



All Games

The benefits of being active for physical and mental health are huge. Being active helps release chemicals in your brain (endorphins), which have a positive effect on your mood, not to mention the benefits to your heart, lungs, muscles and bones.

Traditional school yard games are great fun and a good way to get you and your kids active. You don't need much equipment and many can be played indoors as well as outdoors.

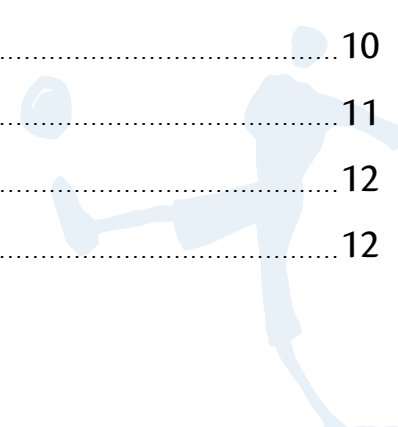
Choose games from the list below to get instructions on how to play them.

Active Ball Games

Dodge Ball (3+ players) »	5
Dodge Ball (8+ players) »	5
Wall Ball »	6

Active Rhyming Games

All in together guys »	8
Down in the valley »	8
Dusty Blue Bells »	9
Grand Old Duke of York »	9
I'm a little bumping car »	10
Magic letter »	10
Oranges and Lemons »	11
Postman »	12
The Mulberry Bush »	12



Active Running Games

Are you there Mrs Bear? »	14
Corners »	14
Duck Duck Goose »	15
Fruit salad »	15
Mother / Father May I? »	16
Red lights »	16
Stuck in the mud »	17
Tip the can »	17
What time is it Mr Wolf? »	18

Active Skipping Games

All in together guys »	20
Down in the valley »	20
I'm a little bumping car »	21
Jelly on a plate »	21
Postman »	22



Ball Games



Dodge Ball (3+ players)

Age Group:	3+
No. of Players:	3 or more
Indoor:	No
Outdoor:	Yes
Equipment:	Ball - A soft ball is better for younger children

How to play: One player is on and has the ball. They try to catch other players by throwing the ball at them.

The ball has to hit the player below the knee - kicking or throwing the ball hard is not allowed. When the ball hits someone else they are on.

Dodge Ball (8+ players)

Age Group:	5+
No. of Players:	8 or more
Indoor:	No
Outdoor:	Yes
Equipment:	Ball - Something to mark the play area A couple of balls

How to play: Divide the players into two teams. Mark a half way point that the teams cannot cross. Mark a bin area at the back of each side. Each team has the same amount of balls to start.

Players throw the ball to hit players on the other team below the knee. Kicking or throwing the ball hard is not allowed. When a player is hit they have to go to the bin area behind the other team.

A player can be released from the bin area if they catch a ball thrown by their team. One team wins when all the opposite team are in their bin.

Wall Ball

Age Group:	3+
No. of Players:	2 or more
Indoor:	No
Outdoor:	Yes
Equipment:	Ball and a wall

How to play: One player starts the game by kicking the ball against the wall. Each player takes turns kicking the ball from where it lands against the wall.

The ball must hit the wall or the player is out. If only two players are playing - if a player misses the wall they give the other player a point. To make it harder you can mark out a special section on the wall for the ball to hit.



Rhyming Games



All in together guys

Age Group:	7+
No. of Players:	3 or more
Indoor:	Yes
Outdoor:	Yes
Equipment:	A long rope

How to play: Two players hold the rope on at each end. The other players stand in a row to one side. The rope is turned and players jump in as the month of their birthday is called during the first rhyme. When everyone is in players jump out as the month of their birthday is called during the second rhyme.

Rhyme 1: *"All in together guys this is fine weather guys. When it is your birthday please jump in - january february march april may june july august september october november december"*

Rhyme 2: *"All out together guys this is fine weather guys. When it is your birthday please jump out - january february march april may june july august september october november december"*

Down in the valley

Age Group:	7+
No. of Players:	3 or more
Indoor:	Yes
Outdoor:	Yes
Equipment:	A long rope

How to play: Two players hold the rope on at each end. The other players stand in a row to one side. The rope is turned and each child takes a turn to jump in and skip until they miss a skip or reach 100 while the rhyme is chanted. The rope is turned faster and faster.

Rhyme: *"Down in the valley where the green grass grows There stands (childs name) hanging out the clothes Along comes (another childs name) and kisses her/him on the cheek How many kisses does she/he receive? 5..10..15..20...100"*

Dusty Blue Bells

Age Group:	5+
No. of Players:	7 or more
Indoor:	Yes
Outdoor:	Yes
Equipment:	None

How to play: Players hold hands up high and walk around in a circle. One player stand outside the circle they go in and out under the arms of other players as the rhyme is sung. On the second verse they choose someone to tap. They then hold hands and continue in and going in and out under the arms and tapping other players. The game ends when everyone is in a line and go in under the arms of the last two players in the circle.

Rhyme: *"In and out goes dusty blue bells In and out goes dusty blue bells In and out goes dusty blue bells early in the morning Tapa-rapa-rapper on my shoulder Tapa-rapa-rapper on my shoulder Tapa-rapa-rapper on my shoulder you are my friend"*

Grand Old Duke of York

Age Group:	5+
No. of Players:	6 or more (you need an even number)
Indoor:	Yes
Outdoor:	Yes
Equipment:	None

How to play: The players form two lines opposite each other. As all players chant the rhyme the following actions are done. The two players at the top hold hands and skip down the middle to the end of the line and skip back to the top.

Then they let go hands and go down the outside of the line at each side the players behind them follow. When they reach the bottom they join hands and form an arch.

The other players go under the arch and line up.

The two players now at the top start over again.

Rhyme: “Oh the Grand Old Duke of York He had ten thousand men He marched them up to the top of the hill And he marched them down again. And when they were up they were up And when they were down they were down And when they were only half way up They were neither up nor down”

I’m a little bumping car

Age Group:	7+
No. of Players:	3 or more
Indoor:	Yes
Outdoor:	Yes
Equipment:	A long rope

How to play: Two players hold the rope on at each end. One player is in the centre jumping. As the player is skipping everyone chants the rhyme - when the rhyme says “**run around the corner**” the player skipping runs around one of the people swinging the rope and then jumps back in to stay skipping for the rest of the rhyme. The count keeps going until they miss a skip or reach 100. Everyone takes turns to swing the rope and jump.

Rhyme: “I am a little bumping car my number is 48 I ran around the corner and slammed on my breaks The policeman came and caught me and put me into jail How many years did I get? 12345...100”

Magic letter

Age Group:	3+
No. of Players:	3 or more
Indoor:	Yes
Outdoor:	Yes
Equipment:	None



How to play: A leader is chosen. The leader stands about 10 meters in front with their back to the rest of the players. The leader picks a magic letter and says it out loud “**the magic letter is _____**”.

When the leader calls out the magic letter no one can move. If they move they have to go back to the beginning. The leader starts calling out different letters of the alphabet. If the letter called is in your name you take a step forward.

If you have two or more of the letter in your name you take the same number of steps forward. If the magic letter is called you don't move. The game continues until one player reaches the leader. They become the leader and the game starts again.

**younger children may need some help to know the letters in their name*

Oranges and Lemons

Age Group:	5+
No. of Players:	3 or more
Indoor:	Yes
Outdoor:	Yes
Equipment:	None

How to play: Two players stand opposite each other and join hands to make an archway. They decide between them who is “**oranges**” and who is “**lemons**” - they don't tell the other player. The other players line up in a single line and skip through the arch and around again singing the rhyme. When the word “**dead**” is chanted the arch comes down to catch the player going under it. The player is asked to choose “**oranges or lemons**” - which ever they choose they stand behind that arch player.

Rhyme: “Oranges and lemons say the bells of St Clements I owe you five farthings say the bells of St Martins When will you pay me say the bells of Old Bailey When I grow rich say the bells of Shoreditch Here comes the candle to light you to bed Here comes the chopper to chop off your head Chip chop chip chop the last person is dead”

Postman

Age Group:	7+
No. of Players:	3 or more
Indoor:	Yes
Outdoor:	Yes
Equipment:	A long rope and a stone

How to play: Two players hold the rope on at each end. One player is in the centre jumping holding the stone in their hand. As the player is skipping everyone chants the rhyme. Everyone takes turns to swing the rope and jump.

Rhyme: *“Early in the morning at 6 o’clock I can hear the postman knock Postman postman drop your letter (let the stone drop) Postman postman pick it up (pick up the stone)”*

The Mulberry Bush

Age Group:	3+
No. of Players:	2 or more
Indoor:	Yes
Outdoor:	Yes
Equipment:	None

How to play: Players hold hands and dance around in a circle doing the actions as they chant the rhyme.

Rhyme: *“(Chorus) Here we go round the mulberry bush the mulberry bush the mulberry bush Here we go round the mulberry bush on a cold and frosty morning*

(Verse) This is the way we clap our hands clap our hands clap our hands This is the way we clap our hands on a cold and frosty morning.”

Repeat chorus and verse putting in different actions each time in the verse. Examples of actions include: Wash our face Comb our hair Eat our breakfast.

Running Games



Are you there Mrs Bear?

Age Group:	2+ (very good for younger children)
No. of Players:	2 or more
Indoor:	Yes
Outdoor:	Yes
Equipment:	None

How to play: One player is chosen to be “Mrs or Mr Bear”. Mrs or Mr Bear stands at the front with their back turned to the other players. The other players walk forward one at a time to say “knock knock who’s there - is it you Mrs/Mr Bear?” Mrs or Mr Bear then makes an animal sound.

If they pretend to be another animal like a pig dog or cat the player has to make the same sound. If they growl like a bear the other players all run away and the game becomes a game of chase until a player is caught. The caught player is now the new bear.

Corners

Age Group:	3+
No. of Players:	5 players
Indoor:	Yes
Outdoor:	Yes
Equipment:	Something to mark corners such as stones plastic place markers chalk or clothing

How to play: Mark out four corners. One player is chosen to be on - they stand in the middle. The other four stand one at each corner. The player who is on calls “**change corners**”. They must try to get into one of the corners while the other players are moving. The player left without a corner goes into the middle and starts again.

Duck Duck Goose

Age Group:	3+
No. of Players:	5 or more
Indoor:	Yes
Outdoor:	Yes
Equipment:	None

How to play: All players sit on the ground in a circle. One player is chosen to be on. This player walks around the outside of the circle saying “**duck duck duck duck goose**” while patting players on the head.

The player who is patted as “**goose**” chases the player who is on around the circle to try to catch them before they take the empty place in the circle. If the “**goose**” catches the player then the player stays on and starts again. If the “**goose**” doesn’t catch the player then the “**goose**” is on and starts again.

Fruit salad

Age Group:	3+
No. of Players:	5 or more
Indoor:	Yes
Outdoor:	Yes
Equipment:	Something to mark a circle such as stones plastic place markers chalk or clothing

How to play: Choose four fruit names - such as apples oranges banana pears. Each player is given a fruit name. One player is chosen to be on - they stand in the middle. The player who is on calls a fruit name and everyone with that name has to move places.

They must try to get into someones place while the other players are moving. The player left without a place is on next.

**This is a very good party game.*

***If there is enough space and chairs are available this can be played using chairs in a circle.*

Mother / Father May I?

Age Group:	3+
No. of Players:	2 or more
Indoor:	Yes
Outdoor:	Yes
Equipment:	None

How to play: One player is chosen to be the “Mother” or “Father” and they stand at the front. The other players line up about 10 meters away.

The “Mother” or “Father” calls each players name and asks them to take a number of special steps forward. The player must say “Mother may I” or “Father may I” before they move. The answer is always yes. If the player forgets to ask “Mother/Father may I” they cannot move. The first one to reach “Mother/Father” becomes the new “Mother/Father”.

Types of steps:

- * Giant step - one long step
- * Baby step - one foot in front of the other
- * Scissors step - jump once crossing your feet and jump again uncrossing your feet.
- * Banana step - lie down with your feet in the same spot as the top of your head - body bent like a banana.
- * Bunny step - one hop Umbrella step - twirl around Choo-choo step - like a train

Red lights

Age Group:	3+
No. of Players:	2 or more
Indoor:	Yes
Outdoor:	Yes
Equipment:	None

How to play: One player is chosen to be on and they stand at the front with their back to the others. The other players line up about 10 meters away.



The player who is on shouts - 1 2 3 green lights - while the other players move up behind them. The player who is on shouts “no laughing no talking no moving - red lights” and looks back quickly at the others. If a player is laughing talking or moving they are put back to the start.

The first player to tap the person that is on becomes the next person on.

Stuck in the mud

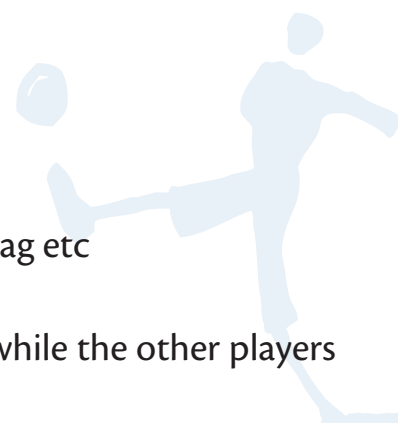
Age Group:	3+
No. of Players:	3 or more
Indoor:	Yes
Outdoor:	Yes
Equipment:	None

How to play: One player is chosen to be on. They chase the other players. If a player is caught they stand still with their arms held out “stuck in the mud”. Another player can release players who are “stuck in the mud” by running under their arms. The player who is on has to catch everybody before they win the game - all players have to be “stuck in the mud”.

Tip the can

Age Group:	5+
No. of Players:	4 or more
Indoor:	Yes
Outdoor:	Yes
Equipment:	An item to tip such as a can wall schoolbag etc

How to play: One player is chosen to be on. They count to thirty while the other players run to hide. When they reach thirty they go to find the others.



When they find a player hiding they have to run back to tip the can/wall/etc and say “**tip the can I see (name).**” If the player who is on catches everyone the first person caught is on next. A player who is hiding can win the game by touching the can and shouting “**tip the can I free all**”.

What time is it Mr Wolf?

Age Group:	3+
No. of Players:	2 or more
Indoor:	Yes
Outdoor:	Yes
Equipment:	None

How to play: One player is chosen to be “**Mr Wolf**” and stands with their back to the other players. The other players stand in a straight line about 10 meters away. The other players call out “**What time is it Mr Wolf?**”. **Mr Wolf** calls out a number between 1 and 12 o’clock. Whatever number “**Mr Wolf**” calls out all the players take that many steps forward.

At any time “**Mr Wolf**” can turn around and call “**dinner time**” and try to catch the other players. Then it becomes a game of catch until someone is caught. They then become “**Mr Wolf**” and the game begins again.

**2 players - an adult and younger child otherwise the more players the better.*



Skipping Games



All in together guys

Age Group:	7+
No. of Players:	3 or more
Indoor:	Yes
Outdoor:	Yes
Equipment:	A long rope

How to play: Two players hold the rope on at each end. The other players stand in a row to one side. The rope is turned and players jump in as the month of their birthday is called during the first rhyme. When everyone is in players jump out as the month of their birthday is called during the second rhyme.

Rhyme 1: *"All in together guys this is fine weather guys. When it is your birthday please jump in - january february march april may june july august september october november december"*

Rhyme 2: *"All out together guys this is fine weather guys. When it is your birthday please jump out - january february march april may june july august september october november december"*

Down in the valley

Age Group:	7+
No. of Players:	3 or more
Indoor:	Yes
Outdoor:	Yes
Equipment:	A long rope

How to play: Two players hold the rope on at each end. The other players stand in a row to one side. The rope is turned and each child takes a turn to jump in and skip until they miss a skip or reach 100 while the rhyme is chanted. The rope is turned faster and faster.

Rhyme: *"Down in the valley where the green grass grows There stands (childs name) hanging out the clothes Along comes (another childs name) and kisses her/him on the cheek How many kisses does she/he receive? 5..10..15..20...100"*

I'm a little bumping car

Age Group:	7+
No. of Players:	3 or more
Indoor:	Yes
Outdoor:	Yes
Equipment:	A long rope

How to play: Two players hold the rope on at each end. One player is in the centre jumping. As the player is skipping everyone chants the rhyme - when the rhyme says “**run around the corner**” the player skipping runs around one of the people swinging the rope and then jumps back in to stay skipping for the rest of the rhyme. The count keeps going until they miss a skip or reach 100. Everyone takes turns to swing the rope and jump.

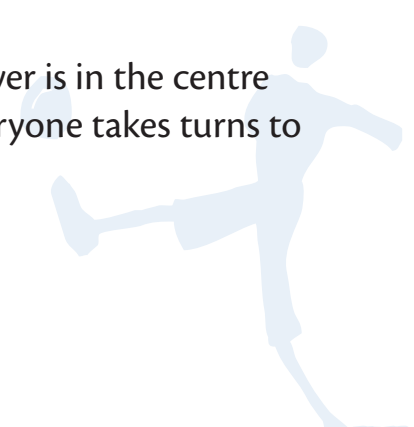
Rhyme: “*I am a little bumping car my number is 48 I ran around the corner and slammed on my breaks The policeman came and caught me and put me into jail How many years did I get? 12345...100*”

Jelly on a plate

Age Group:	5+
No. of Players:	3 or more
Indoor:	Yes
Outdoor:	Yes
Equipment:	A long rope

How to play: Two players hold the rope one at each end. One player is in the centre jumping. As the player is skipping everyone chants the rhyme. Everyone takes turns to swing the rope and jump.

Rhyme: “*Jelly on a plate, jelly on a plate
Wibble wobble wibble wobble
Jelly on a plate
Sausage in the pan, sausage in the pan*”



*Sizzle sizzle sizzle sizzle
Sausage in the pan."*

Postman

Age Group:	7+
No. of Players:	3 or more
Indoor:	Yes
Outdoor:	Yes
Equipment:	A long rope and a stone

How to play: Two players hold the rope on at each end. One player is in the centre jumping holding the stone in their hand. As the player is skipping everyone chants the rhyme. Everyone takes turns to swing the rope and jump.

Rhyme: *"Early in the morning at 6 o'clock I can hear the postman knock Postman postman drop your letter (let the stone drop) Postman postman pick it up (pick up the stone)"*

