedsheet: a standard size sheet (92" x 72") will make more than 70 belts. Cut the sheet into strips 46" long by 2" wide. Larger-waisted players will need longer belts. Dye the strips into two bright colors, one for each team. Tie the strips around the player's waist by using a slip knot or a shoelace bow, so that the belt will come undone with a simple pull. Leave 10 to 12 inches of belt dangling from the player's back or side.

GAME	How Many	Equipment	Ages	Page
11. Counselor Tag	4 to 24	0	all	49
12. Glue Tag	6 to 30	0	all	49
13. Immunity Tag	6 or more	0	all	49
14. Flagbelt Promotion Tag*	20 to 24	fb + x	9 +	49
15. Three-Legged Tag	6 or more	x	9 +	50
16. Running Bases	3, 4, or 5	B	9 +	50
17. Spud	4 or more	B	all	51
18. Breakaway Ball	6 or more	B or D	all	51
19. Classic Dodge Ball	12 to 36	ball	all	52
20. Recycling Dodgeball*	12 to 36	ball	all	52

How To Play 20 Active Outdoor Games

1. **Spring Tag.** Team captains pick two teams, team A and team B. Each team selects a BASE (a place where they are safe from capture), and a JAIL to put prisoners in. Team A chases team B, and tries to capture them by grabbing them and shouting "7-8-9 you are mine!". Captured prisoners are brought to the base. Prisoners may be freed if a member of team B touches the JAIL and shouts "1-2-3 you are FREE!" without being tagged. After a while, or when one whole team is captured, let team B chase and team A run away.

Variation 1. A prisoner is captured only when you grab and pull out his flagbelt. For this version, during the game you will need one counselor whose job is to tie and re-tie all the flagbelts. To make the belts, see page 45. *Variation 2.* Play with three or more teams, each team has a base and a jail.

2. **Rock-Paper-Scissors Tag.** Played the same as Spring Tag, with one interesting exception. When player A tags (and thus captures) player B, both players stop to play a round of Rock-Paper-Scissors (RPS). If player A (the tagger) wins the round of RPS, then player B is officially captured. If player B (the taggee) wins the RPS round, then player B is free, and gets five seconds to run away.

3. **Four-Square.** The court is a square: each side is 24 feet long (adjust the length based on the age of the players). Mark the corners with 4 plastic traffic cones. The corners are the bases. To begin, four players (called runners) stand on the bases (1 player per base), and one player—called "IT"—stands inside a small circle in the middle of the square. Runners must stay along the baselines; the IT can run anywhere. The four runners try to run to another base, while IT tries to get to a base before a runner does. If IT reaches a base before a runner, then the runner left without a base becomes the new IT.

4. **Four-Square Squared.** Any number of kids can play Four-Square: just add on more bases and more squares. For example, for 8 players, have 2 squares with one common side: this gives you 6 bases, and two ITS standing in the middle of the squares. If you make 4 four-squares (in other words, make one huge square and divide it with two perpendicular lines in the middle), then 9 runners and 4 ITS can play. Use T-shirts to mark the bases when you run out of traffic cones.

5. **Capture The Flag.** The object of the game is to defend your own flag, and at the same time swoop into the opponent's territory, grab their flag, and run back without being tagged. The flag is a large, brightly-colored bandanna placed on the ground. Play on a soccer-sized field with a line (midline) that divides the field in half. Players are safe from capture while on their own side; when you cross the midline you may be captured if a player on the other team pulls out your flagbelt. Each team has a jail and its own flag, both located on its own half of the field. The jail may be placed anywhere in your

territory, but there must be at least 10 yards between the jail and any of the boundary edges of the field. The flag may be placed anywhere, with the same 10-yard restriction. A team may not move its jail or its flag, once they have been situated.

Captains should make plans and strategies for leading the attacks and securing the defense. Start play by blowing a whistle. Players may run into the territory of the opposing team to try to steal the flag or free a prisoner. When a player is captured (by taking his flagbelt), then he is taken to the jail. If a teammate tags him when he is in jail, then he (and the tagger) can safely return to their territory. Only one person at a time may be freed from jail. The round ends when a player captures the opposing team's flag then returns safely (without getting captured) across the midline, then runs and touches his own flag. A player with an opponent's flag may be captured in his own territory.

6. **Scoring Keep-away.** Two captains divide the group into two teams. The object of the game is get the ball over your goal line. To do this, you may carry the ball over, or pass the ball over to a teammate. If you have the ball and a player tags you, you must give the ball to him, then give him 3 seconds to escape. During these 3 seconds he cannot advance forward, or pass the ball forward (but he can move or pass backwards). Unlike the game *breakaway ball* (see # 18 below), incomplete passes do NOT necessarily mean that the passing team loses possession of the ball. If the pass is incomplete, whoever gets to the ball first gets possession. However you cannot score a goal by an incomplete pass over the goal line: you have to run the ball over the goal, or complete a pass over the goal to score. Balls thrown over the goal incomplete, or balls thrown past the side boundary lines, automatically give possession of the ball to the other team. A goal scored is worth one point; after the goal the opposing team takes over the ball at mid field.

7. **Banana Bandanna.** Play on a grassy field to avoid scrapes; the field size can be as large as a basketball court. Mark the boundaries (goal lines and midline) with traffic cones or T-shirts. Captains pick two equal teams: each team contains 2 to 12 players. You need 1 yellow bandanna (or flagbelt) for each player. Place the bandannas on the midline of the field; weigh them down with stones if it is windy. The object of the game is to score a point. How? By picking up a bandanna, avoiding getting tagged, then carrying the bandanna across the goal line. To start, players line up on the goal lines at opposite ends of the field. When the whistle blows, all players dash for the bandanna on the midline. A player may pick up no more than one bandanna. You are safe from being tagged if you are on your half of the field. If you get tagged you must give your bandanna to the player who tagged you, and he may now try to cross the goal. Players must give the bandanna to the umpire after they have successfully crossed the opponent's goal. One point is given to a team each time a player crosses the goal. The round ends when the umpire is holding all the bandannas. Count the points, then start the next round

8. **Diaper Tag.** Divide into 2 teams; one team chases the other. When a player is tagged she is frozen (must stand still). To get unfrozen: a teammate must crawl under the archway made by the frozen player's legs.

9. **Mythology Tag.** Select a person to be the Wizard to prepare, organize, and oversee the game. Select captains and divide players into two teams. With 10 kids there will be two teams of 5 players each. Each player is given one of the 5 kinds of creatures: the creatures are Dragon, Mermaid, Knight, Serpent, and Unicorn. If there are more than 5 players on the team, add creatures from the bottom up: the 6th player is another Unicorn, the 7th player is another Serpent, and so on. Each player knows what his own creature is, but the opposing team does not know. Each player receives a "pendant": a white card or piece of construction paper (sized 5" x 7"), folded in half around a piece of string. The string is tied into a necklace and hangs around the player's neck. Inside the card, in very small letters, the Wizard writes the name of the creature. Begin to play after every player is wearing a necklace-card pendant with a creature written inside. Play on a soccer-sized field, and mark out a base and a jail for each team.

Play starts or stops when the Wizard blows a whistle. The unique aspect about this game is that players on BOTH TEAMS may chase each other! When one player catches an opponent (or both catch each other), then the players show each other their cards. If both cards are the same creature, then neither player is captured. If both cards are different creatures, then one player will become the prisoner of the other. The player who captures an opponent must walk his prisoner to the jail. Prisoners may be freed if a player, without getting captured, gets to the jail and tags his teammate. The game ends when one team captures all the opposing players. Throughout the game, the Wizard may blow the whistle and stop the action: this brief stopping is called a "Time Bubble". The Wizard huddles with one team, then the other. During the huddle, the Wizard may exchange player's creature cards (*exchange*, not add other creatures) to confuse the opposing team, and to give different players the chance to be a more powerful creature. Make a big poster of the information below to tell you which creature captures which: note that the Dragon beats all creatures except the Unicorn.

Mythology Tag Battle Chart

	Conquers	Has No Effect On	Is Defeated By
Dragon	Mermaid Knight Serpent	Dragon	Unicorn
Mermaid	Knight Serpent Unicorn	Mermaid	Dragon
Knight	Serpent Unicorn	Knight	Dragon Mermaid
Serpent	Unicorn	Serpent	Dragon Mermaid Knight
Unicorn	Dragon	Unicorn	Mermaid Knight Serpent

10. **Invisible Freeze Tag.** Pick two captains and two teams, and play on a soccer-sized field. Each team begins the game with one fist-sized rubber ball, but during the course of the game one team may possess both balls, and the other team none. One team runs away first, while the other team chases them. After one round (15 minutes), switch: the chasers run away, and the runners become chasers. The object of the game is to tag and "freeze" all the members of the other team before the round ends.

When player A tags player B, then player B is frozen: he must stand still on the spot where he was tagged. Player B can be freed ("unfrozen") if he is tagged by a teammate Why the balls? ... A player who is carrying a ball cannot do three things: he cannot tag another player and freeze him; he cannot unfreeze a teammate; and he cannot be tagged (frozen). Balls must be carried in the hand, and not concealed. Of course, a player can throw his ball at any time. If he throws his ball out of bounds, the ball is given to the captain of the opposing team. As the game nears the end, it may happen that the last player on team B has a ball. In this case, this last player can be captured (tagged and frozen) ONLY by a player who is also carrying a ball. If two players on team B are the last two unfrozen players, and each one has a ball, then Team A must tag each team B player twice: the first tag makes him give up his ball, and the second tag captures him. At any time during the game, if a ball-carrying player is tagged simultaneously by two members of the opposing team, then he must give up his ball to the opposing captain.

11. **Counselor Tag.** Counselors play against the campers: counselors chase kids and try to tag and freeze them. Kids get unfrozen when they are tagged by other kids. One counselor has a whistle: when it blows, wherever you are, you change roles. If you were chasing someone, now you run away; if you were running, now you chase.

12. **Glue Tag.** Choose teams and play the same as in Spring tag. When a runner is tagged, however, he is not captured. He must place his hand on whatever body part the he was tagged on; and then he gets a head start of ten seconds to run away. Of course, he must continue to run while his hand is on the spot where he was tagged. When he is tagged for the second time, then he is captured and taken to the prison. After he is freed from prison, he can run normally again (until tagged the next time).

13. **Immunity Tag.** Play a tag game with any of the following variations. Immunity is temporary: players are given 10 seconds to rest, then 5 seconds to run away. A player or players are temporarily safe from being tagged when:

- The player hops on one foot
- Two players on the same team hug each other
- Two players on the same team lie on the ground and touch the bottoms of their feet or sneaker soles together
- Three players on the same team hold on to one another

14. **Flagbelt Promotion Tag.** Play on a soccer-sized field with two teams of 10 to 12 players per team. Have one hundred 3-by-5 cards and a marker handy. Give each player

a flagbelt which he must tie around his waist in a slip knot (or shoelace bow), with at least 10 inches of belt dangling from the player's side. The two teams line up on their endlines (the opposing team's goal lines). The captains decide who goes first, and the teams take turns attacking and defending. Each round lasts ten minutes, or less if all the attacking players have either been captured or have crossed their goal line. In the following example, the Yellow team attacks, the Red team defends. Example: The whistle blows. The Yellow team and the Red team run to the middle of the field, toward each other. The Yellow team players are attacking, so they try to cross the goal line of the Red team. The Red team members defend their goal by trying to capture the Yellow team members: you capture a player by pulling off his flagbelt. If the Red team player captures a yellow player, then both players walk off the field together and report to the referee who is called the SCORER.

All players start out the game with the rank of "1". The highest rank is 12. There is only one way to gain in rank. When an attacking player crosses the opponent's goal line without getting his belt taken, he gains 1 point in rank. Now he is a "2". Gaining rank is important. A "2" ranked player, when he is playing defense, can capture two of the opponent's men: when he captures a man and takes him to the SCORER, he may return to the field and chase another opponent. A "3" ranked player can capture three men, then after capturing the third man he must leave the field until the next round. Rank means nothing to you when your team is on the offense: you still try to cross the goal line. Higher rank increases your defensive power.

A team wins when it is the first team to have any six of its players achieve the rank of "12". Keep track of the ranks by giving out 3-by-5 cards with the rank numbers written on them. When a player advances a rank, he trades in his old rank card for the new one.

15. Three-Legged Tag. Make 2 teams; divide each team into partners of 2 players. Partners stand side-by-side, then tie their inside legs together with soft string. Frozen players may be unfrozen when tagged by a teammate.

16. Running Bases. Mark two bases, depending on the age of the players, anywhere from about 25 feet to 40 feet apart. Two fielders stand on the bases. One, two, or three runners start the game by standing on the bases. The runners try to run from one base to another. Each time they do that without getting tagged, they score one run. Runners keep track of their own runs. The fielders throw the ball back and forth, and try to tag the runners before they reach the base. Tagging a runner gives the runner one out. Fielders may go anywhere; runners must stay pretty much on the baseline, never more than about 6 feet on either side of the imaginary middle of the baseline. After a runner gets three outs, the runner becomes a fielder, and one of the fielders becomes a runner. When the runner starts out to run for a base, she may run back to the same base: there is never an obligation to run. Fielders may tempt the runners by throwing high pop-ups, or slow grounders. The highlight of the game is when a runner gets caught in the middle of a "run-down": when he is off the base, between the fielders.

Variation: More can play if you add more bases, and more fielders and runners. Or, more simply, just start more than one game. For 6 to 10 players start two separate games; for 11 to 15 players start three games; and so on.

17. Spud. Also called "Baby-in-the-air". Use a playground rubber kickball, or another ball that won't hurt when it hits you. The leader starts the game by giving a number to every player (including himself). Always use one more number than the total number of players: if there are 10 players, give out the numbers 1 through 11. The extra number (it can be any number from 1 through 11) is called the "ghost number". Whisper numbers into players' ears so that no one hears the numbers, and no one knows what the ghost number is. Write down the player's numbers on a card in case someone forgets. To play: the kids cluster together in a small circle around the "thrower", who yells out: "SPUD ... Number ... eight!" (the thrower can yell out any number between 1 and 11). Everybody, including the thrower, runs away from the ball as fast as they can—everybody except the person whose number was called. This person runs to the ball, and when he catches it he yells "STOP!". On hearing this "STOP!", all the runners must immediately freeze. The player with the ball may take three giant steps in any direction; then he throws the ball at any other player—usually the nearest. If the player had caught the ball before it hit the ground, then he is allowed to take five steps instead of three. If this player hits another player with the ball, then the hit player gets one letter of the word SPUD. If he misses, then he (the player who threw the ball) gets the letter. Letters are bad, and when you get S-P-U-D you are out of the game. Whoever gets the point becomes the thrower for the next round.

A funny thing happens when the "ghost number" is called. Everyone runs away, until someone realizes that it's the ghost number. Whoever is the first to realize this yells out "GHOST NUMBER!", then runs to the ball. When he gets it, he holds it out in front of him, and all the other players run to the ball to touch the ball. The last player who touches the ball gets a letter: S, P, U, or D.

Play continues again and again until you're too tired to play anymore.

18. Breakaway Ball. Play with a playground kickball, a football, or a plastic disk. A large area—a football field or soccer field—is needed. Captains pick two teams. Like American football, the object of the game is to pass the ball to a teammate beyond your goal line (but you cannot run the ball over the goal line). To begin, both teams gather around midfield. A counselor throws the ball straight up, and the team that catches it begins the game. Players without the ball may run anywhere. A player with the ball may immediately pass, or he may run as many as five steps backwards or sideways, but never forward. The pass can be forward, to the sides, or backward. After the player takes his five (or less) steps, he must either stand in one place, or pass the ball. If the pass is not caught (it hits the ground), then the ball is given to the other team on the spot where the ball hit the ground. If the ball is thrown over the goal line and not caught, then the opposing team is given the ball at midfield. If the defense intercepts the pass, they automatically become the offensive team. No body contact is allowed: defending players

may block passes (swat them down), or wave their arms in front of a player who is going to pass. A scored goal is worth one point; after a goal is scored the opposing team gets possession of the ball at midfield.

19. Classic Dodge Ball. Two captains pick two teams (about 6 to 12 players per team), then decide which team will be the first to throw and which will dodge. The throwing team stand in a large circle; the dodgers get inside. Use a rubber playground kickball. The throwers throw the ball at the dodgers. Dodgers who are hit must leave the circle and cheer for their teammates who remain inside. When the last dodger remains, the throwers get ten throws to hit her. A thrower may pass the ball to a teammate, but this counts as one of the ten throws. If a thrower hits the last dodger, then the game begins again, but reversed: the throwing team is now the dodgers, and vice versa. If, within 10 throws, the throwers cannot hit the last dodger, then all the dodging team goes back into the circle and the game begins again. *Variation:* Play double dodgeball with two balls and a bigger circle.

20. Recycling Dodgeball. In this game the hit players do not sit out, they are recycled immediately back into the game. Pick 3 team captains who will divide your group (of 18 to 36) into 3 teams of 6 to 12 kids per team. Teams A and B should have the same number of players, and Team C should have the same number of players as Teams A and B combined. (In other words, Team C has twice as many players as Team A). Team A forms a circle, and Team B forms another circle: the circles are connected to resemble a pair of eyeglasses, or a figure-eight. Team C players go inside the circles: half the team C players go into the "A" circle, and half go into the "B" circle. If possible, the Team C captain should divide his team into two subteams of approximately even ability.

Use two balls. To play, Team A throws the ball at the Team C players inside circle A, while Team B throws the ball at the Team C players inside circle B. If a team A thrower hits a team C dodger, then the hit player changes circles: he goes from circle A to circle B. Every time a player is hit they go to the opposite circle. Multiple hits count: if the thrown ball hits more than one player, *all* the hit players move to the other circle. Thus, teams A and B are racing against each other: the winning team is the team that is the first team to knock all the players out of their circle.

Variation: Recycling Defense Dodgeball. Team C players may try to catch the ball that is thrown at them. If a team C player touches the ball but can't catch it, then that player is hit, and must go to the other circle. If the team C player catches the ball, then he throws it back to the thrower. The thrower must carry the ball and run all around the circle, back to his original place, then hand the ball to the teammate on his left or right. (This slows up the progress of the whole team.) If a thrown ball touches one team C player then is caught (before it hits the ground) by another team C player, then it does not count as a catch OR a hit: just count it as a "do-over", and throw the ball again.



FIVE

BASIC COUNSELING SKILLS