

octopus

- **Toes and Nose Tag**
You are safe if are on one leg, holding your nose and toes
- **Bicycle Tag**
You are safe if you are on your back, pedalling.
- **Singing Tag**
Safe if you are singing.
- **Hop Tag**
All players must hop, changing feet is permitted.
- **Shadow Tag**
'It' has to stand on a players' shadow to tag them.
- **Everybody's it**
Everyone tags each other. When tagged, the players crouch down, but they can continue to tag players who run past. The winner is the last person left.
- **Hospital Tag**
The player who is tagged becomes "it" and has to hold their hand on the place on their body where they were tagged while they try to tag others.
- Choose an Octopus, who starts in the centre of the Ocean - a large space with clear edges.
- All other players are Fish. Fish line up at one edge of the ocean and the Octopus calls out "I am the Octopus, full of black potion - Let's see if you can cross my Ocean!"
- The Fish then try to swim (run) across the ocean and the Octopus tries to tag them. If tagged before reaching the other edge of the Ocean then they become Crabs on the ocean floor.
- Crabs must stay where they were tagged, leaving one foot planted. They can tag players running across the Ocean, Last Fish in is the new Octopus.
- Variation - split the Fish in half and have one lot of Fish running across, using the other 2 edges of the Ocean. Alternate the 2 groups running across until the groups get smaller, then both can run at once.

Tag games

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Hunt the Slipper

A GUESSING GAME THAT'S GOOD FOR WINDING DOWN.

- All but one of the players sits in a circle. The remaining player sits in the middle with eyes closed.
- The players chant the following words: "Cobbler, Cobbler, mend your shoe. Have it done by half past two." During this chant the children pass a shoe around the circle behind their backs.
- The centre player then chants Cobbler, Cobbler, tell me true. Which of you has got my shoe?" When the last word is chanted the circle stop passing the shoe and the player who has it makes sure it is hidden behind their back.
- The centre player opens their eyes and has to guess who has the slipper just by looking at the players faces. If they fail, they change places with the person who holds the slipper.
- ANOTHER GAME LIKE THIS: "Who's Got The Cheese"

A SIMPLE CHASING GAME, THAT DOESN'T NEED MUCH SPACE AND KEEPS THE WHOLE GROUP INVOLVED.

- To begin, designate one player as the "Cat" and another as the "Mouse."
- The rest of the players hold hands and form a circle around the "Mouse," while the "Cat" remains outside the circle.
- The "Mouse" starts the game by darting outside the circle and around the players. The "Cat" must try to tag the "Mouse," while staying on the outside of the circle. The players may lift their arms over the "Mouse's" head in order to help him/her, since they usually sympathise with the mouse. Likewise they will try to block the "Cat."
- When the "Cat" finally tags the "Mouse," the "Mouse" becomes the new "Cat," the "Cat" joins the circle, and another player becomes the "Mouse."

Dragons Tail

- **THE HEAD OF THE DRAGON TRIES TO TAG THEIR TAIL.**
- Groups of 8-10 line up and hold on to the waist of the person in front.
- The back person tucks a band into their shorts/jersey/somewhere it is visible.
- The person at the front of the "Dragon" line chases its own tail - front person tries to snatch the tail from the last person.
- If the "Dragon" does catch its tail, the head person moves to the end and takes up the tail position.
- Repeat until each person has had a turn at being the tail.
- Variation: Each "Dragon" tries to catch the tail of another "Dragon"
- Tip - as it can get a bit rough, keep any older children in a separate group.
- ANOTHER GAME LIKE THIS: "Hungry Hawk."

Fruit Salad

LISTEN FOR YOUR FRUIT TO BE CALLED THEN RUSH TO YOUR PARTNERS SPOT.

- Players get into pairs and come up with the name of a fruit. Only one pair per fruit.
- The group sits around in a circle of chairs (not next to their partner), facing inwards with a single player standing in the middle.
- When the person in the middle calls out the name of a fruit, those two players must swap seats.
- Meanwhile the person in the middle will try to beat them to a chair and if successful becomes that fruit and the person left becomes the new caller.
- If "fruit salad" is called, everyone swaps seats.

For more games ideas visit our website

www.oscn.org.nz

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Rats and Rabbits

- **AN EASY CHASING GAME WHERE LISTENING IS ESSENTIAL.**
- Divide group into two equal teams and have them line up back to back. Mark a home line about 20 metres away from each team.
- One team are "Rats" and the other "Rabbits".
- When the leader calls "Rabbits" the "Rabbits" run to the safety of their home line while the "Rats" try to capture them.
- If tagged they join the other teams line.
- Both teams then return to the centre line.
- When the leader calls "Rats," the "Rats" run towards their home line, chased by the "Rabbits."
- Roll the R at the beginning of each word to add to the anticipation. To be tricky, call out another 'R' word like "Rhubarb".
- The game can end when one team has caught everyone or players need a rest.

OSCN's little book of Active Games for 5-6yrs



Games for Younger Players

These games tend to have easier rules and help build skills towards other games, while everyone has fun doing something together.

There is no reason older children can't play too, but for younger players, keep in mind these tips:

- **EVERYONE GETS A TURN.** Don't discourage the keen players but offer turns to quieter group members.
- **CO-OPERATION MORE THAN COMPETITION.** Focus on having fun together, more than finding winners. Don't make a big deal where there is a winner.
- **NO FAVOURITES.** Some kids naturally attract and gain more attention. Don't always pick them to be first or to be a special helper.
- **CLEAR BOUNDARIES.** Younger players will tend to play everywhere. If a boundary is needed you might need to make it more visual with cones or other colourful markers.
- **OLDER PLAYERS.** You don't have to exclude them, but remind them to keep the game fun for the younger ones.

LOOK FOR MORE GAMES HERE [WWW.OSCN.ORG.NZ/GAMES](http://www.oscn.org.nz/games)

Gate Keeper

THERE ARE THREE ACTIONS TO REMEMBER IN THIS CIRCLE RACE. A GOOD ONE FOR MIXED AGE TEAMS.

- All players stand in a circle. Sort players into teams of three with their neighbours.
- One player in each team is the gate keeper, another is the tunnel crawler, last is the bridge runner.
- Call either "gate", "tunnel" or "bridge" to signal which of three players races off from their spot, around the circle (all in same direction!)
- The other 2 players form themselves into either a gate, bridge or tunnel - matching who is racing.
- Gate - players stand facing, arms out touching
- Tunnel - in a line, legs apart
- Bridge - in a line on hand a knees.
- Runner must go through, or over, their team and into the centre to claim a bean bag waiting there.
- First team to claim three bean bags wins.

Transition Games

ANY TIME YOU NEED TO MOVE CHILDREN ON TO SOMETHING ELSE, MAKE IT FUN WITH A TRANSITION GAME.

- **Shush**
One person starts by putting finger to lips. When others see this they have to immediately copy. See who is last to notice
- **C3PO**
Like "Shush" but players turn into robot and move about in character, silently.
- **Tight Rope**
Have a line marked on the floor in tape, with a star marked at the start end. On the signal, players move from what they are doing to the "start" end of the tight rope and walk carefully along it. Have a staff member at the other end, ready to move walkers onto the next activity.
- **Shake It, Don't Break It.**
Announce this while tidying or getting ready for the next activity. Call a body part and everyone has to shake that part while continuing with what they are doing. Change body part as you like.

MORE TRANSITION GAMES AT [WWW.OSCN.ORG.NZ](http://www.oscn.org.nz)

Hungry Hawk

TEAMS WORK TOGETHER TO PROTECT THEIR CHICK.

- Sort into teams or 7-10 players. Teams form in lines with their hand on the shoulders of the player in front. Have plenty of space between teams..
- The front player is the Hen. The back player separates and comes to the front, facing the Hen - they are the Hawk. The other players are Chicks.
- On "go", the Hawk must try to tag the last Chick in their team's line. Other players move about to protect the last Chick.
- When tagged, the last Chick becomes the Hawk and the Hawk joins the front as the new Hen.

Guess What?

AN EASY, FIRST GUESSING GAME THAT MIGHT WORK BEST WITH GROUPS OF 10-12.

- One player goes away from their group. Then the group chooses a secret thing, easily visible.
- The player comes back and can ask up to 20 questions to try to guess the object - the group can only answer yes or no.

Who's Got the Cheese?

- Pick a mouse to stand with their back to the rest of the group counting to 20. One member of the group comes up and steals the "cheese", a small object near the mouse, then goes back to the group, keeping the cheese hidden.
- On "20" the mouse turns around and has 1 guess for who has the cheese. If they are right they swap places, otherwise the mouse has one more go. If they are wrong again, they pick a new mouse.

Run for Your Supper

- Players stand in a circle, with hands joined.
- One player is in and walks around the circle, choosing a pair of players by separating their hands and calling "run for your supper."
- These two players run in opposite directions around the circle and the first back slaps the hand of the player who picked them.
- The first player joins the circle and other is now in.

Squeak, Piggy Squeak!

- Sit players in chairs in a circle. Pick one player to be in the middle, blindfolded holding a small cushion.
- Turn them around a few times then help them find a lap to sit on - placing the cushion first.
- The blindfold player calls "squeak, piggy squeak!"
- The player they are sitting on makes a pig noise and the blindfold player tries to guess who it is.
- It's might be hard to guess, so to keep the game moving along, have the 2 players always swap roles unless the guess is right. If they guess right, the blindfold player can pick who to swap with.

Sinking Island

- Divide into 2 even teams, each with a same size blanket or mat.
- Start with each team all on their mat. Then get off the mat and fold it in half. Teams get back on.
- Repeat with the mat halving in size each round.
- See which team can survive the longest.

Rabbit Hunt

AN FAST-MOVING TAG WHERE PLAYERS SWAP OFTEN.

- Pick a "hunter" and a "rabbit" to start. All other players are in groups of three. 2 join hands around the 3rd who is a rabbit in their rabbit hole.
- The first rabbit runs away from the hunter, who is trying to tag them. They can trade places with any other rabbit in a hole. The first rabbit is then safe in that hole.
- Rabbits who have had a run should trade with one of the others in their three.
- If the hunter tags the rabbit they swap roles. Add an extra hunter for more action.

Blob Tag

- Start with one person in. Tagged players join hands with the tagger/s and keep chasing the others.
- Only the ends of the blob can tag. Players join on to the end that tagged them. Last player in starts the next blob.
- VARIATION - allow blobs of 6 or more to split in 2.

Drop the Handkerchief

IF DUCK, DUCK, GOOSE GETS OLD, TRY THIS FOR A CHANGE

- Players sit in a circle facing inwards. Leave enough space to run between players. One player is "it"
- "It" walks around outside the circle carrying with a handkerchief. "It" drops the handkerchief behind a player. Other players can't call out or give away where the handkerchief is. "It" keeps moving around the circle, back to their spot in the circle.
- As soon as the player discovers the handkerchief they get up and chase "it". [The chaser can go through the circle if they want.] If the chaser fails to tag "it" before "it" gets seated, then the chaser is now "it". Otherwise "it" goes again.
- If "it" gets home without the player finding the handkerchief at all, that player is now a dead fish (DF) and stands inside the circle. "It" goes again.
- DF can get back in the game in two ways. DF may snatch the handkerchief from behind a player before that player sees it, or a player behind whom the handkerchief has been dropped may toss it into the circle behind the dead fish. DF then picks up the handkerchief and chases "it."