

Foreword

The Importance of Play

Play is entwined within our lives from an early age and has strong links with child development. In doing it we learn about ourselves, about each other and the world around us. Children test their theories about the world in a safe play environment, learning many essential personal, emotional and social life skills.

When we play we discover things about ourselves which are often hidden. We learn about and understand our desire to win, to excel, to succeed, how to deal with disappointment and the elation of success. We learn about the need to practice, to keep trying, and to strive to achieve things just beyond our reach. We learn to push ourselves, and in doing so, we can manage and transform negative feelings and experiences which can hold us back.

Life for children, young people and adults is full of challenges, which require problem solving skills, resilience, and lateral thinking. Many of these skills can be learnt through play, be it child directed free play or structured play created by adults, using resources like those you will find in this book.

A child's opportunity and access to play can have a significant impact on many aspects of their life, contributing to good mental and physical health. Those of us with the responsibility for providing play opportunities should keep in mind the life changing difference that our time, energy, skills and dedication can have on the children around us.

We enter into play situations more often than we realise. It is not just the dusty board game that comes out once a year; many people play sports, cards, computer games, they dance, act and enjoy pub games like snooker, pool, table-football and darts. Our state of mind, when we are playing is one of living in, and enjoying, the present moment. We are no longer thinking of what happened yesterday or what may happen tomorrow. When playing we are focussed on the task in hand.

"Creative people are curious, flexible, persistent, and independent with a tremendous spirit of adventure and a love of play."

Henri Matisse, French painter

"Imagination is more important than knowledge. Knowledge is limited. Imagination encircles the world."

Albert Einstein, Theoretical Physicist

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The Real Game Guide

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games



- 5+** = Suitable for age 5+
- 8+** = Suitable for age 8+
- M** = Group size (S <5, M <10, L >20)
- = Circle game
- = Moderately physical game
- = Very physical game
- = Team game

































































































- = Only large ball required
- = Other equipment required
- = Pens & paper required
- = Music required
- = Large Space required
- = Thinking game
- = No equipment required
















































Agony Aunt	Pg 9	10+	S	-		-	
All Aboard	Pg 9	5+	S	-		-	
Amnesiac	Pg 10	8+	M	-		-	
Amoeba Races	Pg 10	8+	M				
Animal Chat	Pg 11	5+	M		-		
Around the House in 8 Minutes	Pg 11	8+	M			-	
Atomic Chaos	Pg 12	10+	M			-	
Baby	Pg 13	5+	M			-	
Balloon Duelling	Pg 13	5+	S		-	-	
Bank or Bust	Pg 14	5+	S	-	-	-	
Barricades	Pg 14	8+	M	-	-		
Bat & Moth	Pg 15	5+	M		-		
Beer Mat Challenge	Pg 15	8+	M	-	-	-	
Bench Ball	Pg 16	5+	M		-		
Birthday Line (Height, Shoes size, etc.)	Pg 16	8+	M	-		-	
Blind Catch	Pg 17	5+	M	-	-		
Blind Face	Pg 17	5+	S	-		-	
Blind Man's Bluff	Pg 18	5+	S	-	-	-	
Blind Mine Field	Pg 18	5+	S	-	-	-	
Blind Trail	Pg 19	5+	M	-		-	
Bomb	Pg 19	5+	M	-	-	-	
Bottle Blow	Pg 20	8+	M	-	-	-	
British Bulldog / British Crabs	Pg 20	8+	M			-	
Cannonball	Pg 21	5+	M	-	-		
Caps	Pg 21	8+	M	-	-	-	

Captain's Coming	Pg 22	5+	M	-		-	
Capture the Flag	Pg 23	8+	M				
Carton Pickup	Pg 24	8+	M	-	-	-	
Cat & Mouse	Pg 24	5+	M		-		
Cat & Mouse (Parachute Version)	Pg 25	5+	M		-		
Cat & Mouse 2	Pg 25	5+	M		-		
Cat & Mouse Maze	Pg 26	5+	M			-	
Catch the Raindrops	Pg 27	8+	M		-		
Chain Gang Tag	Pg 27	5+	M		-	-	
Chair Chaos	Pg 28	5+	M				
Charades	Pg 29	8+	M	-		-	
Chinese Fives	Pg 30	5+	S	-		-	
Chinese Whispers	Pg 30	5+	M	-			
Chin Pass	Pg 31	5+	M		-		
Chocolate Chomp	Pg 31	5+	M	-	-		
Chopstick Mini-eggs	Pg 32	5+	S	-			
Coin Football	Pg 32	5+	M	-	-	-	
Colour Association	Pg 33	5+	M			-	
Consequences	Pg 33	8+	M	-			
Count to 20	Pg 34	5+	M	-			
Cowboy / Farmer	Pg 34	5+	M	-			
Crab Football	Pg 35	5+	M		-		
Crazy Hoops	Pg 35	5+	M			-	
Creative Tale	Pg 36	8+	M	-			
Creep Frog	Pg 37	5+	M	-	-	-	
Daft Dingbat	Pg 37	8+	M	-			
Dead Ants	Pg 38	8+	M		-		
Deadly Spores	Pg 39	8+	M	-			
Dice 2s & 5s	Pg 40	8+	S	-		-	
Dodge Ball	Pg 40	5+	M		-	-	
Double Touchdown	Pg 41	8+	M		-		
Dragon's Tail	Pg 41	8+	M			-	
Draw by Listening	Pg 42	8+	M	-	-	-	
Duck Duck Goose	Pg 42	5+	M		-	-	
Dungeons & Dragons.....	Pg 43	5+	M				

Egg Roulette	Pg 43	5+	M	-	-	-	🔥
Electric Shoe	Pg 44	5+	M	-	-	🔵	🚫
Emperor's Vase	Pg 44	8+	M	-	💡	🔵	🚫
Evacuation	Pg 45	8+	M	🧑	💡	👥	🚫
Evolution	Pg 45	8+	M	-	-	-	🚫
Experience Picture	Pg 46	5+	M	-	💡	-	✍️
Farm Animals	Pg 47	5+	M	-	-	🔵	✍️
Fizz, Buzz Whizz	Pg 47	8+	M	-	💡	-	🚫
Flag Snag	Pg 48	5+	M	🧑	-	👥	🔥
Flour Castle	Pg 48	8+	S	-	-	-	🔥
Forty Forty In	Pg 49	5+	M	🧑	☀️	-	🚫
French Cricket	Pg 49	5+	M	-	☀️	🔵	⚽
Friends and Enemies	Pg 50	5+	M	🧑	☀️	-	🚫
Frogs	Pg 51	8+	M	-	💡	-	🔥
Fruit Salad	Pg 52	5+	M	🧑	-	🔵	🚫
Fugitive	Pg 52	8+	M	🧑	☀️	👥	🔥
Fuzzy Duck	Pg 53	⚠️	M	-	💡	🔵	🚫
Genie	Pg 53	5+	M	🧑	☀️	-	🔥
Giants, Wizards & Elves	Pg 54	8+	S	🧑	☀️	👥	-
Group Knot	Pg 55	5+	M	-	💡	-	🚫
Group Spiral	Pg 55	5+	M	-	💡	-	🚫
Hand croquet	Pg 56	5+	M	-	-	🔵	⚽
Hand Slap Tangle	Pg 56	8+	M	-	💡	🔵	🚫
Hand Squeeze	Pg 57	5+	M	-	💡	🔵	🚫
Hand Tug of War	Pg 57	8+	M	🧑	-	👥	🚫
Heads Down - Thumbs Up	Pg 58	5+	M	-	💡	🔵	🚫
Heavy Load	Pg 58	5+	S	-	-	👥	🔥
Higher or Lower	Pg 59	5+	M	-	💡	-	🔥
High Five Race	Pg 59	8+	M	-	-	-	🚫
Homophones	Pg 60	8+	M	-	💡	🔵	🚫
Honey I Love You	Pg 60	8+	M	-	💡	🔵	🚫
Hopping Mad	Pg 61	8+	S	🧑	-	-	🚫
Hotel Receptionist	Pg 61	5+	M	-	💡	-	🚫
Human Bingo	Pg 62	8+	M	-	💡	-	✍️
I Hate Spaghetti	Pg 63	8+	M	-	💡	-	✍️
I Have Never	Pg 64	8+	M	-	-	-	🚫

I Went to Market	Pg 65	5+	M	-			
I'm Queen Victoria	Pg 65	5+	M	-		-	
Ibble Dibble (Johnny One-Spot / Hello Henry)	Pg 66	8+	M	-			
Impatient Crabs	Pg 67	5+	M		-	-	
Islands	Pg 67	5+	M		-	-	
Jedi Duelling	Pg 68	5+	S		-	-	
Just a Minute	Pg 68	8+	M	-		-	
Kim's Game & Kim's Story	Pg 69	5+	M	-		-	
Kipper Racing	Pg 70	5+	M		-	-	
Knee Boxing	Pg 70	8+	S		-	-	
Ladders	Pg 71	5+	M		-	-	
Leaky Bucket	Pg 72	5+	M				
Liar Liar	Pg 72	8+	S	-		-	
Lighthouse Keeper's Keys	Pg 73	5+	M		-	-	
Mafia	Pg 74	8+	M	-			
Man Vs Monkey	Pg 76	5+	S	-	-	-	
Matchbox Flick	Pg 76	8+	M	-	-	-	
Medic	Pg 77	8+	L	-			
Me Me Me	Pg 78	5+	M				
Memory Mirror	Pg 79	5+	S	-		-	
Mine Field	Pg 80	5+	M	-	-	-	
Monster	Pg 80	8+	M	-	-		
Mouse Trap	Pg 81	5+	S	-	-	-	
Moving Statues	Pg 82	5+	S	-		-	
Mrs Brown's Shopping Trip	Pg 83	8+	M		-		
Murder in the Dark	Pg 84	5+	M	-		-	
Musical Bumps	Pg 85	5+	M		-	-	
Musical Chairs	Pg 85	5+	M		-	-	
Musical Statues	Pg 86	5+	M	-	-	-	
Name Game	Pg 86	8+	M	-		-	
Name Pass	Pg 87	5+	M	-			
Necklace Relay	Pg 87	5+	M				
Object Improv'	Pg 88	8+	M	-		-	
Obstacle Course (Original, Animal & Grammar)	Pg 88	5+	M		-	-	
One Word Story	Pg 89	8+	M	-			

Opposites Race	Pg 89	8+	M				
Over and Under	Pg 90	5+	M		-		
Pandora's Box	Pg 90	5+	M	-			
Parachute Ball	Pg 91	5+	M				
Parachute Colour Chaos	Pg 91	5+	M				
Parachute Mad Scramble	Pg 91	5+	M		-		
Parachute Mushroom	Pg 92	5+	M		-		
Pass the Parcel (Forfeit Version)	Pg 92	5+	M	-	-		
Piece it Together	Pg 93	8+	S	-			
Ping Pong Race	Pg 94	5+	M		-		
Pirates	Pg 94	5+	M		-		
Planks	Pg 95	5+	M	-			
Popcorn Cupcake	Pg 95	5+	M	-	-	-	
Post Offices	Pg 96	5+	M				
Predicament	Pg 97	8+	M	-		-	
Raging River	Pg 97	5+	M	-	-		
Rally 1 2 3	Pg 98	5+	M				
Rocketball	Pg 98	5+	M				
Rock, Paper, Scissors	Pg 99	5+	S	-	-	-	
Rope Escape	Pg 99	8+	S	-		-	-
Rope Race	Pg 100	5+	M		-		
Runaway Train	Pg 100	5+	M		-	-	
Safari	Pg 101	8+	L				
Scarecrow Tig	Pg 102	5+	M		-	-	
Search the Farm	Pg 102	5+	M		-		
Sentence Jumble	Pg 103	8+	M	-		-	
Sharks & Lifeguards	Pg 103	5+	M		-		
Shave the Water Balloon	Pg 103	8+	M	-			
Shrink Zone	Pg 104	5+	S	-	-	-	
Simon Says	Pg 104	5+	M			-	
Skipping Rope Swing	Pg 105	8+	M		-		
Slap, Clap, Click	Pg 105	8+	M	-			
Slaps.....	Pg 106	8+	S	-	-	-	
Sleeping Lions	Pg 106	5+	M	-	-	-	
Smack Down	Pg 107	8+	M		-		
Solemn Monks	Pg 107	8+	M	-			

Speed Ball	Pg 108	5+	M				
Spider Tag	Pg 109	8+	M				
Spin the bottle	Pg 109	5+	M	-	-		
Splat	Pg 110	5+	M	-	-		
Squirrel Mission	Pg 111	5+	M				
Stack 'Em Up	Pg 112	8+	M	-		-	
Statues Alive!	Pg 112	8+	M	-		-	
Straw Football	Pg 113	5+	M	-	-	-	
Suit Circle Race	Pg 113	8+	M	-	-		
Sun and Frost	Pg 113	5+	M		-		
Survival	Pg 114	8+	M	-			
Tag Invincible	Pg 115	5+	M				
TV Tag	Pg 116	8+	M			-	
Tenuous Link	Pg 116	8+	M	-		-	
The Flicks	Pg 117	8+	M	-	-	-	
Thirty Three	Pg 117	8+	S	-		-	
Throwing the Smile	Pg 118	5+	M	-	-		
Time Bomb	Pg 118	5+	M	-	-		
Toilet Tag	Pg 119	5+	M			-	
Top Head Portrait	Pg 119	8+	M	-		-	
Traffic Lights	Pg 120	5+	M		-	-	
True or False (ABCD)	Pg 120	5+	M			-	
Warmer, Colder	Pg 121	5+	M	-	-	-	
Water Balloon Toss (Save the World)	Pg 121	5+	M	-			
What's the Time Mr Wolf?	Pg 122	5+	M		-	-	
Who am I?	Pg 122	8+	M	-		-	
Who's got the Bunnies?	Pg 123	5+	M	-	-		
Who Stole the Cookie?	Pg 123	5+	M	-	-		
Wink Murder	Pg 124	5+	M	-			
Wolf Wolf	Pg 124	5+	M		-		
Word Association Game	Pg 125	8+	M	-		-	
Yes No Beans	Pg 125	5+	M	-		-	
Zip Zap Boing	Pg 126	5+	M	-			
Zombie	Pg 127	5+	M	-			
Additional Material	Pg 128	-	-	-	-	-	-

Agony Aunt

Age Suitability: 8+

Aim: Answer the problems or questions in a funny way.

Equipment Needed: Pens and paper.

Recommended Number of Players: 5+

How to Play: Each player should take a pen and a piece of paper and write down a variety of problems and questions, then place them all in a hat / container. Each person should write at least two. One player is then selected to be the agony aunt or uncle. He or she must draw out a problem and answer in a funny way. Swap roles after each problem.

All Aboard

Age Suitability: 5+

Aim: All players must be inside or on the designated area for 10 seconds.

Equipment Needed: Piece of newspaper and either a hula hoop or parcel tape.

Recommended Number of Players: 4+

How to Play: Depending on the number of players in the group the designated area, (be it the hoop, taped area or newspaper) should be sized accordingly, to make it suitably challenging whilst still possible.

Players must stand in or on the area for 10 seconds without falling over, falling out or putting a foot or hand outside of the area, either on a wall, floor or another object.

To be successful, players are likely to need to hold onto each other, stand on other players' feet, balance, etc. It's all about working together. If the group looks like they can achieve it easily, make the area smaller.

You can make this game competitive by having two teams, racing against each other. The first team to successfully stay inside the area for 10 seconds wins.

Amnesiac

Age Suitability: 8+

Aim: Guess which famous person you are.

Equipment Needed: Pen, paper and some sticky tape.

Recommended Number of Players: 2+

How to Play: The leader writes down some famous people's names on separate pieces of paper. Each player takes one and sticks it on the forehead of another player. Players must not be able to see the name on their own piece of paper.

Everyone has lost their memory and cannot remember who they are. They need each other's help to remember. They can only ask yes or no questions, e.g. 'Am I a man?' or 'Am I a film star?' A guess can be made at any time and players can ask as many questions as they need.

Play continues until everyone has guessed correctly or gives up.

Amoeba Races

Age Suitability: 5+

Aim: Race to the finish line as a fully connected amoeba, without coming apart.

Equipment Needed: No.

Recommended Number of Players: 10+

How to Play: This game can be played with one team or multiple teams. Each team should have a minimum of 5 players, however an optimum number would be 10 on each team. The more players there are on a team the higher the difficulty level will be.

Each team consists of inner members and outer members. The outer members link arms by joining elbows, facing outwards to form a circle. The inner members stand inside the circle. The leader can choose whether or not to have the inner members link together facing inwards, or to allow them to be unlinked. Unlinked is easier.

The amoebas must race towards the finish line without breaking the links. If a link is broken the team must stop until it has reformed and then continue the race. The 'inners' must stay inside the outer part of the amoeba at all times.

If there are only enough players to form one team, they can race against the clock then attempt to beat their previous time. If there are more than 20 players, and there is enough space, more than two teams can race, or compete in heats or a knock-out competition.