Games

Section Contents

Teaching Suggestions

The aim of the Games section of the daily physical activity programme is to achieve maximum vigorous activity in a short period of time.

- Where possible teach the games before the Daily Physical Activity session. This will avoid lengthy explanations during the activity session.
- Many games can be explained in the classroom using the blackboard and quick diagrams.
- Have a consistent vocabulary for various instructions
  - e.g Whistle – stop
    - "Go" – start etc.
- Appoint children to get equipment ready before the session.
- Establish the boundaries for an activity at the beginning.
- In order to have maximum involvement by all children:
  1. Organise team leaders and groups before going outside.
  2. Use small groups wherever possible.
  3. Avoid games where children are "out" and therefore out of the game. Try to find an activity for the "outs" to do e.g. bounce on the spot; find another person who is "out" and jog on the spot etc.
  4. Try to develop a repertoire of games that can be organised readily and played quickly.
- Mix and match the games in this section. Some games may take the whole session while others are shorter and there will be time for 2 games.
- Use the games in combination with other activities
  - e.g. Running activities for 10 minutes
    - Game for 5 minutes
  - or Game for 10 minutes
    - Partner activities for 5 minutes.

Catch the Dragon's Tail

Equipment
Band or bib per team.

Area
Large open space – grass or hard surface.

Formation
Children in groups of 6-8 lined up one behind the other – all hold onto the waist of the person in front. Back person tucks a band or bib into the back of her skirt, shorts or jersey.

Instructions
- On "Go", the front person in line (Dragon) chases its own tail i.e. the front person whose hands are free tries to snatch the band from the back person.
- If the dragon does catch its tail, the head person moves to the end and takes up the last position.
- And the second person in line becomes the new head.
- Repeat several times, or until each person has had a turn at being the head.

Variation
1.   Each group tries to catch the tail of another group.

Teaching Point
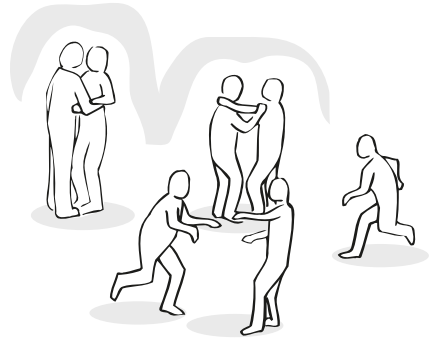- Encourage the whole group to work together.

Hug Tag

Equipment

Band for the tagger.

Area

Hall, grass, hard surface – approx. the area of a netball court.

Formation

Free spacing. One child is "it".

Instructions
- Children are safe from being tagged if they are "hugging" another player.
- The child who is "it" tries to tag another player who is not "hugging". When tagged, that person becomes "it" and wears the band.
- Huggers may change partners at any time although they risk being tagged.
- Teacher calls "Change" at regular intervals (every 20-30 seconds) – all huggers must then release their hug and move to find a new person to hug.

Variation

1.   Change the "safe" rule – only groups of three huggers are safe.

Teaching Points

- When calling "Change", teacher can lengthen or shorten the time interval to assist the tagger if he is having difficulty.
- Ensure that this game is suited to the group, considering age, attitudes and cultural beliefs.
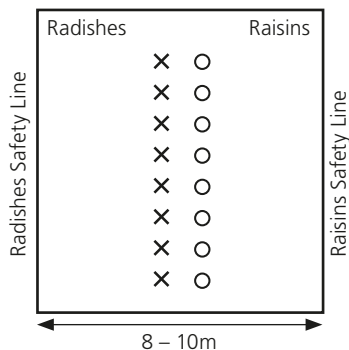
Radishes and Raisins (Rats and Rabbits)

Equipment

Cones if no lines are marked.

Area

Hall, grass, hard surface with line markings.

Formation

As in diagram – children in 2 teams lined up adjacent to a mid-line. One team called Radishes, the other called Raisins.

Radishes		Raisins
×	○	
×	○	
×	○	
×	○	
×	○	
×	○	
×	○	
×	○	

Radishes Safety Line   Raisins Safety Line

8 – 10m

Instructions

- When teacher calls "Radishes", the children in that team run to the safety of their own line, while the Raisins chase them.
- If tagged they join the other team's line.
- Both teams return to central line.
- When teacher calls "Raisins", the Raisins team runs to their safety line chased by Radishes – if caught, the Raisins join the other team.

Variation

1. Select other group names beginning with the same letter or sound.

Teaching Point

- Teacher can roll the "R" at the beginning of each word call to hold the teams for a few seconds in anticipation.
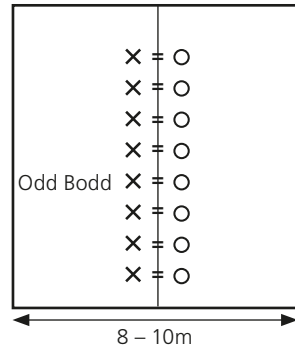
Odd Bod

Equipment

Cones for markers.

Area

Hall, grass, hard surface – centre line or cones.

Formation

Children in pairs on either side of a central line – facing each other and holding hands. There must be 1 person without a partner.

Odd Bodd

8 – 10m

Instructions
- On signal from teacher, children move freely about on their own side of the line.
- On whistle or signal all run back to the centre line to join hands with a new partner – the child without the partner is the "Odd Bodd".
- The "Odd Bodd" nominates the type of movement for the next turn e.g. hop, skip, jump, run in 2s.
- Repeat several times.

Variation

1. Same formation, but children can run anywhere within the whole area and on signal must return to their starting line.

Teaching Point
- If there is not an odd number, teacher may be required to join in.

Scatter

Equipment
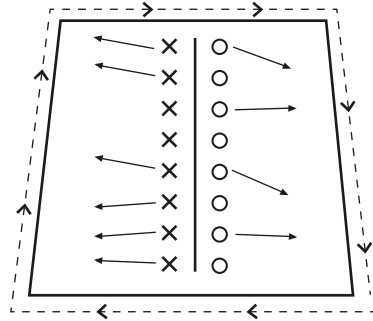
Four cones to mark corner boundaries.

Area

Hall, grass, hard surface – netball court size, cone at each corner.

Formation

As in diagram – children in 2 lines.
Children in each line "number off" 1 to 15
or whatever, by each child in turn calling out their number.

Scatter

Instructions

- On call from teacher "Scatter", all children run to the nearest boundary line and begin running around the boundary clockwise.
- On call "Scatter back", children must run back to their lines and be arranged in their correct numerical order.
- Teacher could check numbers by having both teams quickly call their numbers out loud along the line.

Variations

1. Vary the interval between calls.
2. Vary the activity at the boundary e.g. skipping, walking.
3 As each child calls their number have them jump forward as well.

Teaching Point

- Ensure that all children do "scatter" and do keep moving around the boundary.
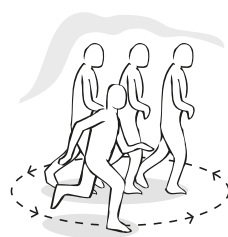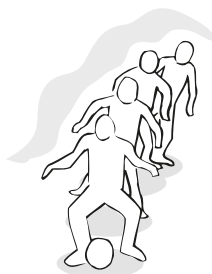
Tunnel and Chase

Equipment

One large ball, cones to mark boundaries.

Area

Hall (with a soft ball), grass, hard surface. Area the size of 2 netball courts, half a rugby field (smaller for juniors).

Formation

Two teams lined up one beside the other in the centre of the area being used. First person in Team A has the ball and is the Thrower.

Tunnel and Chase

Instructions

- Thrower throws or rolls the ball within the boundary area then begins running around and around the team (who should all move in very close together). This continues until Team B calls "Stop".
- The second person in line counts the number of circuits.
- As soon as A has thrown the ball, Team B members scatter and intercept and stop the ball as quickly as possible.
- The first person to pick up the ball calls "tunnel" and all Team B line up behind the ball holder with their legs apart. The ball is then bowled through the legs to the end person who calls "Stop".

Variations

1. As above but teams do not return to the central point for the next round i.e. Team B would throw the ball from wherever they stood to tunnel it.
2. The ball can be passed overhead, passed between legs – one overhead the next between legs or around the sides of the body.

Teaching Point

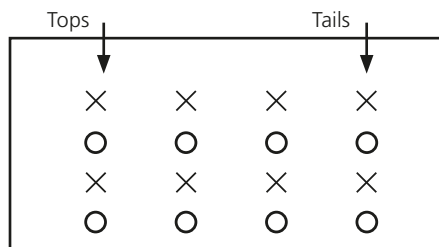- If the thrower throws the ball out of the boundary the game restarts.

Tops and Tails

Equipment
None.

Tops   Tails

```
X   X   X   X
O   O   O   O
X   X   X   X
O   O   O   O
```

Area
Hall, grass, hard surface.

Formation
As in diagram teams of 4. Arm's width spacing, all facing in the same direction.

Instructions
- All children jog or bounce on the spot.
- On call "Tops" – the front person from each line stands still and the rest of team runs around her and back to their places.
- On call "Tails" – back person stands still and team runs around them and back to their places.
- On call "Change" – the front and back leaders quickly change places with someone else in the team.

Variations
1. On command from teacher, children break lines and run freely around the area.

    –   On call "Tops" all team members line up in order and once in line the person at the head of the line leads the team around the front cone, alongside the team line around the back cone and back to their places in line.

    –   On teacher's command teams break lines and run freely.

    –   On call "Tails" team members line up in order, then turn to face the "tail" person who leads the team around the back marker, then to the front marker and back to their places.
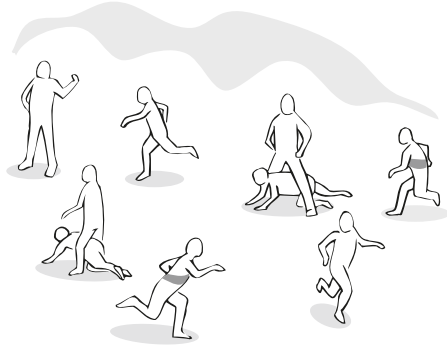
Stuck in the Mud

Equipment

Boundary markers, 3-4 bands
or bibs.

Area

Hall, grass, hard surface –
define boundaries.

Formation

Free spacing, 3 (or more) children have bands and are the taggers.

Instructions
- On "Go", the taggers chase the runners, attempting to tag them on the back.
- If tagged, runners bounce on the spot until freed by another runner crawling through their legs.

Variation
1. Caught children freed by
   – link arms and skip a circle
   – run around the "stuck in the mud" 3 times
   – together do 5 astride jumps.

Teaching Points
- If working on a hard surface, remind the children to take care when crawling between legs.
- **Be sensitive to cultural groups or families who do not approve of crawling between legs.**
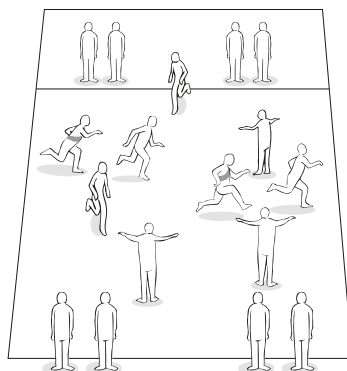
Seaweed

Equipment

Cones or markers if there are no lines.

Area

A large square or rectangle about the size of one-third of a netball court – cones to mark the area if there are no lines.

Formation

As in diagram. One person with a band is the tagger and all others behind their safe line.

Instructions

- On "Go", all children try to run across the area to the safe line on the other side. The tagger chases and attempts to catch them.
- If tagged, that person stands still facing the way they were when caught – these children become the seaweed and are able to tag other runners if they come close enough.
- Continue until all runners have been tagged.
- Repeat the game with a new tagger.

Variations

1. Use 2-3 taggers instead of 1.
2. Have the runners line up in a square formation.
   - On "Go" all children run to the opposite side while taggers attempt to tag them.
   - Children who are caught must stand still and become stationary taggers.

Teaching Point

- Talk to the children about "peripheral vision" i.e. trying not to bump into oncoming runners.
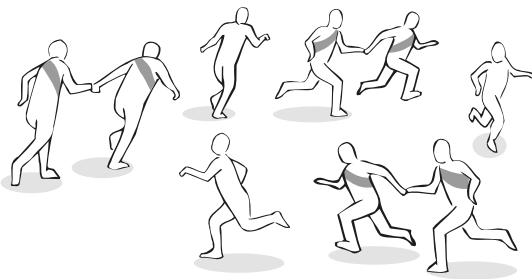
Couple Tag

Equipment

None.

Area

Hall, grass, hard surface
– define boundaries.

Formation

Three couples with inside hands joined are the taggers.

Instructions

- Taggers keep hands joined and chase the free players.
- If tagged, the free player replaces the one who tagged him.
- Continue for several minutes.

Variation

1. Change the activity from running to skipping, walking or slip stepping.

Teaching Points

- This tag game leads well into the next game called Blob Tag.
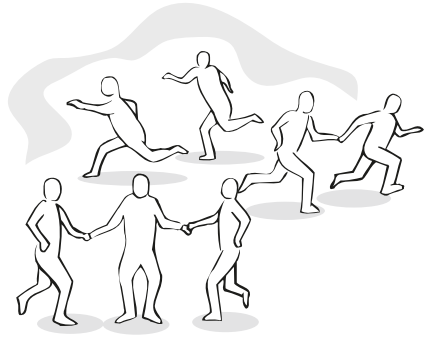- Vary the number of taggers depending on size of class.

Blob Tag

Equipment

None.

Area

Hall, grass hard surface.

Formation

One pair join hands and are the taggers.

Instructions

- Keeping hands joined taggers try to tag free players with their free hands.
- When a free player is tagged he joins the pair and they become a threesome or a "Blob of 3".
- The 3 continue to chase and when a 4th person is tagged he joins on to become a "Blob of 4" – the Blob of 4 breaks into 2 Blobs of 2 and both Blobs continue to chase and tag.
- The game is completed when everyone is in a pair.

Variation

1. Keep the "Blob of 4" until a 5th person is tagged then have the Blob break down to a 3 and a 2.

Teaching Point

- This is a game of co-operation and control as the Blobs get bigger.
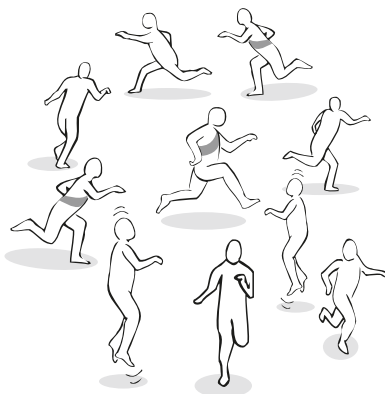
Team Tag

Equipment

Team bands or bibs.

Area

Hall, grass, hard surface – define boundaries.

Formation

Divide the class into 4 or 5 teams. One team at a time is "it".

Instructions

- Team 1, wearing the bands, are "it" and are timed to see how long it takes them to tag all other players.
- When tagged, children bounce up and down lightly outside the boundary area.
- Repeat until every team has had a turn.

Variation

1. Divide the class in half and have one half with bands chasing the other half. Time each half.

Teaching Point

- Children who are out should keep moving e.g. jogging on spot, bouncing etc.

All In Tag

Equipment

Team bands – enough for whole class.

Area

Hall, grass, hard surface.

Formation

2 or 3 children are "it" and have bands; teacher holds remainder of bands.

Instructions
- Players with bands try to tag other players as quickly as possible.
- When tagged, children collect a team band from the teacher and join the taggers.
- The last 2 or 3 children to be tagged begin the next game as taggers.

Variations

1. **Back-to-Back Tag** – Children in pairs back to back, joined by linking elbows.
   – One pair is "it" and move about trying to tag other joined pairs. When tagged the new pair become taggers.
   – If a pair comes apart they become the new taggers.

2. **Three-Legged Tag** – Children are in pairs but the inside legs are loosely tied together with a band or scarf.
   – When one pair tags another they are the new taggers.

3. **Everybody's "It" Tag** – Everyone is "it" and can tag everybody else.
   – Players are both attacking and defending.
   – When tagged players jog on the spot.

4. **Regular Tag** – One child is "it" and when she tags another child that child is "it".

Teaching Points

- Everybody's "it" lasts about 1 minute. A good game if there is only a short time available.
- All of these tag games can be played at a walk.
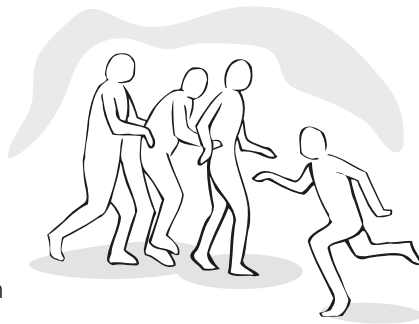
All In Tag

Fox and Geese

Equipment
None.

Area
Hall, hard surface, grass.

Formation
Children in groups of 4-5. One person
is the fox; the others are the geese
and stand in a line holding onto the waist of the person in front.

Instructions
- The fox tries to tag the last child in the line.
- The geese move around to avoid the fox and keep their last person safe.
- If the line is broken the child who lets go takes the place of the fox.
- If the last child is tagged by the fox he takes the fox's place.

Variation
1. As a class 2-3 children are foxes and the remainder of the class are in linked lines of 4-5 geese. Foxes may move about the area trying to tag the last child in any line.

Teaching Point
- Encourage the teams to co-operate to keep the fox away from the end of their line.

Amoeba

Equipment
None.

Area
Hall, grass, hard surface.

Formation
One child is "it".

Instructions
- The chaser or "Amoeba" attempts to tag another child.
- When tagged by the Amoeba the 2 join hands and continue to chase.
- Each child who is caught by the Amoeba joins hands and the line of children continues to chase and tag.
- Only the children at each end of the line can tag free players.
- Continue until all children are caught.

Variation
1. If the Amoeba becomes too unwieldy, the teacher may suggest splitting the Amoeba in half and both halves then work together to trap and tag free children.

Teaching Points
- The growing Amoeba needs to co-operate and communicate to be an effective chasing group.
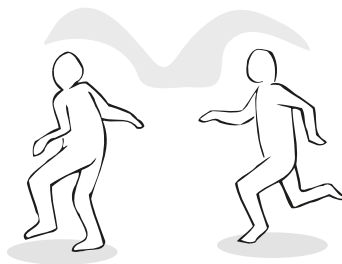- This game leads to an interesting classroom lesson on how Amoeba function.

Touch and Run

Equipment

Lines marked on ground or ropes for lines,
4 cones for boundary markers.

Area

Hall, grass (with rope lines), hard surface
– lines or cones at boundary
about 4-6 metres away.

Formation

Partners face each other over the line, 2s have their hand stretched out
in front.

Instructions

- Number 1s touch 2s' hand and then they turn and run towards their boundary line – once touched 2s chase the Number 1s to try and tag them before they reach the line.
- Players keep a tally of how many times they tagged their partner.
- Repeat but with 1s holding out their hands to be tagged.

Variation

1. Instead of touching hands the runner calls "Go" to his partner.

Teaching Point

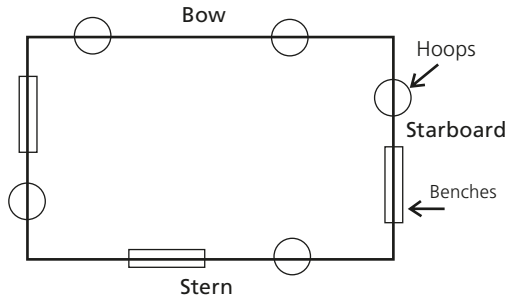- Discourage children from starting before the signal to chase.

Battleships

Equipment

Benches or forms;
hoops/cones.

Area

Hall, grass, hard surface.
Boundary must be very
clearly defined – lines or
cones, hoops or benches
scattered around boundary.

Instructions

- Teacher acts as caller – when a call is given all the children do the activity pre-arranged for that call, as quickly as possible.
- Teacher varies the length of time between calls.
- New calls can be made before children have completed the previous activity.

Calls

- **Bow** – all children run to that end of the area.
- **Stern** – all children run to that side.
- **Starboard** – all children run to that side.
- **Port** – all children run to that side.
- **Torpedoes** – all lie face down on the ground, legs together and arms at sides.
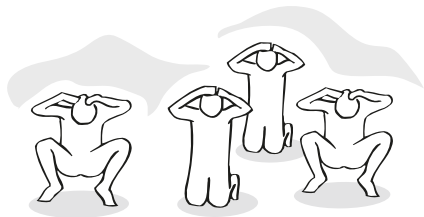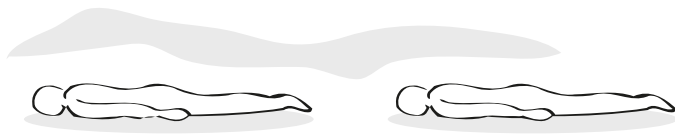
- **Into the Lifeboats** – sit cross-legged, arms folded across chest.
- **Row Boats In** – teacher calls a number e.g. 4s, then players stand one behind the other in groups of that number e.g. 4.
- **Dive Bombers** – children kneel down, bend their heads forward and cover their heads with arms.
- **Seagulls** – children stand with legs apart, arms waving overhead.
- **Submarines** – children lie flat on their backs, legs together, 1 arm raised vertically upwards.
- **Captain's Coming** – children stand to attention facing the teacher and salute.
- **Scrub the Deck** – on hands and knees – scrubbing action.
- **Sharks** – children run to the boundaries and get off the ground – onto a bench or into hoop.
- Teacher could have card with these commands printed on them.

Teaching Points

- Introduce the game using only 3-4 commands; add others after several playings, when children become familiar with the game.
- Introduce the calls in the classroom before playing the game. Children may devise other calls and actions.
- Modify for juniors with fewer calls.

Cat and Mouse

Equipment
None.

Area
Hall, grass, hard surface.

Formation
Groups of 5-7 children – hands linked in a circle. One child is the cat and stays outside the circle, another child is the mouse and stays inside the circle.

Instructions
- The cat tries to get into the circle to catch the mouse, who can "duck" in and out under the arms of the children in the circle.
- The children in the circle try to keep the cat out and protect the mouse.
- When the mouse is caught, another 2 players become the cat and the mouse.

Variation
1. Groups of 10-12 children can play with 2 cats and 2 mice, or other combinations e.g. 1 cat and 2 mice, 2 cats and 1 mouse.

Teaching Point
- Encourage children to work together to help the mouse.
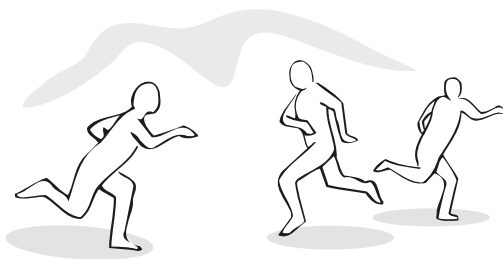
Go Between

Equipment

None.

Area

Hall, grass, hard surface.

Formation

Free spacing; 1 player is "it".

Instructions
- The child who is "it" chases and tries to tag other children.
- If another player runs between the "it" and the players being chased, the tagger must then start chasing that player.
- When a player is caught she becomes the new "it" or tagger.

Variation

1. Can be played with 2 taggers for a very fast-moving game.

Teaching Point
- Encourage children to work together to tease the tagger and ensure the person being chased changes frequently.
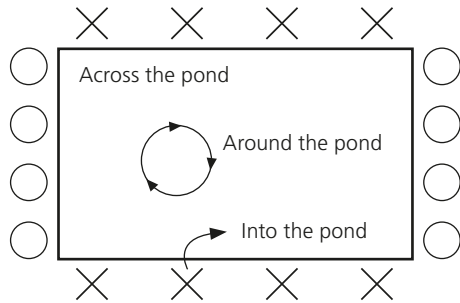
In the Pond

Equipment

Lines marked on ground, chalk lines or skipping ropes.

Area

Hall, grass (skipping ropes as lines), hard surface.

Formation

Four teams – each form 1 side of a square, court lines or chalk lines in front of each team – teams face inwards.

Instructions
- Teacher is the caller.
- On "Into the pond", all children jump over their line into the central area – both feet together.
- On "Onto the bank", children jump back over the line – both feet together.
- On "Around the pond", children turn on the spot – they must first jump into the pond if they are not in the square.
- "Up and down"– children jump up and down on the spot.
- "Across the pond"– children move to the opposite side of the square.
- Vary the speed of the calls.

Variation

1.   Other commands can be added e.g. "Swim about"– all children move freely in the area, "Water rats" – children must get outside the lines as quickly as possible.

Teaching Point

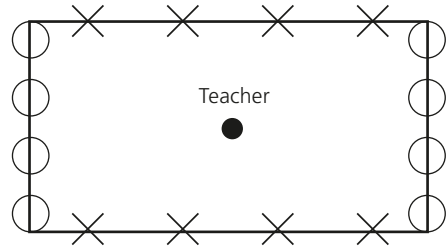- Make the game more active by increasing the size of the area.

Squared

Equipment

Lines marked or cones.

Area

Hall, grass, hard surface – use
line markings on ground or cones
at corners.

Formation

Four teams each forming 1 side of a square – facing inwards.

Instructions

- Teacher stands in the centre of the square facing in 1 direction.
- Team members memorise their position in the team and their position in relation to the teacher in the centre.
- The teacher turns around to face a different direction.
- All teams must move and re-form so they are in the correct order and the same position relative to the centre person.
- Once everyone is in the correct position – teacher turns again.

Variations

1. Teacher may turn a 2nd time before the teams have had time to reach the new position.

2. Have a scoring system for the fastest and slowest teams.

Teaching Point

- Give juniors more time to change.
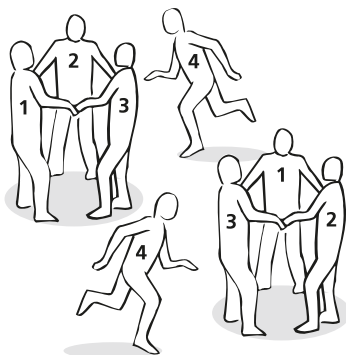
3 Against 1

Equipment
None.

Area
Hall, grass, hard surface.

Formation
Children in groups of 4. Three children
join hands in a circle and the
4th person stands out.

Instructions
- One child from the circle is chosen to be the victim and the free player attempts to tag that person.
- The tagger is not permitted to reach across the circle to tag.
- Children in the circle side-step and turn to prevent the victim being tagged.
- When tagged, 2 new children become the tagger and victim.

Variation
1. Can be played as 4 against 1, or 5 against 1.

Teaching Point
- Set a short time limit and change round even if no tag.
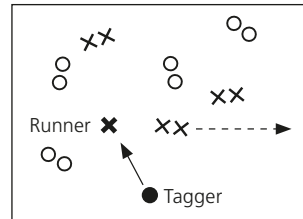
Bump

Equipment

None.

Area

Hall, grass, hard surface – define the boundaries.

Formation

Children in freely spaced pairs, side by side with elbows linked. Two children stand free.

Instructions

- One free-standing child is the tagger; the other child is the runner.
- Tagger chases the runner – if the runner is caught and tagged they immediately reverse roles and the runner chases the tagger.
- The runner can, at any time, avoid being caught or chased by joining onto a group of 2 by linking elbows with an end person.
- When this happens the child on the other end of the threesome is "bumped" off and is chased by the tagger.

Variations

1. Divide the class in half and have 2 games going at once.
2. This can be played with 2 taggers and chasers, once the children are familiar with the game.

Teaching Points

- This game takes some time to learn. Initially teacher may need to assist children to recognise who is chasing who.
- Encourage children to "link on" frequently so that everyone has plenty of turns at running and chasing.
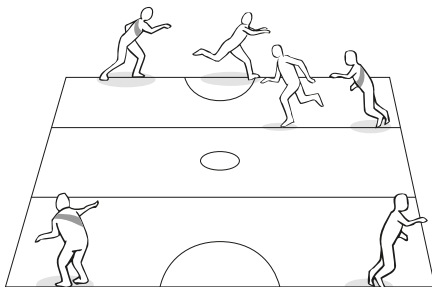
Line Tag

Equipment

Two or 3 team bands or bibs.

Area

An area with painted
court markings.

Formation

One, 2 or 3 children are taggers and have bands.

> **Instructions**
> - All players and taggers can only move along line pathways or leap from 1 line to another.
> - Taggers chase players around the lines – when tagged the new tagger wears the band.
> - Taggers can work together to trap runners.
> - If a runner leaves the lines when being chased she automatically becomes the new tagger.

Variation

1. Change the type of movement around the lines e.g. skipping, slip stepping.

Teaching Point

- Have the children take care not to collide with other runners along the lines.

What's the Time Mr Wolf?

Equipment

None.

Area

Hall, grass, hard surface.

Formation

One or 2 lines of children along a starting line, with teacher or leader out in front (Mr Wolf).

Instructions

- Leader begins walking forward with class following behind.
- Class asks in unison "What's the time Mr Wolf?"
- Leader can respond "It's running time" (or other movements) and leader begins running with children following.
- Leader can answer "Dinner time", all children turn and run back to the starting line and leader attempts to tag as many children as possible.
- Leader keeps a tally of the number of children tagged.
- Repeat several times then change the leader.
- Leader can respond with several movements before giving the "Dinner time" response. Activities may be on-the-spot activities or moving ones.

Variation

1.   Children can follow in a group rather than in lines.

Teaching Point

•   Begin with teacher as leader then as the children become familiar with the game children can become the leader.

What's the time Mr Wolf?
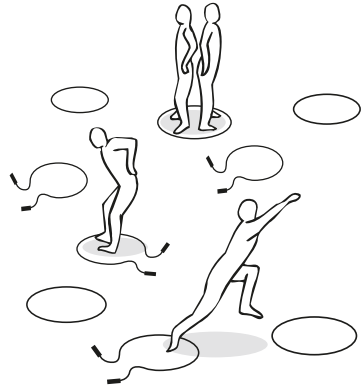
Island Tag

Equipment

8-10 hoops, 8-10 skipping ropes.

Area

Hoops and ropes scattered around the area, close enough together to jump from hoop to hoop or rope to hoop.

Formation

One or 2 players are "it" and can move anywhere on the ground.

Instructions

- All other players must move from hoop to hoop or along a skipping rope.
- Taggers chase the other players, who are safe if inside a hoop – only 2 children may be in 1 hoop.
- Any players not in a hoop may be tagged and must swap places with the tagger.
- Any players who move off a rope or hoop onto the ground when being chased take over as "it".

Variation

1. Allow only 1 child per hoop. The number of hoops can be increased or decreased depending on the size of the class.

Teaching Point

- Begin with only 1 tagger until children become familiar with the game.

Island tag