



No prep or special equipment needed!

These games to play outside with kids take almost no setting up so once you understand the rules you can start playing straight away!

1. CAPTURE THE FLAG

Works best with: large groups in a large space

You will need: 2 brightly colored t-shirts or similar.

How to play:

- Divide your playing area in two sections.
- Make two teams and give each team an area.
- Teams choose somewhere to position their flag (t-shirt).
- They also need to choose a prison area where they will keep the opposing team members that they capture.
- The aim of the game is for each team to try to capture the other team's flag.
- When a team member enters the other team's territory she or he can be captured by being tagged.
- When caught they must stay in the prison until they're freed by a team member (again by touching them).

2. MOB MOB

Works best with: large or smaller groups in a large space

You will need: nothing

How to play:

- One person is nominated seeker and counts at 'base' while everyone else hides.

- The aim is for those hiding to get back to base first.
- The seeker must look for hiders but they must do so cautiously as hiders will be trying to get to the base without spotted!
- Every time the seeker spots someone he/she says "mob mob *hiders name 1,2,3*). The captured hider must sit at base until the end of this round.
- Everyone is freed if a hider can get to base without being spotted and say "mob mob save all" before the seeker gets there.
- If the seeker spots the hider then a race to the base ensues. Who will "mob mob" first?!

3. I SPY

Works best with: smaller groups

You will need: nothing

How to play:

- One person to say "I spy with my little eye something beginning with..."
- The others to try and guess.
- Younger children can use colors..."I spy with my little eye something red..."

4. MAY I?

Works best with: smaller groups between two walls if possible.

You will need: nothing

How to play:

- One player to become the Captain and stands by a wall or on an invisible line.
- Other players become the crew and stand against the other wall or invisible line.
- Crew members take turns to ask the Captain a question..."May I take 5 steps forward?"
- The Captain can decide to allow it or to offer an alternative..."No but you can leapfrog like a frog twice."
- The aim is for Crew members to reach the Captain's line first.
- *Suggestions..."May I...take 4 steps forward/ take 8 baby steps forward/ run forward for 2 seconds".*

5. MR CROCODILE

Works best with: medium sized groups.

You will need: nothing

How to play:

- Someone becomes Mr Crocodile.
- Players stand a set distance opposite Mr Crocodile and say...

"Please Mr Crocodile, may we cross the water to see your lovely daughter who's floating on the water like a cup and saucer?"

- Mr Crocodile replies "Yes, if you're...wearing black".
- All players wearing black can cross safely.
- Players left have to run across dodging the Mr Crocodile.
- If you get caught then you're out.
- Continue until no players remain.

6. IT

Works best with: most sized groups.

You will need: nothing

How to play:

- Someone becomes IT.
- They have to chase everyone else and try and catch them.
- If they touch someone, they say "IT" and the other person becomes IT and begins to chase.

7. STUCK IN THE MUD

Works best with: most sized groups.

You will need: nothing

How to play:

- Play like IT (see no. 6) but when someone is caught they get stuck in the mud.
- Players who are caught stand still until everyone has been caught or until they are freed by another player.
- Players can free other players by touching them or make it more challenging by scrambling under stuck person's legs or outstretched arms.

8. SHADOWS

Works best with: most sized groups. Works best on sunny Summer days.

You will need: nothing

How to play:

- Play like IT (see no. 6) but players who stand on a shadow are safe and can't be caught.

9. CHAIN

Works best with: smaller sized groups.

You will need: nothing

How to play:

- Play like IT (see no. 6) but when someone is caught they must link arms with IT and attempt to catch other players.

10. BLIND MAN'S BUFF

Works best with: medium sized groups.

You will need: something to use as blindfold.

How to play:

- Player to be IT is blindfolded.
- Turn IT around a few times to disorientate a little
- Other players stand around IT who attempts to tag someone.
- The player who is touched first becomes IT next.

11. RED LIGHT, GREEN LIGHT

Works best with: most sized groups.

You will need: nothing

How to play:

- Someone is chosen to be the caller.
- Caller stands facing away from the other players.
- Mark a starting line about 10-12 meters away for other players to stand behind.
- If Caller shouts "green light", the children run forward and try to tag him/her.
- They need to move quickly and be ready to freeze at any time when the caller shouts "red light".
- The Caller turns around at this point and anyone caught moving is sent back to the starting line again.

12. RELAY RACES

Works best with: all size groups.

You will need: nothing.

How to play:

- Divide your players into teams.
- Ideally you want no more than around 6 people per team but you can have numerous teams.
- Team members stand one behind the other facing the finish line.
- The person at the front of each group should run to the finish line and back and tag the hand of the next in line and goes to sit at the back of the queue.
- As soon as they have been tagged the next person repeats the process until everyone has had a turn.
- The winning team is the first to have everyone sitting down having run.

13. CAT AND MOUSE

Fast paced fun!

Works best with: larger groups.

You will need: nothing.

How to play:

- One player to be the cat and another the mouse.
- All other player form a circle holding hands.
- The mouse stands inside the circle while the cat stands on the outside.
- The mouse needs to get outside the circle and while avoiding being caught by the cat.
- The mouse has to stay moving but can't stay inside the circle for longer than 10 seconds!
- The cat isn't allowed to step inside the circle but they can reach inside to grab the mouse.
- The players that make up the circle must help the mouse by opening their arms to let it pass but blocking the cat.

14. HIDE AND SEEK

Works best with: most sized groups

You will need: nothing

How to play:

- One person seeks while everyone else hides.
- First person found is on first next time.



15. SARDINES

Works best with: small to medium sized groups.

You will need: nothing

How to play:

- Similar to hide and seek but only one person hides while the others seek.
- When the hider is found the seeker must hide with them until all but one seeker is hiding with the group.
- Last person seeking becomes next hider.

16. LINE UP

Works best with: any sized groups.

You will need: nothing

How to play:

- Make teams of around 5 or 6.
- One person becomes the Caller.
- The Caller says something like "Everyone please now line up ..." and fills in the blank with a statement e.g. oldest to youngest.
- All the players race to find the right order and shout when they are finished.
- Other ideas: Alphabetic order of First name, Tallest to shortest, Birthday month, Number of siblings/ cousins/ pets.

17. SILENT LINE UP

Works best with: any sized groups.

You will need: nothing

How to play:

- As above but no talking aloud so players must use sign language or gestures.

18. WHAT'S THE TIME MR WOLF

Works best with: medium sized groups.

You will need: nothing

How to play:

- Nominate a Wolf.
- Everyone else stands opposite around 8 meters back in a line.
- The Wolf turns his back on everyone.
- The group calls out "What's The Time, Mr Wolf?"
- The Wolf replies "It's 4 o'clock"
- Player take 3 steps forward, towards Mr Wolf.
- They ask again, "What's The Time, Mr Wolf?" and they take more steps towards Mr Wolf.

- When Mr Wolf senses someone close by he can reply "It's dinner time" and chase players until he catches someone.
- That person becomes Mr Wolf.

19. LEAPFROG

Works best with: small or medium sized groups.

You will need: nothing.

How to play:

- The first child crouches down and rests their hands on their knees.
- Second player runs up to the crouched child and leaps over them by placing their hands on their back and stretching their legs wide apart.
- When that child lands they immediately crouch down into the frog position.
- The third child now has to leap over the first and second, before crouching too.
- Keep going until thoroughly exhausted!!!

20. DUCK DUCK GOOSE

Works best with: small and medium groups.

You will need: nothing.

How to play:

- All but one player to form a circle.
- The player not in the circle walks around the outside of the circle tapping each child on the head while saying "duck, duck, duck..."
- Whenever they choose they can say "Goose!" instead.
- At this point the child who was tapped jumps up and chases the tapper around the circle.
- They have to catch the tapper before he/she reaches the space where they were sat.
- If the tapper reaches the empty space and sits down before being caught then the goose becomes the tapper. If not they must play again.

21. WHEEL BARROW RACES

Works best with: small to medium groups.

You will need: nothing

How to play:

- Put children in pairs.
- One child in the pair must hold the legs of the other child (like a wheelbarrow).
- The wheelbarrow must walk on their hands to the finish line.
- The first pair to the finish line wins the race.

22. LOOK UP LOOK DOWN

Works best with: small to medium groups.

You will need: nothing

How to play:

- All players stand in a large circle roughly one big paces away from each another.
- An adult who's not playing shouts "look up".
- All the players must look up at someone on the circle.
- If anyone locks eyes then both players are out.
- Players continue to stare until "look down" is shouted.
- Continue until all but two are out.

Games to play outside with kids...that require a little prep.

These games to play outside with kids take a little more forward planning but they're a lot of fun.

1. TREASURE MAP

We do this with our boys birthday presents each year. It makes gift giving and receiving extra fun.

Works best with: small groups.

You will need: a map and something small to hide as treasure.

How to play:

- Either have fun making a treasure map together or make in advance.
- Draw your outdoor area on the map...outline trees, stepping stones etc.
- Place an "X" on the map and hide the treasure at that location.
- Players work together to find the treasure.
- You can hang items from trees etc. for them to collect along the way.

2. NATURE SCAVENGER HUNT

Great game at picnic or while camping.

Works best with: any size group.

You will need: nothing or [a scavenger hunt printable](#)

How to play:

- Either, ask players to "Find something blue/ shiny/ rough" etc
- Or, give them a printable sheet to complete.
- Make sure they know not to pick too many or uncommon flowers or move insects. Instead they can draw a picture or write the name.

3. SPLASHING

Perfect if you have water nearby.

Works best with: smaller groups.

You will need: water and a change of clothes.

How to play:

- Visit a suitable shallow stream or find a fresh puddle.
- Splash!

4. RAFT RACES

Upcycle objects into rafts.

Works best with: smaller groups.

You will need: a river, used bottles etc and a change of clothes.

How to play:

- Players have a set time to build the best raft they can using only natural objects.
- You can use some extras you have to hand like bottles from your recycling bin.
- It's really important if your using anything other than natural items that someone stands at the finish line to catch all the rafts that pass by (*recycle when you've finished having fun*).

5. CHALK DRAWING

Works best with: smaller groups.

You will need: chalks

How to play:

- Draw pictures, mark roads for bikes and toy cars, fields and trees for animal figures, crocodile swamps or hopscotch grids.

6. TREE FUN

Works best with: smaller groups.

You will need: trees

How to play:

- Find a tree and climb it...not too high!
- We spot inexperienced children and make sure they don't go higher than we can reach
- Alternatively hand a hammock and chill.

7. WELLY THROWING

Works best with: smaller groups.

You will need: wellies

How to play:

- Players grab a welly and see who can throw the furthest!

8. DONKEY

Works best with: medium and smaller groups.

You will need: ball.

How to play:

- Everyone to stand in a circle.

- The ball is thrown from one person to another.
- When someone misses they get a letter D then O then N and so on until they spell DONKEY.
- The first to spell DONKEY us out until the next round.

9. LOOSE A LIMB

Works best with: medium and smaller groups.

You will need: ball.

How to play:

- Play like Donkey (see no. 9) but instead of getting a letter you have to loose a limb.
- So, for example, miss the ball once and you must catch one handed.
- Miss again and you're one handed and on one knee .
- Then two knees.
- Then laying down.
- Then your out.
- If you can the ball at any stage you regain a limb. So catch the ball one-handed and you'd return to standing up.

10. OBSTACLE COURSE

Works best with: medium and smaller groups.

You will need: random spare parts

How to play:

- Set up an obstacle course with objects you have around. Old tyres to step into, blankets to crawl under, wood to balance on, trees to run around.
- Add in some areas where you have to somersault or cartwheel.
- Now, select teams and race!

11. DODGE BALL

Works best with: medium and smaller groups.

You will need: a soft foam football.

How to play:

- Put kids into teams.

- Teams face each on opposing sides of a court.
- Place two or three dodgeballs along the centerline.
- Players from each team have to race to get a ball at the start of the game.
- The aim of the game is to throw the ball so that it makes contact with opposing players.
- If a ball hits a player below the shoulders then they are out.
- If a player catches a ball thrown by an opponent then the opponent is out. It also means that they can reinstate a team member.
- Game lasts 3 minutes and winner has most players.

12. TUG OF WAR

Works best with: medium sized groups.

You will need: a rope

How to play:

- Place a marker on the floor.
- Make 2 teams with maximum of 8 per team.
- Aim of the game is for both sides to pull on the rope until the opposition crosses the middle line.

13. NATURES RAINBOW

<https://familyadventures.com/natures-rainbow/>

14. ROUNDERS

Works best with: medium sized groups.

You will need: rounders bat and ball and a few jumpers to make bases.

How to play:

- Mark out a circle with 4 or 5 jumpers as bases.
- The circle is what players will run around so choose a size that suits your players.
- Divide children into two teams plus you'll need a bowler.
- Teams take turns to field and to bat.
- Players have three hits before they have to run. If they miss they can only run to first base.

- Fielders have to either catch them out (before ball bounces) or touch the ball on the base before they run past it.
- Count how many times they run around circle.

15. FRISBEE

Works best with: medium sized groups.

You will need: a Frisbee

How to play:

- Make teams of around 7 players.
- Each team has an end zone.
- The aim of the game is to catch the Frisbee the other team's end zone to score a point.
- Read more detailed rules [here](#).

16. PETANQUE

Works best with: small or medium sized groups.

You will need: a petanque or boules set.

How to play:

- Read rules [here](#)

17. FIND A PLAYGROUND

If you just need a space to let the kids just run off some steam then read how we [find a playground nearby](#) pretty much anywhere we visit!

18. PIGGY IN THE MIDDLE

Works best with: small group

You will need: a ball

How to play:

- Two people to stand opposite each other a few meters apart
- One player to stand in the middle.

- While the two players throw the ball to each other the player in the middle tries to intercept it.
- If they succeed in stealing the ball then the person who missed it goes in their place in the centre.

19. LONG ROPE SKIPPING

Works best with: small groups.

You will need: long skipping rope.

How to play:

- Take a look at some [fun jump rope games here](#).

20. HULA HOOP GAME

Works best with: small groups.

You will need: hula hoop.

How to play:

- Everyone stand in a circle.
- Slide a hoola hoop onto someone's arm and everyone to link arms.
- Players must move the hoop all the way around the circle without letting go of each other's hands.

21. LIMBO

Works best with: small to medium groups.

You will need: rope.

How to play:

- Two players hold either end of a rope.
- Other players take turns to pass underneath it by bending backwards.
- Each round the rope should be lowered a little until the players fall while trying to limbo underneath!

22. POKEMON GO

- If you're looking for something a little different then try Pokemon Go.

23. GEOCACHING

Works best with: small groups.

You will need: rope.

How to play:

- Find one of the millions of geocaches hidden around the world with [this app](#)

24. GARDEN PLAY EQUIPMENT

Works best with: small groups.

You will need: play equipment.

How to play:

- If you regularly have groups of kids in your garden then it may be worth investing in some [garden play equipment - take a look at what we have in our garden!](#)

25. MESSY PLAY

Unstructured play without rules is so important for children. If your child enjoys it then messy play is a great way to get them exploring the outdoors.

Works best with: small groups.

You will need: patience, a bucket and a flannel!

How to play:

- Let them loose...join in if you fancy!
- Ask them to wash off before coming indoors for a bath.

26. PARACHUTE

Works best with: small groups.

You will need: Parachute

How to play:

- Parachutes are so much fun and are great for hanging over a trampoline or [climbing dome \(the best garden play equipment we ever bought!\)](#)

