

**MICHIGAN 4-H**



**Group-Building  
Ideas for  
4-H Club & Group  
Meetings**

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**MICHIGAN STATE  
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**4-H Youth Development  
Children, Youth and  
Family Programs**

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# Table of Contents

Introduction .....	1
What Is Recreation? .....	1
The Role of a Recreation Leader: To Lead or Entertain? .....	1
Suggestions for a Recreational Toolkit .....	2
Ideas for Splitting Up Into Groups .....	5
Get-Acquainted Activities .....	6
Club Meeting Ideas .....	8
Additional Resources.....	14
References .....	14



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# Introduction

An important part of building a strong 4-H club or group is making sure that each person knows everyone else in the group. Volunteers and members need to be able to call each other by name and they need to feel comfortable working and learning with each other. By incorporating recreation and group-building activities into meetings, you can accomplish both of these goals. This material will provide useful activities to help volunteers and members build a strong 4-H club or strengthen an already existing group. The material in this booklet was compiled from a variety of sources. Special thanks to Bonnie Malone and William Henderson, Ohio Extension, for their help in compiling some of these resources.

## What Is Recreation?

- Webster defines it as refreshment after toil.
- Recreation is participation. It is better to play a game than to watch one; better to sing than listen to a song; to paint a picture than to look at one.
- It is an activity which one chooses because of the personal enjoyment and satisfaction it brings.
- Good, wholesome fun is a great tonic for both mind and body. The success of our way of life is influenced by our happiness.

*Enjoy it whenever and wherever you can!*

## Why Do Energizers, Icebreakers and Recreation?

- Fun
- Build comfort
- Build trust
- Learn to work together
- Learn communication skills
- Tolerance
- Problem solving
- Teach patience
- Interaction

- To show commonalities
- Excitement
- Build community
- Adventure
- Build common goals
- For comic relief
- To develop leadership skills
- Wake up
- To get hyped up
- To equalize people

## More Than Just Fun and Games

As mentioned above, icebreakers, energizers and recreation should provide enjoyment and relaxation for all of the participants. They should also provide an opportunity to build group spirit and cooperation. All club meetings should include 15 to 20 minutes of group-building activities. Group building is an important “key” that can unlock some of the social barriers all people build around themselves for protection. It provides an “excuse” to enjoy learning, sharing, respecting and growing in life skills with the members of our 4-H clubs. Competition and “winning the game at all costs” should never take the place of playing hard, playing fair, building teamwork, having fun and respecting each other’s unique abilities.

Icebreakers, energizers and recreation, poorly done, can cause more harm than good. Poor activities tend to be unplanned, unsupervised and does not take into consideration personal feelings and differing levels of ability. Poor activities include games that are played simply to get people out of the way, exercises that let only the “strong” survive or hurt people physically and mentally.

## The Role of a Recreation Leader: To Lead or Entertain?

You may want to consider having an office of recreation leader for your 4-H club or group. A good recreation leader may be the most impor-

tant – and most difficult to find and train – officer a 4-H club can have. Building positive relationships between club members enhances the club members’ opportunities to work together, enjoy each other’s friendship and grow to their highest

potential. Choose recreation leaders with care, and provide them with opportunities to learn and grow in their planning and leadership skills and abilities.

## Steps for Being an Effective Recreation Leader

1. Plan something for those who arrive early.
2. Plan many different kinds of games.
3. Have everything ready ahead of time.
4. Plan twice as much as you think you will need.
5. Select activities in which everyone can participate.
6. Assemble the group before explaining the game.
7. Lose as little time as possible starting to play the game.
8. Give directions clearly, briefly and correctly.
9. Demonstrate how to do the activity.
10. Encourage the group.
11. Ask everyone to play but don’t force someone who absolutely does not want to participate.
12. Stop the game when everyone is having lots of fun. The next time they will be anxious to play.
13. Don’t try to get everyone to play the game exactly right. Sometimes it is fun to make mistakes.
14. Don’t drag out the game if the group is not enjoying it.
15. Enjoy the game yourself! The group is just like a “mirror.” If you are having fun leading, the group will have fun playing.

## Suggestions for a Recreational Toolkit

According to VanWinkle, Davis, Skubinna and Larwood (2002), every club or group can assemble a recreational toolkit of recreational equipment and games its members enjoy. Members or parents can donate or loan items to the toolkit which can be stored – depending on the size – in a box or an old suitcase. The following table lists items and possible activities and games linked to the items.

Item	Activities
Balloons	Bat-with-hands- or pass-under-chin relay; hold with knees and run; play soccer
Beanbags	Catch; play tag or keep away; relay races
Cans	Play golf
Inner Tubes	Crawl through; jump from; arm wrestle on; roll; over and under
Paddles	Play baseball; balance balls; bat balloons; fan ping pong balls; catch beanbags
Ping Pong Balls	Fan with – or balance on – paddles; play baseball; blow on table or along floor
Rope	Jump rope; pick up while jumping; hobble, foot-to-hand- or three-legged race; crawl through; tie ball on end; swing with bag; tug-of war
Sticks	Push or roll discs; push pennies; jump sticks; catch hoops

Other items you may wish to have in your toolkit are rubber balls, floppy frisbees, a rubber chicken and blindfolds

## Recycled Hosiery

Recycled nylons are something else you might consider for recreational activities. Sara Lee Hosiery/L'eggs™ Products manufacture hundreds of thousands of pantyhose they cannot sell because of inferior nylon, machine-caused grease stains, defective sewing and the like. You can receive a case (approximately 300) of recycled hosiery by writing to the company and enclosing a \$10 check. The case may include flawed nylons of differing sizes, colors and weights. To order a case, make a check payable to "Sara Lee Hosiery." Mark the check "For waste hosiery" and mail it to:  
Sara Lee Hosiery  
L'eggs Products  
1901 North Irby Street  
Florence, SC 29501-1501

### But What Do We Do With 300 Defective Nylons?

Good question. The following are some ideas for activities using waste hosiery.

#### Dye

Although you can leave your hosiery, as is, we recommend you dye them using standard fabric dye. Run them through the washing machine according to package directions. You can also fill up a five-gallon bucket with hot water, add the dye, stir, put in the nylons and let them soak overnight. In either case, rinse them well, and let them hang dry or put them in the dryer.

#### Balls

Roll four or five nylons into a ball. (If you have a lot of pantyhose, use the panty section or the toe pieces as stuffing.) Stretch the large end of one of the hose around the ball as you would roll up socks.

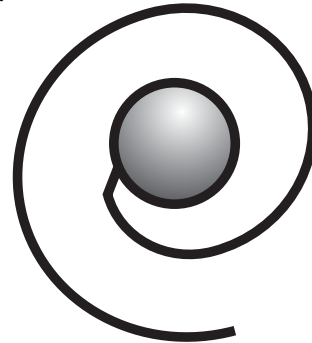
Stuff the ball about five inches up the end of a another nylon. Tie a knot just above the ball in the long part of the hose. Pull the long, open end of the nylon up your arm until you can grab the ball. Then pull the ball back through the hose on your

arm by pulling the hose off your arm while still holding the ball in your hand. Twist or tie another knot very tightly against the ball.

Repeat the process to get at least five layers of nylon around the ball. Tie and cut off the tail to make a round, soft ball.

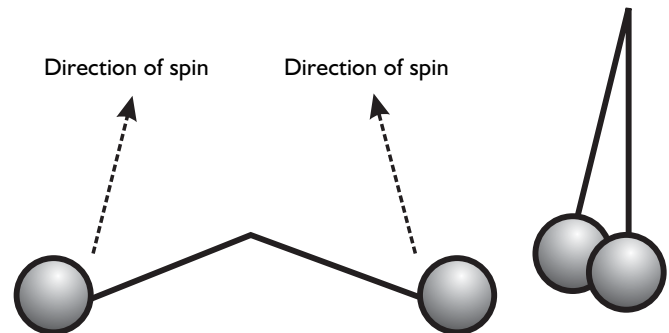
#### Comet Balls

Follow the directions for a ball but leave the tail on. You can leave the tail the same color or cut and tie lengths of different colors for variety and eye appeal.



#### Spinning Yo-Yo

Tie together two comet balls about 14 inches up the tails. Start one ball going in a counterclockwise circle. Flip the second ball in a clockwise direction.



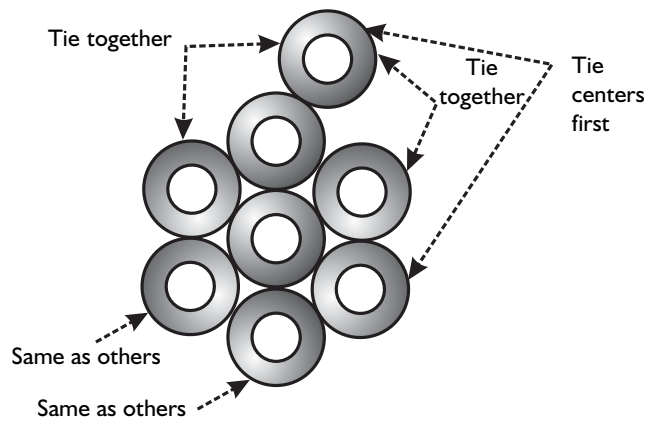
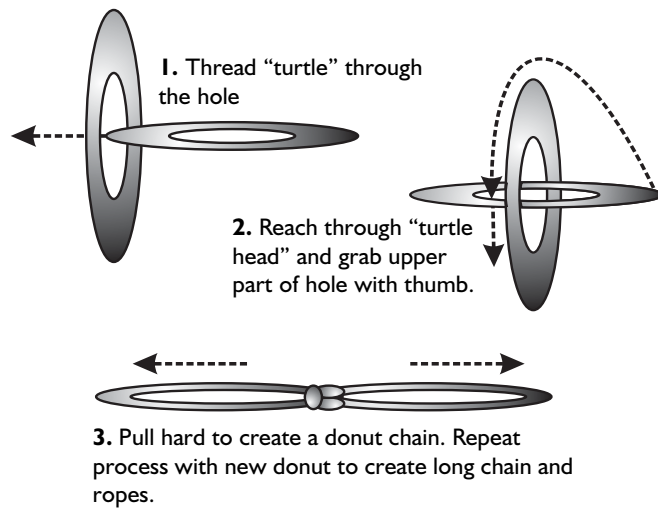
#### Bagels

Pull one nylon over your arm and double back to create two layers on your arm. (This helps prevent skin irritation. You could also wear long sleeves!)

Cut a hole for your thumb. Select another nylon (thigh-high hosiery is best if you have them) and start with the larger end. Pull the nylon up your arm over the skin protector until the full length of hose is rolled into the shape of a bagel.

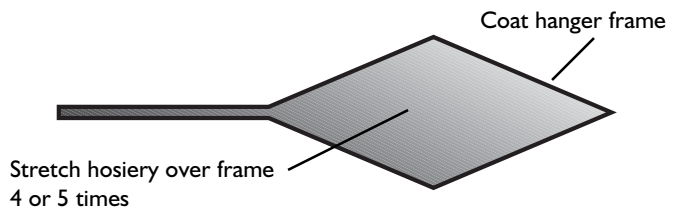
## Rope

Loop several bagels together as illustrated.



## Rackets

Stretch a nylon over a coat hanger. Double over the hose as you did for a ball. Twist the nylon at the bottom of the hanger and pull the long open end back over the hanger. Repeat the process several times to get a strong "racket" face. Finish with the long end of the nylon down by the handle. Wrap the handle tightly with hose. Stretch out the coat hanger to create a racket.

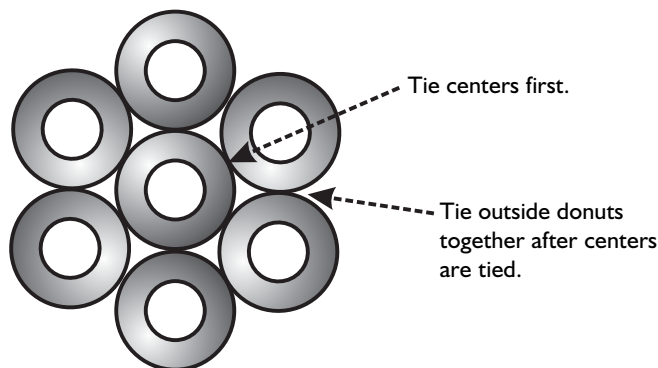


## Flying Disks

Connect seven bagels together as illustrated. Cut loops of hose about two inches wide to use as a tie cord. Tie the rings to each other with square knots. Tie the outside rings to the inside ring. Then tie the outside rings to each other. If you are concerned with appearance, place all rings in the same direction (i.e., seams on the same side).

## Single Geo-Ball

Combine two flying disks to create a geo-ball. Put a balloon into the center and blow up the balloon **or** fill the inside with packing foam.



## Double Geo-Ball

Add an additional ring to any outside ring as illustrated. Tie all the outside rings to this extra ring. You may fill it with foam or a balloon.

## Finger Weaving

Cut lots of loops from a nylon (think of the nylon as a loaf of bread and cut slices from it). Or you can purchase a bag of nylon loops cut for potholders.

Loop one around your little finger: twist a half turn and loop over your ring finger. Do **not** put a loop over your thumb. Repeat with another loop. Turn your palm down and pull the first piece over the second piece and off your hand. Initially, this will look rather odd!

Turn your palm up and use the first strand (the middle finger loop) as the "puller" and pull snug. Repeat over and over.

The long chains that you get can be stitched into floor mats, bracelets, hats or whatever you can think of!

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# Ideas for Splitting Up Into Groups

Sometimes it is necessary to split a large group into smaller groups. It is okay to count off but sometimes it is more to use less traditional methods such as those suggested below. If you use the ideas in the follow list, you may have to adjust players after the initial splits assemble.

- Have everyone fold their arms, clasp their hands together or – if sitting – cross their legs or ankles. Those whose left arm, left thumb, left leg or left ankle is on top comprise one group. The second group is made up of those whose right arm, thumb, leg or ankle is on top.
- Have everyone hold up one or two fingers (or up to however many groups you are forming). Those with the same number of fingers up are in the same group.

- Have everyone with the same shoe size get into a group. Combine groups to get the number and size of groups desired.
- Give everyone a penny. Have them flip the coin. Those who coins landed on heads are one group. Tails are the other.
- Hold up a glass that is filled halfway with water. Those who think the glass is half full form one group. Those who think the glass is half empty form another group.
- Split months of the year up into the number of groups desired. Everyone born in those months form the group.

If four groups are desired, you may split into two groups using one technique and then split each of those groups again using another technique.

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# Get-Acquainted Activities

## Make Name Tags

Provide index cards, markers, wallpaper sample books, scissors and safety pins. Have everyone make a personalized name tag (or name placard) as they arrive.

## Toss-a-Name Game

Have everyone make a circle. Toss a ball around the circle, person by person, with everyone saying their own name. When the ball comes back to you, say someone's name across the circle and toss them the ball. The person you tossed the ball to says someone's name across the circle and tosses the ball to them. (Make sure that no one is left out.) After everyone is fairly familiar with names, add a second ball and then another. **Note:** Balls must be tossed and not “zinged.”

## Imaginary Ball Toss

This is similar to the “Toss-a-Name” game except that the ball is imaginary. Therefore, the ball can change weight and shape while it is tossed around.

The person with the ball explains what kind of ball (e.g., helium balloon, bowling ball, football, a square ball, one that weighs 25 pounds) it is when he or she says someone's name and “tosses” it. Everyone must use imagination and accept each person's interpretation of how the “ball” tosses or is caught.

## 5-Minute Interview

Have each member and group leader pair up with someone they don't know. One member of the pair interviews the other for 2½ minutes and then the interviewer and interviewee switch. Have each pair take turns introducing one another to the rest of the group.

## Introductions

Pretend you are hosting a party where no one knows anyone else. Have everyone standing in no particular order. In a party spirit, walk up to one of your “guests” and introduce yourself by name. For example:

- “Hi, I’m Karly. What’s your name? Gabrielle? Hi, Gabrielle, glad to meet you. Come on, there’s someone I want you to meet.” You then take Gabrielle to meet another “guest.”
- “Hi, what’s your name? Paul? Hi, Paul; this is Gabrielle. Gabrielle, this is Paul.” Gabrielle and Paul play it up. They smile, shake hands and say “Glad to meet you.”
- Try to “introduce” everyone in three minutes.

## Name Roulette

Divide those present into two equal groups. Have each group form a circle, facing in. Move the two circles so they are close together. Tell one circle that at the word “go,” they will rotate clockwise, and tell the other circle to rotate counterclockwise. Tell each group that they are to stop rotating when you say “stop.” Start the groups rotating and when you say stop, say “look” to the two people who are standing back to back. Those two people spin around and the first to say the proper name of the other wins that person for their circle. (You may use a quick on-and-off boom box and turn the music on and off for the “go” and “stop” commands. Keep playing until there’s only one circle.

## Get With the Beat

Assemble the group into a big circle. Say your name with a motion for each syllable. The entire group then says your name with the motions. The next person says their name with a motion for each syllable. The entire group says your name with the motions, then the second person’s name with the motions. Continue around the circle.

## Backwards Introductions

Standing or sitting in a big circle, announce yourself by saying your first and last names backwards. Then ask each person, when ready, to introduce himself or herself to the group. Don’t analyze anyone’s interpretation of their backwards name pronunciations. Some people may need a paper and pencil to visualize their name backwards.

## Introductory Adjectives

Sit or stand in a circle. Each person introduces himself or herself with two adjectives that de-

scribe them with the same first letters as their first and last names. For example, “Hi, my name is Caitlin North and I am creative and nice.”

## Bumpity Bump Bump

You need to know that saying “bumpity bump bump” rapidly takes between .6 seconds and .645 seconds (the average is .623).

Assemble the group in a big circle with yourself in the middle. Point decisively to one of the people in the circle and say that person’s first name with conviction. Follow the statement of their name immediately with the exclamation “bumpity bump bump.” The person you pointed to and named must respond by saying the first name of the person to their left before you finish saying “bumpity bump bump.” If the person named flubs the name or completely forgets, his or she will take your place in the center and try to trap someone else.

If the person in the center says “right” before pointing to someone and saying his or her name, then the person who is pointed to must name the person to his or her right.

## Peek-a-Who

Split the group into two teams. Have two people hold up a blanket between the two groups so that neither group can see the other. Each group quietly picks one person who scoots to the center of the blanket. On the count of three, the holders drop the blanket and the two people in the center try to be the first to identify the other person. Whichever of the two people says the other’s name first gets that person to their side. The process is repeated until there is only one group. Be sure to rotate blanket holders or else use leaders as holders.

## Name Tag

With the group standing in no particular order, have each person close their eyes and put up their hands to protect their faces. Have them slowly mill around until you say “stop” but keep their eyes shut. You will say someone’s name and tap them on the shoulder. That person will open his or her eyes, say someone else’s name and tap that per-



son on the shoulder. Each player sits down after tapping and identifying the next person. Before you begin, tell the group that you will time them. (Time stops when the last person is identified.) The game may be replayed right away or it may be replayed at the next meeting. Either way, the group should attempt to better their time when they play again.

## **Name by Name**

Assemble the group in a big circle. Everyone says their name once, loudly. Then without talking or using props or signals, the group is to arrange itself around the circle in alphabetical order, starting with “A” at your space and going clockwise. Once the group has moved and the circle is reformed, round one ends. Test the group by having all the names said again. If people are out of sequence and corrections need to be made, allow people to move a second time – again with no speaking. Another test ends round two. The challenge is to form the alphabetical circle in the fewest number of rounds.

## **Hustle Bustle**

Assemble the group in a big circle. Explain that you will say your own name so that everyone can hear. Then the person to your left will say their own name, continuing around the circle. Repeat the sequence but this time, use a stopwatch. Repeat the sequence again, trying to beat the previous time. Give the group a few minutes to discuss among themselves what techniques could be used to bring down their time. After their discussion, ask the group to suggest realistic goals for their ultimate lowest time.

Repeat the “name your own name” sequence clockwise three or four times to get the group’s lowest time. Divide the group into two groups. Go around the two circles in the same manner with Group A going in a clockwise direction and Group B in a counterclockwise direction. Then pit

clockwise “Group A” against counterclockwise “Group B” to try to beat the established record. Do the “name your own name” sequence counterclockwise (to your right) several times to see if Group B can meet or beat Group A’s record time.

## **That’s My Name**

Divide the group into equal teams. Line the teams up across the room from a table on which there is a stack of blank papers and a marker for each team.

On “go,” the first player on each team runs to the table, prints his or her name on a piece of paper and runs back to their team holding the piece of paper. The player holds up the paper and the team shouts out all of the letters in the name. The named player jumps up for every consonant shouted and squats for each vowel shouted. When the team is finished shouting the person’s name, he or she moves to the back of the line and the next player repeats the sequence. When the last player for a team has jumped and squatted to accompany their shouted name, all of the team members, at the same time, shout out their own names and then they sit down.

## **Name Bingo**

Give each person a slip of paper, and a pen or pencil. Have them write their name on the paper and drop the paper, unfolded, into a basket. Have them keep their writing instruments. Give each player two blank bingo cards. Have them write their names in the center squares. Players circulate and have other members and leaders write their names in other squares and vice versa. No one may have their name in more than one square. Play bingo with the top card. When a name is drawn, that player waves and says, “Hi, I’m (name).” Players cross out names on the cards as they are called and stand up after bingo. Play until everyone is standing. Sit down and repeat with the bottom card.

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# Club Meeting Ideas

## Birthday Line Up

Line up according to your birthday. Get the entire group to line up according to their birthday, January to your right in a straight line to December to your left. No one can say a word. Each person must communicate in other ways. After the group is lined up, have them give their birthdays. Then have the groups prepare a cheer for their month.

## Human Knot

Divide the group into teams of at least seven people each. Each team forms a tight circle. Each member of the team should reach one hand across the circle to join hands with someone else on their team. Once joined, they should do the same with their remaining free hand. Be certain each person has the hands of different team members. Once this is done – without letting go of hands – they work as a team to undo the knot. When they finish, they should be standing, hand in hand, in a circle again.

## Bloop

Divide the children into groups of six or eight people and have them disperse so that each group has space to work, and they are not too close to another group. **Holding hands throughout the entire activity**, the group's goal is to keep a balloon in the air (for 21 consecutive hits, if possible) using only:

- Heads
- Head and shoulders
- Hands (or heads and hands)
- Knees and feet.

## I Love You, Honey, But I Just Can't Smile

"It" is in the center of a circle. He or she goes to a person in the circle and asks three times, "Do you love me, honey?" The person asked must respond three times, "Yes, I love you, honey, but I just can't

smile." If the person responding laughs, he or she becomes "It."

## Balloon Train

Split the group into teams with even numbers on each team. This is a relay race-type event. You will need a starting line and cones or chairs that the teams need to move around on their way back to the starting line. Members will blow up balloons that will be used as spacers between themselves and the persons in front of them.

On the "go" command, the teams move ahead, keeping the balloons positioned between themselves. (Team members may place their hands at their sides, on each others' shoulders or waists but may not hold the balloon in place with their hands.) If a balloon drops, the whole train must stop, reposition and then continue.

What were some of the difficulties playing this game? Was it better to try and go fast or slow? How did you know if your teammates behind you were having trouble?

## Group Juggling

This is an outstanding way to work on cooperative behavior and it is an easy exercise to teach. Begin by forming circles of 8 to 15 people. (The number of people is not critical.) Use soft kinds of balls (e.g., sock balls, tennis balls, trash balls, foam balls, newspaper balls). Select a leader to start tossing a ball. Each person tosses the ball to one person, *without repeating people, remembering who they tossed the ball to*, until the final person in the circle tosses the ball back to the one who started the action.

## Are You Really Looking at Me "Keen Eyes"?

Two equal teams stand facing each other several yards apart. One team is "It" and its members carefully observe the appearance of the players opposite them (e.g., the way the team opposite is dressed, their hair is combed, etc.). At a signal

from the leader, the “It” team turns around. Each member of the other team changes something about their appearance (e.g., they may untie shoelaces, change the part in their hair, etc.). When the signal is given, the “It” team turns around. Each of the “It” members has 30 seconds to try to find out what change the player opposite has made. If he or she guesses the change correctly, a point is given to the “It” team. Teams switch and repeat as above.

## Wink

A circle of chairs is set up with one more chair than there are players. The group is divided into two. Half of the players are seated in the chairs and the other half of the participants stand behind the chairs, with their hands on top of the chair. The game’s object is for the person standing behind the empty chair to fill it with one of the seated players. This is done by giving a sly wink to one of the seated players. The job of the person receiving the wink is to get away by jumping quickly out of the chair, before the person behind him or her sees the wink. The person behind the chair has the job of keeping the seat filled by catching the escaping person by the shoulders. Large circles can have two empty seats to add to the action.

## Do You Know Your Neighbor?

This game is used to create energy among the group, mix up the seating arrangement, and to exchange names and discover commonalities between group members. It is a higher-risk game that requires more energy. The game also includes the need to discuss personal safety. Some of the rules include:

- Make sure you have supportive shoes on with laces securely tied or remove shoes and place under your chair.
- When running from chair to chair, be certain to be backside first – **no** diving for a chair. That is very unsafe.
- Be nice and have fun; it’s only a game!

Organize your group in a circle with each person (except you) sitting in a chair. (Be sure there is one less chair than the number of participants.) Begin the activity standing in the middle of the circle.

Discuss the rules listed above and the reasons for the rules. Introduce yourself and approach one person. Ask that person, “**Do you know your neighbors?**” If the selected person knows his neighbors in the group, he or she will introduce them to the group. However, if the selected person does not know someone’s name, he or she will find out the name and introduce the person to the group.

After the group has been introduced, you will ask the selected person, “**Who would you like to know?**” The selected person will say he or she would “like to know someone who is **and state a characteristic**. For example:

- “I would like to know everyone who has more than one sibling.” **or**
- “I would like to know everyone who is in the sheep project.” **or**
- “I would like to know everyone who has a pet.”

Once the selected person has stated the characteristic of someone he or she would like to know, everyone with that characteristic will get up from their seat and try to find a vacant chair. It’s chaos! (Be certain you do not sit next to the same people as before.)

The person left standing in the middle continues the game. To add surprise to the game, every so often when the selected person is asked “**Who would you like to know?**,” he or she may reply, “**Everyone!**” Then, the entire group needs to relocate.

## The Big Wind Blows

(another version of “Do You Know Your Neighbor?”)

Have all of the people make a circle with their chairs. Take away the chair of one person and have that person stand in the center of the circle. The person without a chair is “It.” That person is instructed to say: “The big wind blows on who and state a characteristic. For example:

- “The big wind blows on people with blond hair.” **or**
- “The big wind blows on people who are wearing shorts.” **or**

- The big wind blows on people who took a shower this morning.”

After the command is made, all the people who have the given characteristic must get up and find a new seat. The person who does not get a seat becomes “It” and the process starts over. The big wind can also blow on “everyone” in which case the entire group needs to find a new seat.

## Zapper

Have the group sit on the floor. Have everyone put their heads down and close their eyes. The facilitator walks among the group and touches one of the player on the head while walking by. (The person whose head was touched will be the “Zapper.”)

After a short time, all participants are instructed to open their eyes, stand up, move around the room and shake hands with everyone in the group. When the “Zapper” shakes hands, he or she can zap people by scratching their palms while shaking their hands. Someone whose hand is scratched must count to 15 silently and then use his or her best acting to skills to pretend to have been zapped by lightning (i.e., drop to the floor and stay there until the game is over).

Play continues. At any time, a player who has not been zapped can stop the game and make an accusation naming the “Zapper.” If the accusation is correct, the game is over. However, if the accuser is wrong, he or she must act zapped.

## Pair Tag

This is a great game for groups of 40 or more. It works well inside and all right outside, if it is confined to a relatively small area. Divide the total group into groups of four and then divide each group of four into teams of two. Each team of two will play against the other team of two in the group. Team members hold hands throughout the play of the game.

While one of the two teams in each group closes its eyes for a count of 20, the second of the two teams “disappears” into the larger group. At the completion of the count of 20, the first team

opens its eyes and begins a search for the second team. When the searching team finds the hiding team, it tags the hiding team and the roles reverse.

Although this sounds easy, with dozens of teams hiding and dozens of teams searching, it becomes quite exciting. The only thing to hid behind is other people hiding and searching. Keeping the game confined to a relatively small area keeps running speeds low and adds to the excitement as those searching and hiding keep low in order to remain out of sight.

## Gotcha!

Hand out pencils and the “Gotcha” sheets (see next page). Everyone has 12 minutes to complete the items on the worksheet. As each person completes a task, the person who helped with the task must sign the sheet. Each person can only help with one item. This is good for people who don’t know each other very well.

**WORKSHEET:**

# Gotcha!

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Signature of Person(s) Who Assisted You</b>
Untie someone's shoe and then tie it again.	
Count out loud (as loud as you can) as you do 10 jumping jacks with a partner.	
Find someone who is left handed.	
Have someone do five push ups for you.	
Get someone to sing a TV commercial.	
Do your very <b>best</b> impersonation of a cow, pig or chicken for someone.	
Find someone whose birthday is the same month as yours.	
<b>On the back of this sheet</b> , get six different people to give you their autographs and list their places of birth.	
Find someone whose eyes are a different color than yours.	
Form a circle with four other people and sing one verse of "Row, Row, Row Your Boat."	
Get a penny from someone.	
Have a group hug with six people.	

## **M & M™ Game (for a mixed group)**

This game requires a fun-size pack of M & M's™ for each participant and a list of directions for each team. To begin, the players open their packages of M & M's™. Without eating the candy, the participants group them by color. Beginning with one color, the participants answer the questions on the chart below. Each player must give a number of answers that equal the number of colors in their package. For example, if they have three blue candies, they must give three answers to the "blue question." After you know more about your group, eat and enjoy your M & M's™!

- Blue: What are your favorite hobbies? **or** What you like to do in your "free" time?
- Brown: What are your good qualities that help you to be the special person you are?
- Green: What do you like about 4-H?
- Orange: What are your favorite TV shows, movies or books?
- Red: What is your favorite food?
- Yellow: What is your favorite vacation spot? **or** Where would you like to visit?

## **M & M™ Game (for young people)**

Using the same instructions given for the mixed group, each player responds to the following questions:

- Blue: What is a quality you have (e.g., kind, organized)?
- Brown: What classes or subjects are you taking in school?
- Green: What do you like about 4-H?
- Orange: What sports do you enjoy?
- Red: What is a state or city you have visited?
- Yellow: What are your favorite foods?

## **M & M™ Game (for adults)**

Using the same instructions given for the mixed group, each player responds to the following questions:

- Blue: What is an activity you would like to try?
- Brown: What vacations have you taken or would you like to take?

- Green: What do you like about 4-H?
- Orange: What are your family's favorite 4-H project areas?
- Red: What are your favorite sports teams?
- Yellow: What are your favorite hobbies?

## **M & M™ Arm Wrestling**

The object of this game is cooperation. Bags of M & M™ candies are only the equipment needed.

Participants are asked to get into pairs, and to lay on the floor on their stomachs, face to face in arm wrestling position. The following instructions are given:

"Every time you pin the hand of your partner, you get an M & M™. Every time your partner pins your hand, he or she gets an M & M™."

Give the group about 15 seconds to see how many times the partners can pin each other's hand. Ask for counts on the number of "pins" each team got. Pass out the M & M's™. It is usually not necessary to carefully count the number of M & M's™ each pair receives.

Most of the time, the number of "pins" will be very small, six or less. If some numbers are high, note those. Ask the pairs if they think they could improve on their numbers. How could they win more candy?

Give the pairs another 15 seconds and see if some have figured out how to cooperate. There should be significant increases in scores. However, some pairs will not be able to stop competing and will not figure out how to cooperate.

# Additional Resources

The publications listed below are additional resources you may wish to use for further ideas.

Bendaly, L. (2000). *Brain teasers for team leaders*. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Limited.

Burroughs, T. S. (1995). *Super fun kid's games*. Stamford, CT: Longmeadow Press.

Epstein, R. (2001). *The big book of motivation games*. Chicago: McGraw-Hill.

Fluegelman, A. (1976). *The new games book*. Garden City, NY: Dolphin Doubleday & Co.

Heermann, B. (1997). *Building team spirit: Activities for inspiring and energizing teams*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Orlick, T. (1982). *Second cooperative sports and games book*. New York: Pantheon Books.

Pearse, J., McCutcheon, J., & Loughton, B. (1989). *Clouds on the clothesline and 200 other great games*. Huntsville, Ontario, Canada: Camp Tawingo Publications.

Rhonke, K., Grout, J., & Project Adventure, Inc. (1998). *Back pocket adventure*. Needham Heights, MA: Simon & Schuster Custom Publishing Company.

Rhonke, K., & Butler, S. (1996). *Quicksilver: Adventure games, initiative problems, trust activities and a guide to effective leadership*. Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company.

Rhonke, K. (1994). *The bottomless bag again: This one too*. Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company.

Rhonke, K. (1991). *The bottomless bag*. Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company.

Rhonke, K. (1984). *Silver bullets*. Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company.

Ukens, L. L. (2000). *Energize your audience: 75 quick activities that get them started . . . and keep them going*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass/Pfeiffer.

VanGundy, A. (Ed.). (1998). *101 great games & activities*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass/Pfeiffer.

Weinstein, M., & Goodman, J. (1983). *Playfair: Everybody's guide to noncompetitive play*. San Luis Obispo, CA: Impact Publishers, Inc.

## Reference

VanWinkle, R., Davis, W., Skubinna, T., & Larwood, L. (2002). *Active teaching – active learning: Teaching techniques and tools*. Corvallis: Oregon State University, Extension Service.

