

Great Playground Games for K - 6

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Games for Kindergarten – Grade 1

Red Light Green Light

One player is the Stop Light and stands near a wall. Other players stand far away. Stop Light turns away from players and shouts "Green Light". Other players start moving towards the wall. At any point, Stop Light can shout "Red Light" & turn around. If he catches any players moving, those players are out. The game starts again when the Stop Light turns around and calls "Green Light". The game continues until one child reaches the wall. That student then takes a turn calling out Red Light/ Green Light.

What Time Is It, Mr. Wolf?

Mr. Wolf starts at one end of the field with his back to the group. The group at the other end yells out "What time is it, Mr. Wolf?" Mr. Wolf then yells out a time that is on the even hour (1 o'clock to 12 o'clock. The group then takes that many steps. When the group gets to where the wolf is, but not past him, and asks the time, the wolf can yell "Midnight!" The wolf then turns and chases the group. Those that are caught sit out. The last one left becomes the wolf. A variation is to allow each child who is tagged to also become a wolf and help catch people.

Duck Duck Goose

A group of players sit in a circle, facing inward, while another player (the IT) walks around tapping each player in turn, calling each person a "duck" until finally picking one to be a "goose". The goose then rises and races around the circle in the opposite direction of the It to reclaim his space on the circle, that is unless It gets there first. The first player left without a space is the It for the next round.

Tag Games

You're It

One person is chosen to be "it". The objective is for the player who is "it" to catch somebody else who then becomes "It". Normally this is played using "touch tag", where a single touch or 'tag' is all that's need to say they've been caught. It's sometimes helpful to include a rule that the person just caught cannot immediately tag the person who just got them.

All in Tag

Starts with only one chaser, but from there on each person caught also becomes a catcher and helps to catch the others.

Chain tag

Each person to be caught joins hands with "it," and the chain thus formed must chase the others as a pair. As more people are caught they too join hands with the "it" players, forming a lengthening chain. Only those at the ends of the chain are able to catch someone, as they are the only ones with a free hand.

Frozen Tag

Players who are tagged are "frozen" and must stand in place with their arms stretched out until they are unfrozen. An unstuck player can perform an action to unfreeze them, such as crawling between their legs or tagging their outstretched hand.

Games for Grades 2 - 3

Hopscotch (Equipment: paint or chalk to mark lines)

The first player stands in a designated spot outside the first space. The player tosses his/her 'potsy' (small rock or pebble) in space one. If the potsy lands outside the space or on a line, his/her turn is over. If it lands inside the space, the player hops over space 1 into space 2 and on through the pattern and back to space 2, bends over and picks up the potsy, hops into space 1 and then out. Having been successful, the player continues trying to toss the potsy into space 2. If successful, the player hops into every space but space 2 and comes back to space 3, bends over to pick up his/her potsy, and hops through spaces 2 and 1 and out. If successful, the player continues until either the potsy misses its space or a hopping error is made. When this happens, the other player takes a turn. Player may begin their next turn where they were when they previously made an error. The first player to complete all numbers in the pattern is the winner.

Rock Paper Scissors Team Tag Game

Divide the group up into two teams. Each team goes to an end line of the play area to decide on a leader to represent them and either Rock, Paper, or Scissors. The leaders meet at center to do Rock Paper Scissors at center. All of the other team members are gathered around their leaders on the center circle. For the leader who wins the Rock Paper Scissors, all of the team members chase the other team members in an attempt to tag them before they get to their end line. Any member of the losing team who is tagged must switch to the other team. After the chase, team members would gather on their end line again to decide on a new leader and a new Rock Paper or Scissors. Leaders meet at center again to do Rock Paper Scissors with winning team chasing losers again. If there is a tie (i.e two Paper), teams gather at end line to choose a new Rock Paper or Scissors.

Tic-Tac-Toe (Equipment: bean bags & tic-tac-toe design)

A tic-tac-toe design can be chalked or painted in pavement with a piece of 2 x 4. The X's always go first. Two players can use colored beanbags and toss them into the game while alternating throws. If there are no bean bags, use people as teams instead to form a line of three. One team can stand with arms at their side while the other team crosses their arms. To make the game more fun, don't allow talking.

Skipping Games

Skipping: Birthday Game (Equipment: long skipping rope)

The game needs two enders and 4 – 8 players. Everyone starts inside the rope and the enders turn at normal speed.

“All in together kids, How do you like the weather kids, When is your birthday?

Please jump out.

January, February, March, April, ... December.”

Each child jumps out of the rope on the month of his/ her birthday so by the time the chant is over, everyone is out. Reverse it by saying the chant again. This time, each child jumps in when the month of his/ her birthday is called.”

Skipping: Ice Cream Soda (Equipment: one long skipping rope)

Ice cream soda, Lemonade hearts, Tell me the names,

Of your sweethearts

A, B, C, D, ...

A new jumper may enter on each letter.

Skipping: Cinderella (Equipment: long skipping rope)

Cinderella, dressed in yella

Went upstairs to kiss a fella

By mistake, she kissed a snake

How many doctors did it take?

1,2,3,4,5, etc. (jumper keeps jumping and counting, as the rope is turned faster and faster until the jumper misses)

Skipping: All Together (Equipment: long skipping rope)

Game requires two capable enders to turn and no more than 5 jumpers. The enders keep the turns slow and as big as possible while the jumpers cooperate by standing close together. The jumpers stand in line. The first jumper runs in and begins jumping with the remaining players joining in one at a time until all players are jumping together. The group continues to jump until someone misses. Change enders often.

Skipping: Double Dutch (Equipment: two 14' or 16' ropes)

Two ropes are turned alternatively toward each other. Remind jumpers to focus on the rope further away and to enter as it nears the ground. Jumpers work through basic moves in tune with a rhyme. As skipping improves, progress on to different tricks such as doing a 180-degree turn in a single jump or hopping on one foot.

Wall Ball Games

Wall Ball: Handball (Equipment: rubber ball and wall)

Person #1 is designated as the Server. All other players are receivers and are numbered 2, 3, 4, 5, ... The Server stands on a serving line (drawn with chalk) and lets the ball drop and with an underhand clap hits the ball so that it strikes the wall above the one meter line (drawn with chalk) and lands back over the serving line. Receiver #2 must wait until the ball has bounced once behind the serving line and then hits the ball back to the wall. If receiver #2 fails to return the ball, the Server gets one point. If Receiver #2 returns the ball successfully, the Server hits the ball again, and Receiver #3 hits the ball, followed by Server, Receiver #4, Server, Receiver #5, and so on. Server keeps on serving until he misses the serve or misses the ball on the return. Only Server can score points. If the Server fails to make a legal return, he then becomes the last receiver and Player #2 becomes the Server. The game is played until one player gets 11 points. Ball cannot be caught before hitting and players must hit the ball with their hand. Ball must not bounce twice.

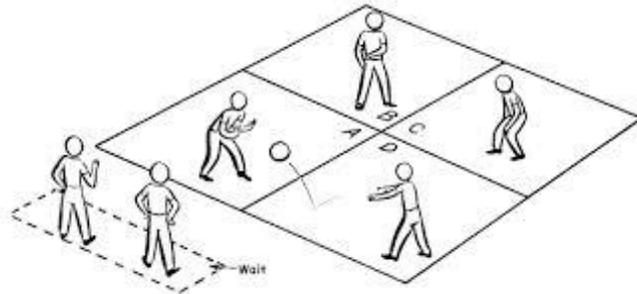
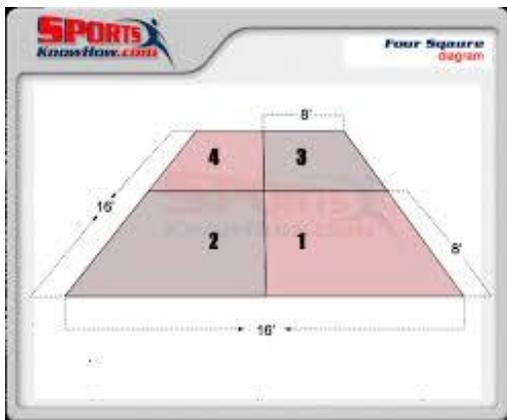
Wall Ball: Donkey (Equipment: tennis ball and a wall)

This game can be played with 4 or more players. One player throws the ball against the wall while the others attempt to catch it so they can be the next one to throw. The ball can also be caught off the bounce. If the first player to the ball catches it, he/she makes the next throw. If the player making the catch drops the ball, that player must touch the wall before any other player can retrieve the ball and throw it back to the wall. If the ball reaches the wall before the player, then that player gets the letter "D", and the game continues. Once you spell the word "DONKEY", you are out. The game continues until only one player remains. Variation: Use the word "DOG" or "MULE".

Games for Grades 4 - 6

Four Square

One player starts in each box. The server starts in the outer corner of Box 1, bounces the ball once, and bats it open-handed into another square. Receiver lets it bounce once and bats it into another square. (Ball cannot be hit downward at any time.) The game continues until someone commits a fault: stepping over a line, missing the ball, hitting a line, ball goes out of bounds, player is hit by a ball. When a fault is committed, that player leaves the game and players advance up a number box and a new player enters in Box 4. If no other players are waiting to play, the player who committed the fault goes into Box 4 and other players advance.



Capture the Flag (Equipment: 2 flags, skipping ropes, hoops, bibs)

The game is played in a large open area. Divide students into two teams and identify one with bibs. Divide the area with a center line and place 5 hoops on each side of the field. Give each team a flag and tell them to place it on the ground in their own end. Create a circle around the flag with 3 or 4 skipping ropes. A jail is made with skipping ropes in the corner of each team's field. The object of the game is to steal the opponent's flag and get it back safely to your own side. The hoops are safe zones and a player cannot be tagged if in their opponent's hoop. Only one person is allowed in the hoop at a time. Any number of players can be in the flag zone at once. Players are not allowed to enter their own flag zone or hoops. If an opponent, on the opposite side of the field tags a player, they are escorted to jail by the tagger. Tagged players must stay in jail until one of their teammates can reach the jail safely and tag them. Players are then free but must go back to their own end before starting again.

Kick the Can

Boundaries for the game are decided on in the beginning. Anyone who goes outside the boundaries is automatically caught and goes to jail. A can is placed in an open area with a ten foot circle drawn around it with chalk. Everyone is divided into two teams. One team is designated as "It". They cover their eyes and count to 50 while the other players run and hide. It then tries to find and tag each of the hiding players. Anyone caught must be accompanied back to a pre-designated jail area, usually in plain sight of the can. Any player who has not been caught can kick the can and set all the captured players free. The seeking team can have just one guard who watches over the can. The guard cannot go inside the circle except when chasing someone. Once all of the hidiers are caught, the game is over and the two teams switch roles. Variation: One person can be It and he merely has to call the player's name and hiding place rather than actually tagging him by touch.

Ultimate Frisbee (Equipment: frisbee, two sets of pinnies)

Divide the students into two teams. Have the students play the game up to a predetermined score or for a set period of time. Game is played on a large field which can be divided in two to have four teams playing two games. Determine which team will receive the initial toss. Start the game by throwing the frisbee from the center of the field to the team with first toss. The object of the game is to advance the frisbee down the field so that it can be caught in the end zone. The team with the frisbee cannot run with it and must advance it by passing it down the field. The team loses possession of the frisbee when it falls on the ground or an opponent intercepts the pass. Once a team scores, they return the frisbee from their end of the field by throwing it to the other team. Players may hold the frisbee for no more than three seconds and are only allowed to take three steps before releasing the frisbee. Once a player has caught the frisbee, they have three seconds before they can be tagged. Once tagged, they lose possession of the frisbee.

Basketball Games

Horse (Equipment: basketball and hoop)

Players decide who shoots first. Game begins with first shooter taking a shot from anywhere on the court. If ball goes in, the second shooter must make it from the same spot. If second shooter misses, the letter "H" is assigned. If he/ she makes it, no letter is given and third shooter must make the shot or else gets a "H". When the first shooter misses a shot, the second shooter then gets a chance to take any shot which, if made, must be duplicated. As players make and miss baskets, the letters H-O-R-S-E will be assigned. The object is to have your opponents be the first to spell H-O-R-S-E.

21 (Equipment: basketball and hoop)

Game begins with one player shooting from the foul line. The other players alternate foul shots until one of them makes a shot. That first foul shot is worth one point. All foul shots after the first made one are worth two points. The player who made the first foul shot continues to shoot 2-point foul shots until he/she misses. The next player rebounds a miss and tries to make a shot from where the ball was rebounded. If the shot is made, he/she scores one point and then shoots from the foul line until a miss is made. Game continues until one player reaches 21 exactly. If a player reaches 22, he/she must score from a rebound and then from the top of the key to win the game.

Bump (Equipment: 2 basketballs and hoop)

Players line up in single file from the foul line. First two players each have a ball. The object of the game is to BUMP out other players and be the last one shooting. To be bumped out, the player BEHIND you must make his/ her shot before you. Each player's first shot must be a foul shot. Player one shoots foul shot and player two does the same right after. If player one makes the shot, he/she quickly retrieves the ball and passes it to player three then goes to the back of the line. Now player three is shooting behind player two trying to bump him/her out. When a foul shot is missed, that player has to retrieve the ball quickly and try to make a lay up before the player behind him scores. The cycle continues until one person is left.