Fun Game Ideas

P1 - P7

Created by Active Schools
Na H-Eileanan an Iar
Introduction

This booklet has been designed to provide teachers, volunteers and coaches with additional ideas for games and activities within a school, playground or club setting.

The games listed within this booklet have been broken into four sections - Warm Up Activities, Main Activities, Cool Down Activities & Parachute Games. Within the description of the games please lookout for the box specifying which group the activity would be best suited to. However these are simply suggested guidelines and can be adapted to suit various ages, games and activities.

At the bottom of each game description you will find a comments box. This is the perfect opportunity to take notes on the games played. This could be anything from what worked well, or what might be done differently, how to make it more challenging or simpler. By doing this you may also create your own game!

Active Schools also has a wide range of resources, games and activities available online. Please feel free to take a look and try out some of the games within the resource pages. If you would like more information on any of the games or the booklet please do not hesitate to contact your Active Schools Coordinator.

Active Schools online: www.cne-siar.gov.uk/activeschools

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Warm Up Activities
Why do we warm up?

“*The main reason for using warm ups is to minimise risk of injury. Warm ups also serve to enhance the physiological and physiological preparedness for the activity.*” (Byl, J. 2004)

An effective warm up should:

- Gradually increase HR and blood circulation
- Increase body temperature
- Improves efficiency of muscular actions
- Prepares the joints & associated muscles to function to their full Range of Movement (RoM)
- Adds psychological preparation for activity to follow

What you could ask children during the warm up:

- Why do we warm up?
- How are you feeling – hot, sweaty, out of breath?
- Why do we sweat?
- If you touch your skin, how does it feel?
- Heart rate, is it fast or slow? Blood pumping round your body getting you ready to take part in sport/games.
- Where can you feel your heart beat (pulse) – chest, neck, wrist
- Are you ready?!

Length of Warm Up

- Should not exceed 10 to 15 minutes

Things to consider

Recommendation is for no static stretching during warm ups. Stretches should be dynamic, e.g. high knees, heel flicks, arm swings, touching ground while walking / running

Introduce elements of main activity in warm up where appropriate, e.g. arms and shoulders if throwing involved; build up running speed if sprints are involved.

Involve all children in whole warm up.
Cups and Saucers
(Agility, Balance, Coordination)

Split the group into two teams (depending on numbers). Have each group stand at either end of the hall. In middle of the hall, spread out cones, some sitting the correct way to make ‘saucers’, and others upside down to make ‘cups’. When the leader shouts “GO” the children must run into the centre of the hall. One team will be turning the cups into saucers, and the other team will be turning saucers into cups. Give the group 20 seconds or so to see how many cones they were able to turn. The team who turn the most cones win.

Coaching Points:
- Encourage children to stay on their feet
- Ensure children move around and don’t stay in one area turning over the same cones.

Notes:
Why not give children a challenge. I.e they can only turn over a certain colour or decrease the time allocated to turn over cones. Have more than one game going at once - split the hall in half.
To clear up the cones when the game is complete, introduce a mini competition to see who can collect the most cones.

Suitable age: P1—P7

Line Tig / Pac-Man
(Running, Agility, Balance)

Using the lines of a badminton court, the coach selects one child to be a catcher or Pac Man/Girl. They must then try and catch the other children - however they all must follow the lines of the court. If a child is caught 3 times they block the route at the point they were caught, and sit on the line holding onto their knees as a ‘road block’. This is fast pace walking activity.

Notes:

Suitable age: P1—P7
Rock Paper Scissor  
(Running, Agility)

Select two teams. Have them facing each other in a line around 5 feet apart. As a group they select either rock, paper or scissor. Once each team has selected their item, they return to line, and face one another. They then hold out only one hand and make a fist. Both teams then say together “1, 2, 3” and both teams show their selected item. The team who win must then chase the other team and try to catch them before they cross their safety line which is located behind them roughly 10 paces away. If caught, they join the other team.

Notes:

Suitable age P5—P7

Shark Attack  
(Running, Coordination)

One catcher is a shark, the rest are swimmers. Spread a number of hoops around the hall, which are islands. The children jog (swim / surf / water ski) around the hall, and around the hoops. The shark swims around also, with their hands on their head, in the shape of a fin. When the coach shouts ‘Shark Attack!’ the swimmers must get onto an island before begin caught by the shark. If any swimmers are caught they then become a shark. You can also limit the number of people to an island as an added challenge, and you can pick up the islands, and then throw them down after you yell ‘shark attack’ so pupils don't congregate round hoops.

Notes:

Suitable age P1—P7
Assign each wall as either N,S,W,E. When the coach shout out a direction ie North, children must run to that wall as quickly as possible. You can introduce the following actions to make it a little harder as they have to remember a number of actions! If the hall is too big, mark a square out with cones.

**Scrub the Decks** – Children fall to their knees and pretend to scrub the floor.

**Climb the Rails** – Children pretend to climb rails

**Captains Wife** – Children put their hand on their hips and move in a circular motion while saying – whoot whooo

**Captains Cook** – Children pretend to be sick

**Captains Coming** – Children salute and say “Aye Aye Captain”

**Walk the Plank** - Children have to walk in a perfect straight line one foot exactly in front of the other with arms outstretched to the sides

**Peg Leg Jim** – children hop on one leg

**Notes:** For lower primary pupils, instead of using N,S,E,W, place a colour cone at each wall, and call the colour.

**Suitable age P1—P7**

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**Stealers**

**(Running, Coordination)**

Split the children into four teams and have each team sit in a straight line, one behind the other. Number each person in the team from 1 – 5 for example. Make a square with 4 cones (like No. 4 on dice). Each team sits behind a cone with a hoop in front of them, facing the centre of the square. In the centre of the square, place another hoop, filled with bean bags. When ready, call out a number at random. That number, from each team will then run to the centre of the square and collect ONE bean bag. They then run back to their hoop and place (NOT THROW) it into the team hoop. The same number keep going until a team gets 3 beanbags first. On the second attempt, call another number at random (or you can call out sums, ie 2+2, therefore number 4 would run). This time they can take from the middle hoop, and steal from other teams hoops to prevent them from getting 3 before anyone else. Ensure those sitting keep their hands away from the hoop.

**Notes:**

**Suitable age P4—P7**
Select two catchers (farmers). Their aim is to catch the other children who are rabbits. The rabbits tuck a bib into the top of their t-shirt or at the top of their shorts. The farmers then have to catch the rabbits by pulling out their tails. If a rabbits tail is stolen, the farmer gives it back to the rabbit. Tell the children a story about rabbits have been cheeky how they have been stealing the farmers carrots. This always makes them giggle!

Farmers can also collect the bibs during the last game instead of returning them. This is a good way of tidying up. You could also get the farmers to collect the bibs and place them into a hoop in the corner of the room each time they catch a ‘tail’. You can then make this into a challenge and see if any other farmers can beat the record made by the previous farmers.

**Notes:**

**Suitable age P1—P7**

All children tie a small braid / bib (the tail) into the side or back of their shorts, or at the top of their t-shirts. The object of the game is for the child to try and not lose their tail, but at the same time try and catch someone else’s tail. If a child loses their tail, the catcher returns it to them in their hands (so as to ensure nobody slips on a bib on the floor). To finish the game, change the rule so that this time if their tail is stolen, they sit down & the game will carry on until the end when we find out who has the most tails.

**Notes:** We would only make children sit down or go ‘out’ during a game at the end of a game / session to ensure all pupils are included and active.

**Suitable age P1—P7**
Late for School  
(Coordination)

This is a fun warm up activity. Tell the children to copy all your actions. Pretend you are asleep and suddenly wake up and are late for school. Everything you do is done on the spot but in a hurry. Brush your teeth, wash your face, put your clothes on, run downstairs, run back up (forgot to put trousers / skirt on), back down stairs, eat breakfast, pick up your bag, open front door, shut door, run down the street, jump over a hedge, look both ways, cross the road etc. Finally arrive at school slowing down panting and puffing then suddenly stop at the closed gates. Its Saturday!!

You must provide a running commentary whilst doing the actions and you can make it as varied & interesting as you like. It is a fun and easy to follow pulse-raiser. A similar cool-down activity is called "Getting ready for bed". This involves a lot of stretching as we mime removing clothes, hugging teddy bears, etc. It ends with children lying on the floor ‘asleep’.

Notes: You can also try this in the classroom.

Suitable age P1—P3

Fruit Basket  
(Running, Agility)

Divide the class into 4 groups and have them move into each corner of the area. Give each of the group a fruit name such as apples, oranges, bananas and watermelons. Call two of the fruit names and those groups have to run and change places. They maintain the same name throughout the game. When you call "Fruit Basket" all of the children run and sit in the centre of the area. You can also change the movement as you go ie. Hopping, skipping, bunny hopping.

Notes: Encourage children to keep their heads up to avoid collision

Suitable age P1—P7
The Numbers Game  
(Running, Coordination)

Develop your pupils’ addition / subtraction skills in this enjoyable game. Set up a square marked out in the four corners of the hall which will allocated either number 1,2,3 or 4, and assign teams accordingly. On the floor of the hall, spread out, will be 4 sets of numbers from 1-8 (so there will be four 1’s, four 2’s etc in the hall). Pupils will jog around the hall in and out of numbers. The teacher shouts a number between 1 and 8. At this, the pupils have to pick up whatever number they are closest to, and using the numbers in the corners have to get the number the teacher shouted using adding or subtraction, e.g. if the teacher shouts 3 and the pupil picks up number 5, then that pupil must run to the corner numbered 2, as 5 minus 2 equals 3.

Notes:

Suitable age P4—P7

Run Around the Tepees  
(Running, Agility, Balance)

This is a fun, partner game / warm-up activity which can be played with the whole class. Children find a partner & then whole group make a circle. One partner is the ‘Indian’ and sits on the ground on the inside of the circle, cross legged. The other is the ‘Teepee’ and stands facing their partner with their legs apart on the outside of the circle.

To play tell the children which way round the circle they will be running. Point the way as the game starts. The leader shouts ‘Indians’ or ‘Teepees’. On ‘Indians’ they have to go into their teepees (through their partner’s legs) and run as fast as they can around the outside of the circle back to their teepee and enter through their partners legs again and sit down cross legged. No one is allowed to push and overtaking must be around the outside of other runners. On ‘Teepees’ they must run round circle and get back to their positions as quickly as possible.

Notes:

Suitable age P1—P5
Golden River
(Running, Agility)

One child is chosen to be a catcher or ‘fish’. The catcher stands in the middle of a badminton court. Children say together “Fishy fishy, may we cross you’re golden river?” The fish then replies with “only if you’re wearing (a colour, a t-shirt, hair colour etc).” All those who have that particular item are then permitted to cross the golden river safely. Once they cross, the leader then gives the group a 3 second count down to get ready to cross, and they then need to cross the river without being caught by the fish. If they are caught they become a fish with the original catcher. This continues until there is only one person left.

Notes:

Suitable age P4—P7

Traffic Lights
(Jumping, Running, Agility, Balance)

Using different cones children pretend to be cars. Call out various instructions.
Red – Stop
Amber – Jogging on the spot
Green - jogging
Motorway – short sprint

When the leader shouts Red – The children must Stop and stand still
When the leader shouts Amber – The children jog on the spot and get ready to take off
When the leader shouts Green – The children drive off in their car

The game continues with the leader adding further actions.
Flat Tyre – Children must hop on one leg
Raining – Children use their arms like window wipers
Car Horn – Children make the sound of a horn.

Notes: Suggestions:
1 Puncture (Hop)
2 Punctures (Bunny Hop)
Roundabout (Pupils form 1 big circle)
Speed Bump (2 footed jump & carry on)
Traffic Jam (Slow Walk / Light Jog)

You can introduce gears to try & regulate & get them to think about speed.
(Ie. 1st Gear = Walking, 2nd Gear = Jogging, 3rd Gear = Running, 4th Gear = Sprinting)

Suitable age P1—P5
Clock in the Tower
(Running)

Children stand in a circle and one child stands in the middle. Number the children off in 3s (depending on numbers). Once all the children have their number, they all say together, “the clock in the tower strikes the hour”. The child in the middle then claps their hands to let them know the time ie 3 claps equals 3 o’clock. All those numbered 3 then have to run around the outside of the circle, back through their space and in the middle where the clock is. The first person to touch the clock wins and then they become the clock.

Notes:

Suitable age P3—P7

Funky Seaweed
(Running, Agility, Balance)

The child or catcher is the Octopus. Children have to try and get to the other side of the room without being caught by the octopus. The leader will give a 3 second count down for children to get ready to cross. If they are caught while trying to run across they stand where they are caught and become a bit of ‘funky seaweed.’ Funky seaweed must NOT move their feet but can catch others with their hands as they try and cross the river. If the funky seaweed catches someone trying to cross, they too become a piece of funky seaweed. The object of the game is to try and cross without being caught.

Notes:

Suitable age P3—P7
Beat the Ball
(Running, Agility Coordination, Catching)

Children stand closely in a circle with one ball. The person who starts with the ball passes it to the person on their right, and continue to pass round the circle. Once the first player passes they also have to run round the outside of the circle and back to their space before the ball reaches.

Notes:
The ball can travel one way and the child the other.
Teacher can call out a direction, they must run in that direction, or try opposites - Left = Right!

Suitable age P3—P7

Video Game
(Running, Jumping, Agility, Balance)

Children respond to the following video controls, using the appropriate actions:

• Play - walk around
• Rewind - run / walk backwards
• Fast Forward - run
• Pause - jump on the spot
• Stop - stop
• Search for the programme - get the children to skip sideways.
• Change - they then change direction.
• Slow Motion - walk in a slow exaggerated way.
• Eject – Big jump
• Record – Pull a funny face

Notes:

Suitable age P1—P7
Mr Man Game
(Agility, Balance, coordination, Running, Jumping)

Say the name of a Mr. Man and children have to move like him. Some good ones to use are;
• Mr. Slow - move slowly.
• Mr. Rush - move fast.
• Mr. Jelly - shake your whole body.
• Mr. Muddle - walk backwards.
• Mr. Bounce - bounce!
• Mr. Small - crouch and move.
• Mr. Strong - move flexing your muscles.
• Mr. Tall - stretch up and move (good for stretching once the children's hearts are racing.)

You can add more including Little Miss characters. The children can also make up their own characters & movements!

Notes:

Suitable age P1—P5

Dragons’ Tails
(Running, Coordination)

In groups of 3 children stand in a line, one behind the other, with their arms on the person in front’s shoulders. The person at the front will be catcher, and the person at the end is the tail. The tail of the dragon places a bib in the shorts or tee shirt to create a tail. In their threes the front two can try and steal the person at the backs tail. Alternatively the team of 3 can work together to steal other dragon’s tails (other teams) whilst protecting their own tail. This game highlights the importance of team work!

Notes:

Suitable age P4—P7
Main Activities
Factors to consider for you main activities

STEPS Principle

- **S**pace  
  Hall, football pitch, utilise the space
- **T**ask  
  Aim of the activity, rules & instructions
- **E**quipment  
  What you have available or require
- **P**eople  
  Group you are working with, numbers, ability
- **S**peed  
  Pace of the activity

Other important factors:
1. Age related activities
2. Keeping it Active
3. Inclusive
4. FUN!!

Purpose of the main activity:

- Opportunity to focus on a specific skill within the Physical Literacy area of the Long Term Athlete Development Pathway Model (see next page)

NOTES:

1. **Age related activities**
   - **P1-3** – main concentration should be on running, jumping, throwing and catching. Need to improve basic movement skills – different types of; running (forward, backwards, side ways, skipping, bounding, hopping); jumping (hurdling, standing long jump, rebounding, standing high jump; throwing (underarm, over arm, push); catching (2 hands, left hand, right hand, overhead). All these skills help to improve coordination, which could include handwriting, and ability to progress successfully to sports and activities as they get older.
   - **P4-5** – introduce more complicated movements through small sided games, and games which involve challenge/strategy.
   - **P6-7** – increase challenges and develop sport specific skills e.g. basketball dribble and shoot, volleyball, etc… (consider using volleyball in practical to show how a sport can be adapted to build up confidence and skill levels – progress with balloon/beach ball/allowing bounces/oversize ball/official size ball).

2. **Active** – explain the activity simply and get on with it, don’t talk too much or leave children sitting out for too long.

3. **Inclusive** – work on ways to involve all children – modify games, build up skill level, etc

4. **Fun** – **always fun**. Think of bad experiences people can relate to in PE from their own school days. We want to avoid this.
Phase 1
FUNdamentals (Lower Primary)

This phase is appropriate for boys aged 6 to 9 and girls aged 5 to 8. The main objective should be the overall development of the athlete’s physical capacities and fundamental movement skills. The key points of this phase are:

- Participation in as many sports as possible
- Speed, power and endurance are developed using FUN games
- Introduction to the simple rules and ethics of sports
- ABC’s (Agility, Balance, Coordination and Speed)
- RJT (Running, Jumping, Throwing)
- CKs (Catching, Kicking, Striking with an implement)

The first ‘critical period of speed development’ will occur during this phase, age 6-8 for girls and 7-9 for boys respectively.

Phase 2
Learning to train (Upper Primary)

This phase is appropriate for boys aged 9 to 12 and girls aged 8 to 11. The main objective should be to learn all fundamental sports skills. The key points of this phase are:

- Further develop fundamental movement skills
- Learn general overall sports skills
- Continue to develop endurance with games and relays
- Develop knowledge of warm up, cool down, stretching, hydration and nutrition
Cops & Robbers / Jail Break
(Running, Throwing)

Mark out a circle with cones in the corner of the hall which will be the jail. Select two people to be police men or women. They each put on a bib, and are given a soft bean bag or ball. On ‘GO’ the police have to try and catch the robbers (other children) by throwing the bean bag / ball under arm to hit a robber below the waist. If the bean bag / ball touches the robber, they must go to jail. This continues until all the robbers are caught.

However, if the cops bean bag / ball misses the robber and slides along the floor, a robber (not in jail) can pick up the bean bag before the cop, and can throw it in the jail, from where they are standing. If the bean bag / ball lands in the jail, the robbers in the jail shout “JAIL BREAK” and are free to join back in the game.

Notes:

Suitable age P3—P7

Eskimo Rounder’s
(Running, Throwing, Kicking, Catching, Agility, Balance, Coordination)

Split the group into two teams - one team will be the fielders (Eskimos) one team will be the batting team (Igloos). There are no bases, and only requires one soft ball about the size of a football. The batting team stand one behind the other, anywhere in the hall or playing area. Each member of the batting team has 3 turns each. On their turn, they can kick or throw the ball anywhere in the playing area. The Eskimos, are spread out all over the hall. When the Igloo kick or throw the ball, their team mates who are standing behind them make a tight circle. The batter then has to round around the igloo as may times as possible. Meanwhile, the Eskimos have to collect the ball. The person who has the ball, then has to stand where it was collected. The rest of their team must run behind them in a straight line. They then pass the ball over head, then through the legs, continuing the pattern of over and under until it reaches the last person in the line, and shout STOP! This is the indication for the other team member to stop running around the Igloo. The number of times they run around the igloo is how many points they are awarded, ie. 6 runs = 6 points. They only get a point if a full run is completed. The next person in the batting team then moves to were the ball landed, and they kick or throw the ball, repeating the process. Once all the batting team have had 3 turns each, teams swap roles and they try to beat the Igloos score. If a child misses the ball when batting, they can still run.

Notes:

Suitable age P4—P7
10 Second Dodge Ball
(Throwing, Catching, Jumping, Agility, Coordination)

Introduction to dodge ball: Select two teams. Soft balls are lined up in the middle sitting on cones to keep them still. On go, children run up to the line, and collect a ball. They then must try and hit the other team below the waist. If anyone gets hit by the ball, they take a 10 second time out in the designated time out zone at the side of the court. Once their 10 seconds are up, they are free to join back in. You can give them tasks to do in the time out zone eg. Star jumps

- Make sure children throw the ball under arm.
- Children must stay within their box, and not cross the half way line.

**Time Out Zone**

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**Key:**
- Team 1 =
- Team 2 =
- Cones =
- Balls =

**Notes:**

Suitable age P2—P4
Dr. Dodge
(Catching, Throwing, Jumping, Agility, Coordination)

The leader puts children into two teams. Children in each team secretly pick one of their team mates to be the ‘Doctor’. The doctor has the power to bring their team mates back into the game if they have been hit by a ball by pulling them to the back of their area. If a player is hit, they must sit down where they were hit. It is then upon the Doctor to try and rescue their team mate without the other team noticing. Once the doctor is caught the rest of the team cannot be helped and are out if caught. The race is on to find and catch each teams doctor!

Notes:

Suitable Age P4—P7

Dodgeball
(Catching, Throwing, Jumping, Agility, Coordination)

Split the group into two teams. Each team stands at the base line of the badminton court. Soft foot-balls are lined up in the middle of a badminton court, sitting on cones, which separate team zones. Teams stand at the back of their zone and wait for the teacher to shout ‘GO’ or “DODGEBALL”

On ‘GO’, children run up to the centre and collect a ball. They then must try and hit the other team below the waist. If anyone gets hit by the ball they stand to the side. If a member of their team catches a ball in mid air all the teams mates that are out are back in the game. If a player throws a ball and it is caught in mid air by the opposing team, they are out.

Why not try ‘End to End Dodge Ball’? This time if a player is out they stand in a zone behind the opposition. They can now work with their team mates that are still in. Now both teams need to be aware that balls are now thrown from behind them and continue from the front. For those in the end zone to join back to their original side, they must try and get someone from the opposition out. If they manage to do this the player they hit is out and they can return to their team.

Notes:

Suitable Age P4—P7
Start as you would for the Stealers Warm up. This time stand teams in a line one behind the other. On go, the first person from each team runs to the centre hoop takes one bean bag and runs back to their team, places the bean bag in their team hoop and high 5s the next runner. They then run out, collect a bean bag take it back to their hoop and high 5 their team mate. This continues until there are no more bean bags in the centre hoop. Now the person whose turn it is to run can now steal one item from other teams hoop & they then return to their team hoop where the place the bean bag and high 5 their team mate. The teams then have 30secs to steal as many bean bags as they can. When their time is up, get the group to count how many bean bags they have, but they are not to tell anyone until the teacher asks. Winner is the team with the most beanbags. You can play again, and rotate the teams position and order they ran in.

**Notes:**
When working with younger children, once all the bean bags have gone from the centre hoop, for some reason all the children want to run at once! Emphasise the fact the only ONE person from each team can run at any one time.

**Suitable age P4—P7**

**Corner to Corner**
**Running, Agility**

Split the group into 4 teams of 4 different colours. Each team stands in a corner of the hall. Once each team are in a corner, the coach shouts two team colours. I.e red and blue. The two teams with that particular colour then have to swap corners as quickly as possible. The teams keep their colours when the swap corners. Try this a few times. Then pick one child to be a catcher. This time, when the coach calls out a the colours, the catcher tries to catch the runners before they run to a new colour. If caught, they join the catcher in the middle.

**Notes:**

**Suitable age P3—P7**
Split the group into two teams. Place chairs or benches or a badminton net in the middle of a badminton court or a similar sized area. Spread out soft bean bags, soft balls etc evenly on each side of the benches / chair / net.

The object of the game is to clear the toys from your garden by throwing them into next doors garden in a certain amount of time. The winner is the team with the cleanest garden, or the team with the least items in their badminton court or ‘garden’. Ensure children throw only 1 item at a time, and encourage movement around their garden.

This game focuses on throwing and introducing the overhead throw. If using benches, ensure children use the under arm throw for safety. For older children increase the height of the net and introduce the overhead throw.

Key:
Team 1  =  
Team 2  =  
Net  =  
Soft Toys  =  

Notes:

Suitable for P1—P7
**Scoreball**  
(Running, Throwing, Catching, Agility, Balance, Coordination)

Split the group into four teams. Have 2 teams working in each half of the hall/area. The aim of the game is to complete 3 passes of the ball, using their hands. Once they have successfully completed their 3 passes, they can now try and score a point. To score a point, they have to pass to their team mate on the bench. If the team mate on the bench catches the ball successfully they score one point. The person who passed to them changes places and they stand on the bench, and possession is handed over. Both teams can try and stop the opposing team completing the 3 passes but putting pressure on the person with the ball, and marking the other places. There should be NO contact with players.

**Notes:**

**Suitable age:** P4—P7

**Popcorn**  
(Running, Throwing)

20 to 30 bean bags required. Players spread themselves around the playing area. The container with the bean bags and one designated as the popcorn maker are at the centre of the playing area. At the leaders signal to start, the popcorn maker tries to throw all the popcorn out, one at a time, in an effort to empty the container. The rest of the players try to get the bean bags and toss them back into the container. The popcorn maker can not intentionally block players from returning the popcorn into the container. If the popcorn maker gets too tired, assign a new popcorn maker.

**Notes:**

**Suitable age:** P1—P7
Swamp Monster
(Agility, Balance, Coordination, Running, Jumping)

Spread mats or hoops out on the floor far enough apart that players can pass between them. Players distribute themselves around the floor not touching a mat/hoop. Play some music & tell players to use specific locomotor patterns (skipping, hopping, galloping etc) to move around the mats. If they make contact with the mat the swamp monster gets them. To free themselves and rejoin they must perform 10 star jumps on the mat/hoop. When the music stops players must find a mat by themselves and perform a balance. If no mats/hoops are left (or if they lose their balance) they lose a life. To make it harder, you can remove a mat/hoop.

Notes:

Suitable age P1—P7

Island Tag
(Running, Balance, Coordination)

Mark out an area with cones on the floor. This can my any shape (like an island - Lewis, Harris, Uist, Barra, Australia). All players stand inside the coned area which is now an island. Make it easier by making the island bigger, and smaller to make it more challenging. Each player partners up with another player. One of the players is designated as the catcher. On the leaders signal, the catcher spins round twice on the spot to give their partner a chance to get away. The catchers then chase their partners. When the partner is tagged, the partner becomes the catcher, spins round twice and gives chase.

Notes:

Suitable age P4-P7
Cool Down Activities
Why do we Cool Down?

“Active players need to overcome muscle fatigue quickly after exercise to experience full recovery. The cool down should be active enough to wash away muscle metabolism by products such as lactic acid.” (Byl, J. 2004)

An effective cool down

- Decreases the HR and blood circulation gradually
- Assist the removal of waste products
- Returns the body to the pre-exercise condition
- Prepare pupils for next class
- Creates good habits for when older and training with a sports club.

What you could ask children:

- Did you enjoy the session?
- What was your favourite game?
- Would you like to play that game again?
- How are you feeling?
- Do you have any games you would like to play next session?
- Why do we cool down?
- How are you feeling – hot/cold sweaty,
- If you touch your skin, how does it feel? Compare to Warm Up
- Heart rate, is it fast or slow?
- Can you remember where you can find your pulse?
Heel-to-Toe Race
(Balance, Coordination)

Place the pupils into teams. Each team stand behind a starting line. Teams should stand in a straight line behind one another. Designate a turning point 20 paces away. On the leaders signal to run, players race as quickly as possible to the turning line and back to the starting line. Make sure that the players run heel to toe throughout the duration of the race. When they return to the starting point, they high 5 the next person in their team who will them carry out the same action. Once all team members have finished they must sit with their hands on their head. The winning team is the first team all sitting with their hand on their heads.

Notes:

Suitable age P1—P7

Beat the Bunny
(Coordination, Catching)

All children stand in a circle. The bunny (a small ball) is started first and is passed from person to person around the circle. When the bunny is about half way around, the farmer (large ball) is started in the same direction. The farmer can change directions to try and catch the bunny, but the bunny can only go one way until the farmer changes direction.

Notes:

Suitable age P4 - P7
Guess the Time

Children sit with their legs crossed and hands behind their backs. The aim of the game is for the children to stand up when they think the allocated time has passed. For example, the leader will ask the children to stand up after 30 secs has passed. You will tell them when the time starts. A great cool down game, and it provides a great insight to a Childs perception of time! The person closest to the time given by the leader is the winner.

Notes:

Suitable age P4—P7

Laughing Valley

Children stand in two lines facing each other, 4 feet apart. One child then has to walk between the two lines of people - “the valley”. The person chosen to walk through the valley must make it to the other end without laughing. Those standing in the lines have to try and make the person walking through the valley laugh before they reach the end.

Notes:

Suitable age P3—P7
## Time Bomb!

**Coordination**

Sitting in a circle the leader tells the children that s/he will be counting to 15 in their head. The children then start passing a soft ball which will be the ‘time bomb’ round in the circle. When the leader reaches 15, they shout “time bomb” & the child holding the bomb is then out or loses a life.

To keep children involved, give them a watch and get them to shout ‘Time Bomb’ after a selected amount of time. When there are only 2 children left they sit back to back and pass the ball round to the each other until the time is up.

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## Duck Duck Goose

**Agility, Coordination, Running**

Children sit in a circle and one child walks around the outside of the circle tapping each child on the head and saying duck, duck, duck duck. When the child taps a head and says goose, the child sitting then has to chase the child that tapped their head around the outside of the circle. They then have to try and catch them before sitting back in their space. If the goose catches the person being chased the person who was being chased sits in the middle of the circle. The goose now becomes the new catcher. The person sitting in the middle leaves the centre when the next person is caught.

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Rhythm Master – Circle Game
(Coordination)

Children sit in a circle & select one child to be the ‘Rhythm detective’. Ask them to walk over to a wall, face the wall, close their eyes and cover their ears. Select one child in the circle to be the ‘Rhythm Master’. The rhythm master then chooses what movements they will carry out and the rest will copy. Always start with the rhythm master tapping their knees. The teacher then asks the detective to return. The rhythm master will then change their movements and the other children sitting in the circle copy. The detective then has 3 chances to try and guess who the rhythm master is. Encourage children not to look too often at the rhythm master and talk about what movements or actions could be done at the start of the activity.

Notes:

Suitable age P4—P7

Magical Wink

Children sit in a circle. Select one child to be the detective. The detective stands in a corner, with their back facing the group. The coach then selects one child to hold the power of the Magical Wink. Once a child is selected, the detective is called back to try and figure out who holds the magical wink. The person with the magical wink, will wink at others in the circle. If they are winked at, they faint dramatically! The detective has 3 chances to guess who the magical winker is.

Notes:

Suitable age P3—P7
Knee Tag
(Agility, Balance, Coordination)

Players stand facing a partner approx 1 or 2 paces apart. The objective of the game is to touch their opponent’s knees more than their own knees are touched. Players can also stand in a hoop to reinforce the space identified.

Notes:

Suitable age P4—P7

Space Boy / Girl
(Balance, Coordination)

Explain to children that they are Space Girls or Boys and they have been sent on a mission to the moon. Once on the moon explain that there is no gravity so their movement is really slow and exaggerated. You can make up a story and for each part of the story, the children re-enact that movement. For example, if the children are told to catch the highest star, children will stretch up high to reach a star, and place it in their ‘basket’.

Notes:

Suitable age P1—P3
Commando
(Balance, Coordination)

Split the class into two / three teams. The aim is to reach the opposite side of the hall first. Each team stands in a line at one side of the hall with their legs apart. The person at the back then crawls underneath all of the pairs of legs and then becomes the person at the front. Once they have reached the front of the line the child then has to shout next so the person at the back knows when to start. Slowly but surely the line starts to move forward! Tip: make the children stand really close together as it’s a little easier. The first team to the opposite end of the hall are the winners.

Notes:

Suitable age P1—P7

Sleepy Bears
(Balance, Coordination)

Get the children to find a space anywhere in the hall. Provide commentary & explain to them that they are big bears, and that they have had a really big dinner so they are feeling really full and really sleepy. Ask the children to slowly lay down on the floor. Once lying down, ask the children to close their eyes and to keep as quite and still as possible. Once they are all quiet explain that only the quietest and stillest bear will be woken up by you. To wake the ‘sleepy bears’ the leader moves around the group quietly and taps a pupil one at a time on the shoulder. The child then has to get up as quietly as possible and must not wake any of the other sleeping bears. The children are asked to tip toe to the door or sit on the bench.

Notes:

Suitable age P1—P7
Parachute Games
Benefits of Parachute Play

A parachute is a great addition to the play equipment in any school.

Why incorporate parachute play into your sessions? Because parachute games encourage cooperative, non-competitive play and reinforce turn-taking and sharing. While most gross motor activities for young children develop muscles in the lower body more than the upper torso, parachutes strengthen primarily shoulder, arm and hand muscles. When children work together to make the parachute move, they also refine perceptual motor skills and develop a sense of rhythm. Gaelic activities can also be incorporated into most parachute games.

Parachutes are a lot of fun for both children and adults to play with and the opportunities to encourage children’s overall development with this exciting activity make it an ideal choice for early childhood development.

Benefits of parachute play include:

- Encourages cooperation
- Strengthens upper torso
- Non-competitive
- Differing abilities are non-issue
- Refines perceptual skills
- Reinforces turn-taking / sharing
- Develops a sense of rhythm
- Requires following directions
- Promotes social interaction
- Enhances language development
Mushroom

This is a simple exercise to get the children used to the parachute. All the children are asked to bend down and take hold of the parachute. When the leader calls ‘up’ the children lift the parachute up as high as they can – making a mushroom shape. Pulling the parachute down creates a refreshing wind and enables you to repeat the exercise again. Another version of this exercise is to ask the children to lift the parachute high in the air and then walk in towards the centre.

Crossing

This is a good warm-up game whereby the children have to run underneath from one side of the parachute to the other whilst all the other children lift it up to make a mushroom shape and then pull it down in order to trap those running underneath. I have used the following to encourage different groups of children to run underneath but you can easily make up your own.
- All those who like watching EastEnders
- All those who are boys / girls
- All those wearing red
- All those called….
- All those wearing a tie
- All those who have long hair
- All those who like Marmite

Turtle

Imagine that the parachute is the shell of a turtle. The children are asked to go underneath the parachute and hold the edge in front of them, keeping their backs to the middle of the parachute. Explain to the children that they have to work together and if not the turtle will not move as one. (You will be outside of the parachute at this stage and the children will be underneath). Ask the children to move in one direction, making sure the parachute does not lose its shape. You could also try putting obstacles in the way to climb over or move around.
This game is also called ALLIGATOR SWAMP and has two versions but both require the children to sit around the parachute with their feet hidden underneath the parachute. The first version begins with one child being selected to go underneath the parachute whilst everyone else pulls the parachute to their chests and begins to make waves. The person under the parachute goes around and grabs the legs of someone and gently pulls them under with them. They then change places and the new shark or alligator seeks out another victim.
The second version: One shark and two lifesavers are selected. The shark goes under the parachute with everyone making waves with the parachute and the two lifeguards circle the outside of the parachute in order to help those being dragged in by the shark. Once a shark pulls a child under the parachute then that child joins the shark and the two sharks seek out more victims.

You can use beanbags for this game but small coloured balls work best and are fun to watch. You could use small plastic balls and select two different colours. Children can then be divided into two teams on either side of the parachute or boys against girls and one colour will represent each team. All the children stand around the parachute holding it tight and then make large waves. Throw the balls onto the parachute and watch them fly off in all directions. The team that bounces off all of their coloured balls first wins.

A popular chasing game that involves one child being selected to be the mouse and the other to be the cat. On the first whistle the cat goes underneath the parachute and crawls around the outer rim, while all the other children kneel down and make waves. On the second whistle the cat goes on top on its hands and knees and tries to catch the mouse. If the mouse makes it around the outer rim of the parachute and back to its place without being caught by the cat then it becomes the winner. The children kneeling around the parachute making waves must help the mouse not the cat.
Cat, Mouse & Dog

This game is played with two parachutes, one placed on top of the other. It is basically the same game as cat and mouse but this time a dog is added to catch the cat while the cat tries to catch the mouse. The mouse goes underneath the first parachute, the cat between the parachutes and the dog on top.

Eagle & Fish

One child is selected to be the eagle and sit in the middle of the parachute; this will become the eagle’s perch. Now the eagle is a vicious bird of prey and feeds upon fish, mice and other small creatures. Four ‘fish’ (children) are selected from different locations around the parachute. The remaining children have to sit or kneel around the parachute and make waves. At some point the fish can go underneath the parachute and try to poke the eagle before it sees them. The game is four against one but the eagle can pounce upon the fish but needs to know that it can’t swim in the sea and must stay on its perch. Fish pounced on by the eagle must then leave the sea. The fish can meet up underneath and plan to attack all at once or one by one.

Sock Shuffle

This game could also be done with shoes, preferably at the beginning of the session before their shoes are taken off. Have all the children stand up and hold the parachute to their waist. Walk around the parachute and number off the children 1-5, or other numbers as you desire. All those who are number 5 have to toss one of their socks underneath the parachute. Then, when the whistle is blown, the children make a mushroom shape and all those with one sock underneath must rush in, collect it, put it on and then try to get back to their place. The last one out with their socks on is given a forfeit or asked to run around the outside and back to their place.
Volleyball

You will need a large soft ball for this game. The children are divided into two teams as in popcorn and make waves with the parachute. The ball is thrown into the middle and each team must try and send the ball flying off their opponent’s side in order to win a point. You could also use a soft toy animal instead of the ball to add more fun. After the first couple of tries I would then select one child for each team to go underneath the parachute and help their team by hitting the ball over the heads of their opponents.

Under the Chute

This is a good exercise to end the session, but please make sure no children are left outside the parachute. Ask the children to pull the parachute tight & bend down with it so that it rests on the floor. Then ask them to lift it high to make a mushroom and when they pull it down to pull the parachute behind them and sit down on it. You should now have all the children inside the parachute making a tent. I would then play a game whereby one child is chosen to stand as a tent post in the centre but not with their head poking through the middle of the parachute. A soft ball is then thrown into the centre and, without using their hands; the children have to kick the soft ball against the tent post ten times. It is not that easy to do but when ten hits have been recorded you could then use the time for light discussion, etc.