

# Outdoor Games



## Red-Light, Yellow-Light, Green-Light, Stop (good for preschoolers)

What you need:

Nothing

\*Need several players

What to do:

In this game, one person plays the "stop light" and the rest try to touch him/her (if you are playing with young children, it may be best for you or another adult to be the stop light). At the start, all the players form a line about 15 feet away from the stop light. The stop light faces away from the line of players and says "green light". At this point the players are allowed to move towards the stoplight. At any point, the stop light may say "red light!" and turn around. If any of the players are caught moving after this has occurred, they are out. Play resumes when the stop light turns back around and says "green light". The stop light wins if all the players are out before anyone is able to touch him/her. Otherwise, the first player to touch the stop light wins the game and earns the right to be "stop light" for the next game.

## Mother May I (good for preschoolers)

What you need:

Nothing

\*Best to play with several players

What to do:

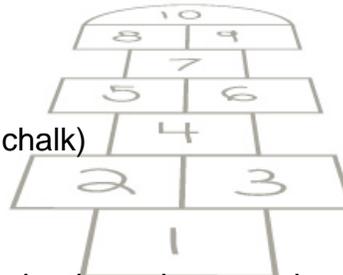
One child serves as the *Mother* (for young children it may be best for you or another adult to be the mother). The other players line up and face the *Mother* about 20 feet away. Children take turns asking mother what they can do. For example, "Mother may I take five giant steps." then the mother says, "Yes, you may," or say "No" but tells the child what they can do (example: five baby steps). Whoever makes it to Mother first becomes Mother for the next round. In the excitement of the game, someone is bound to take their steps without asking "Mother, may I?" When that happens, Mother reminds the player of his or her manners and the player is sent back to the beginning of the line.

## Hopscotch (good for preschoolers)

What you need:

Painted hopscotch pattern (or drawn with chalk)

Bean bag or rock to mark spot



What to do:

Children must take turns throwing their marker in each square in sequential order (1, then 2). Children must hop over the square where the marker is (this may require a hop on one foot or jumping over a square).



## **"Hot Potato"**

Good for children that are having a hard time letting go of things!

What you need:

Medium size playground ball (to be the "hot potato")

CD player or anything to that plays music

\*need at least a few players

What to do:

The children get in a circle, and the music starts. As the music plays, players must pass the "hot potato" around. Players should pass it as quickly as possible. The player caught holding the "hot potato" when the music stops is out, and the game begins again. It is best for your or another adult to be in charge of starting and stopping the music.

\*If you don't have anything to play the music, you can sing! "The hot potato goes round and round, to pass it quickly you are bound, if you're the one to hold it last, then for you the game is past, and you...are....out."

## **Outside Animals**

What you need:

Open space to run, hop and slither

What to do:

Have the children stand in a line facing the way you will run. Then explain that they will go down and come back as an animal. Tell the children a name of an animal and see if they know how it gets from one place to another. If they don't know help them. Ex: bunny - hops, tiger - on all fours, and snakes - slithers.

## **Nature Walk & Collage**

What you need:

Paper Bags

A place to walk that is rich in nature (Like City Park or Audubon park)

Paper

Glue

Crayons (and other tools for creativity that the children desire)

What to do:

Go on a nature walk. Allow the your child (or a group of children) to pick up objects from nature such as rocks, bark, grass, leaves, flowers, nuts etc., and put them into their bags. As you walk along, encourage your child (or children) to talk about what they see and hear in nature. When you get home, set out the art tools and let them create a collage of their nature walk.

## Nature Rubbing Books

What you need:

Lightweight paper (recycled copy paper works well)  
old crayons without the wrappers

What to do:

Encourage your child to place paper over outdoor objects and areas (ex. sidewalks, tree trunks, grass, exterior of buildings, fences et cetera.) and rub with crayons. Have your child arrange the rubbings in order from smoothest to roughest. You can label each rubbing with the proper source and bind together to create books.

## Simon Says (can also be played inside!)

What you need:

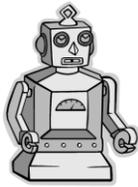
Nothing

\*best played with several players

What to do:

Have the players stand in line, and with the phrase "Simon Says", ask them to do something. Such as: "Simon Says stand on one foot", or "Simon Says touch your nose". Have fun with this, you'll get many laughs with this game!! Now simply ask the children to do a move without saying Simon Says. Did someone move, and Simon didn't say? "Oops" they must sit out! This continues until only one child is left standing, he or she is the winner.

## Robots



What you need:

None

What to do:

Take your children (or child) to an area with lots of room. Have them pretend to be robots. Program your robots" to go straight when they hear one beep, turn around when they hear two beeps and stop when they hear three beeps. Beep once to start your robots. Have them continue walking straight until they hear two or three beeps. Instruct them to simply walk in place if they are in danger of running into someone or something. Beep twice to have them turn around or three time to stop. Encourage them to listen carefully for the beeps.

\*As your children become more skilled, add more "programming," such as turning right when they hear one whistle, turning left when they hear three clasps and so on.

## Duck, Duck, Goose

What you need:  
Nothing



What to do:

Gather everyone around in a circle and sit down. Have one child or adult be the Duck. Walk around the circle repeating Duck-Duck-Duck while tapping each person individually on the head. When you have someone in your sights to be the goose, you tap that person on the head and say Goose!! This person must jump up and try to catch the Duck, while running around the circle. When caught, this person now sits and the process repeats until everyone is bored or tired!

## Shadow Tracing

What you need:  
Sidewalk Chalk

What to do:

On a sunny day have your child pick a position to stand in. Have them keep that pose as you trace their shadow. Allow them to color in their shadow when you are finished tracing. They can draw their face and clothes or color any design they wish!

## Rope Game

What you need:  
Long rope (could be a jump rope)



What to do:

Lay a long rope in a zigzag pattern in the grass or on your deck. See if your child can walk on the rope. Lay the rope in a straight line like a tightrope and have your child hold out his/her arms to balance as he/she walks. With the rope still lying straight, ask your child to think of how many ways he/she can go over it: walk across it, hop over it (on one or two feet), jump across it, crawl across it, or any other way he/she can think of.

## Bubble Run



What you need:  
Bubbles (be sure to check out the make your own bubbles page!)

What to do:

With some bubble solution, blow bubbles into the air and allow your child to chase and catch them. Give your child a turn to blow the bubbles and you can show him/her how to catch them.