

☆ More The Merrier ☆
Large Group Games and Activities

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THROW AND CATCH BINGO!

Create a "Bingo Playing Field" using hoops. Sixteen aligned in rows/columns of 4 works well but the board may be made larger if desired. Before the activity is played, "Bingo Task Cards" must be prepared. The task cards should be replicas of the playing area with different patterns of hoops connected by a line. Make many cards with all kinds of "bingo" combinations (diagonal, straight across, 4 corners, cover all, etc...).

To begin the game, divide the class into groups of 2-3. Give each group a "Bingo Task Card". Switching roles between thrower and catcher, each group attempts to score a "bingo" by catching a ball while standing inside one the marked hoops. Players switch roles regardless of whether a catch was made or not. If a catch is made, a marker is placed on the group's task card. When all of the designated marks are filled, the group yells "Bingo!" and switches to a new card.

COVER ALL

This is a throw and catch game. Within the playing area place hoops in a grid formation of 5x5 or larger (depending on the number of students in the class). Approximately 10 feet from the first line of hoops establish a line the students must remain behind while throwing.

To start the game, divide the class into groups of 2-3. On the "go" signal 1 player from each group runs to a hoop. The player left behind is the thrower who attempts to throw the ball to his/her partner for a catch attempt. If the ball is caught, a marker is placed inside the hoop and the players switch roles. If the ball is dropped or the throw is not accurate, players switch roles for another attempt. The **objective** of the game is for the group to cover all the hoops with markers within a specified time limit (5 min works well). If any hoop is without a marker before the time limit is up, the attempt is considered unsuccessful. Players must be in the hoop when making the catch. Bounces may or may not be allowed (teacher decision). The class should discuss strategies to ensure everyone receiving an opportunity to add to the overall group success.

KICK THE CAN

Modified version of the backyard classic game. The playing area is set up with a "home base" at one end of the playing area and a "jail" at the opposite end. In the middle place a "can" (a ball or other object that may be kicked).

Select 3 players to be taggers. The object of the game is for the taggers to tag all of the players sending the players to prison. The taggers have 3 minutes to accomplish this goal. The players not designated as taggers attempt to last the entire 4 minutes without being tagged. If tagged, the players go to the jail. If one of the players is able to kick the "can" without being tagged, all players, including those in jail, must return to the home base before the ball is retrieved and placed back on the mark by the taggers. Any player not in home when the ball is placed on the mark must go to jail. The home base may or may not be designated as a "safe area".

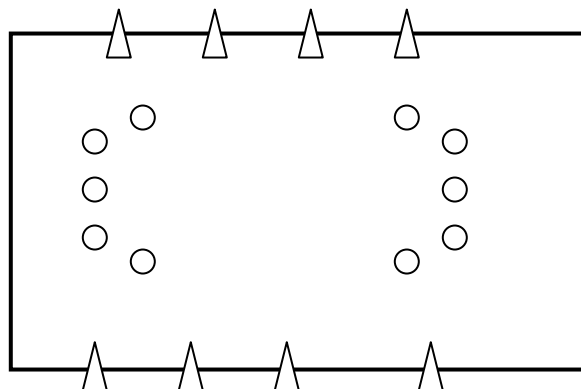
TEAM PIRATE BALL

Divide the playing area in half and assign 1/2 the class to each end. Place 5 cones, with a tennis ball on top of each, at each end of the playing area. The task is for each group to take all the tennis balls from the opposing team. If tagged on the opposing team's side, the tagged player goes to jail (the jail is only large enough for one player at a time, so when a teammate goes to the jail, or hoop, the other may enter the game again). If a ball is captured, the player has "safe passage" back to his/her own side. The captured ball is placed in a bucket. After crossing to the opposing team's side, a player may choose to take back his/her team's captured ball instead of taking the other team's ball. When a team captures all of the opposing team's tennis balls, the game ends.

ORCHARD 500 (Nate Heath. NH)

Set up:

Use cones or markers to create an oval race-track in the gymnasium. Designate "pit stops" on the outside (or inside) edge of the track. In the diagram, the triangles are the pit stops and the circles are the cones.



Each group is a "race car". This can be done several different ways such as by simply running, dribbling a ball, traveling on a scooter, or by placing a mat on scooters and being pushed by teammates.

Rules of the activity:

- On the "go" signal, each group completes one lap and returns to the pit.

- The driver runs to the middle of the track to get a playing card from the teacher.
- At the end of the activity, teams will add up the total value of the cards to determine their scores.
- Playing cards are worth the face value x 10 (ex. 5 is worth 50 laps) with the exception of the face cards which have penalties that must be performed immediately by the entire group:
 - Jacks: 10 jumping jacks (flat tire penalty - no lap value)
 - Queens: Partner Skip around the track (sponsor penalty - no lap value)
 - Kings: 10 push ups (race commission penalty - no lap value)
- The teams switch the driver after each lap.
- Teams may be given a black flag for unsafe racing. If "black flagged", the team returns to the pit and is not eligible to receive a lap card.
- When time is up (all the cards in the deck are gone), the activity is over. All groups calculate the total number of laps from the lap cards.

CROWDED HOUSES

Divide the playing area into 4 sections. Split the class into 4 separate teams, assigning each team to a section of the playing area. Place poly-spots or other markings around the perimeter of each team section to indicate the spots from which the students will be kicking. Roll 5-10 beach balls onto the playing area. Using dino-skin (foam balls) to kick, each team attempts to move any and all beach balls out of its section. Players may travel anywhere to retrieve a kicking ball, but must return to their kicking spots before kicking. At the end of 3 minutes, teams are given points for any beach balls remaining in their section. Lower scores win the game.

ROUNDAABOUT

Split the class into several teams (4-7 students per team). Set up the playing area as depicted below. Position at least one player on each mat (it doesn't matter on what team they play for...for now). One team plays defense. Defenders are not allowed on or over the mats. The OBJECTIVE is to pass the ball from the "home" mat to the "scoring" mat. Offensive players located on the mats MUST stay on the mats regardless of where a ball may end up. The offense may retrieve any ball as long as they DO NOT leave the mat. Defenders may intercept, knock down and/or collect any ball. Defense scores by collecting balls and putting them in their bucket. After 2-3 minutes, rotate another team on defense.

Special Rules:

- No slapping or taken the ball out of someone's hands.
- 1 ball in hand at a time (defense or offense)
- The ball must be passed to players on the scoring mat (and caught) for a score to count

Variations:

- If you have color mats, the offense must pass to a different color mat each time
- Allow the players on the scoring mat to leave the mat to collect errant balls. However, the ball must be brought back to the home mat.

"WATCH IT" TAG (Garry Bowyer, OH)

This game starts as a 2 vs. 4 game. The "2" are taggers. Played within a confined area, the taggers pass a ball to each other trying to tag each of the "dodgers". The taggers may not move with the ball. If tagged, the dodger switches roles with the tagger (establish a rotation so each person becomes a tagger as well as a dodger).

Variations:

- (1) When tagged, the dodger becomes an additional tagger. As the number of taggers grows, the role of the dodger becomes more challenging.
- (2) Use different types a balls to pass.
- (3) Change the passing roles, so the dodgers are passing and the taggers are trying to tag the person with the ball.

EDER FITNESS SHUFFLE (Eric Eder, NJ)

Place different colored hoops around the playing area creating a large circle. The hoops should be positioned approximately 10'-15' apart. Set 2-3 dice in each of the hoops. Assign each color hoop an exercise or task. Position students at each of the hoops prior to the start of the activity.

On the starting signal each student rolls a die. The student then travels around the circle, moving the number hoops corresponding with the number resulting from the roll of the die. When the student arrives at the hoop, s/he performs the task for that hoop. After completing the task, the student rolls the die and moves again. Continue for a set time limit.

*** Suggestion: Create a poster with the assigned tasks or give each student an index card with the assigned tasks recorded.**

BEE HIVE

Split the class into smaller groups of 5-6 players. Each group will play its own game. Create a playing area of approximately 20'x30' (the older the players, the larger the playing area). In the center of each playing area place a hoop or mat. At each end of the playing area place 3-4 hoops.

To begin the game, all the players stand in a hoop (except for the middle hoop). One player is designated as defense. To score players must cross to the opposite end, touching the middle hoop/mat on the way over. If successful, the player scores 1 point. If tagged by the defense no points are scored. First player to score 5 points wins and a new game is started.

SPACE SHUTTLE (inspired by Chip Candy)

The class divides into smaller groups. The groups make a shuttlecraft by joining hands. Each shuttle needs a pilot. The pilot stands inside the shuttle. On a "go" signal the shuttle craft must travel across the playing field and back in the shortest amount of time possible. The pilot **MAY NOT** touch the shuttle (and vice versa). If contact is made the shuttle must begin again (or penalize the group by adding seconds).

Variations:

- Combine times of the whole class. Challenge them to record a faster time.
- Set a timed goal for the whole class.
- Add a co-pilot.
- Blindfold the pilot.

3 ON A TREE (Chip Candy)

This is a tag game. Give each tagger a ball or beanbag that helps identify him/her as a tagger. Give out 4-5 golf tubes or foam noodles. These are the "trees". A player is safe when holding on to a tree. However, the tree only holds 2 players. If a third player holds on to the tree, the first 2 must leave. If tagged while off a tree, the player switched roles with the tagger.

VARIATIONS:

- Use different color or size noodles to designate trees that hold more than 2 players!
- Allow the trees to move around!