

Do-it-yourself play equipment and games!

These equipment and game ideas can make boring days fun! Try them out in your home, early childhood service or school.

**1. Rolling wedge**

**Make your own:** Prop one side of a couch cushion up on some pillows

**Games to play with a rolling wedge:**

* Incorporate into an obstacle course: ask children to lie on their side and roll down the wedge or climb up it.

**2. Balls**

**Make your own:**

* Paper balls - scrunch pieces of newspaper or magazines into a ball and wrap masking tape around it firmly.
* Sock balls - firmly stuff old socks or stockings into a sock or cut off stocking. Tuck all loose ends inside the sock or stocking and sew the opening shut.
* Use balloons

**Games to play with balls:**

**Target practice**

* Cut simple shapes out of cardboard or plywood. These can be decorated using textas or paint.
* When attached to a fence or wall children can practice their aim and throw skills by throwing soft balls at the targets.
* To bring counting into the game, numbers could be drawn or painted on the target – children could keep a score. Velcro could also be applied to the target and felt balls used to ensure they stick.

**Underarm relay**

* Two relay courses are marked out with markers, chalk or tape, each with a starting line, a midway line and an end line as a turning point.
* Place a ball at the midway line.
* Children are put into groups of 3 or more and line up at a start line up at the starting line.
* On a signal the first child in each line runs to the turning point and back towards the team. At the midway line they need to stop and under arm throw the ball to the next child.
* As soon as the ball is caught the next child can begin the run carrying the ball with them and then throwing it to the next child from the midway line.

**Balloon Volley Ball**

* Place chairs in a line or mark a line with masking tape
* Attach a piece of string between the chairs.
* Children stand on opposite sides and use a blown up balloon as a volley ball.

**3. Bean Bags**

**Make your own:** these can be made in various shapes (square, circle, polygon) and sizes (10 cm square is a good starting point). Use a strong fabric such as denim. Fill the bag with dried beans, peas, bran or rice and sew them up tightly to avoid leaks.

**Games to play with bean bags:**

**Bean bag balance**

* Children balance beanbags on their heads and move around an area to music.
* To change the pace or action turn off the music and call out an action such as hopping, skipping or clapping.
* Restart the music and see if the children can keep the bean bag on their heads.
* Try mixing it up by asking children to balance their bean bag on their arm, their foot and on their back.

**Throlf**

* A bit like golf a course is established using targets and holes (use buckets, washing baskets, empty containers).
* A start line is made next to each target.
* Children can move around the course throwing their bean bag at a target or in a hole.
* Make this activity more fun by creating a flag out of paper or card board for each hole.

**4. Buckets**

**Make your own:** Use empty, clean ice-cream containers

**Games to play with buckets:**

* Aim and throw activities like Ball toss and *Throlf* (see above).

Other activities:

* Water the garden Wash your bike

**5. Parachute**

**Make your own:** Use an old bed sheet or blanket

**Games to play with parachutes:**

**Keep the ball up**

* Have children hold a section of the parachute.
* Throw a ball or a balloon on the parachute and ask the children to try and keep it up in the air by shaking and moving the parachute.

**Hurry and hide**

* Have children sit around the parachute.
* On the count of three ask children to pick up a section of the parachute as high as they can and run under.

**6. Potato Sacks**

**Make your own:** Use old pillow cases.

**Games to play with potato sacks:**

**Jumping jack**

* Encourage children to jump to music in their potato sacks.

**Jump races**

* Have children get into their sack and race one another to a finish line.

**7. Soccer Goals**

**Make your own:** Lay out markers (see below) to kick between or cut the front out of a large box and lay it on its side.

**Games to play with soccer goals:**

* Soccer!

**8. Goal Rings**

**Make your own:** Secure hula hoops with tape between the backs of two chairs or simply use an upright box with a hole cut out at the bottom of one side.

**Games to play with Goal rings:**

* Basketball.
* Aim and throw activities like Ball toss and *Throlf* (see above).

**9. Horse or motorbike sticks**

**Make your own:** Use pool noodles, cling-wrap cylinders or any long objects.

**Games to play with Horse sticks:**

* Have a horse or motorbike race. Set it up using masking tape on the floor indoors and chalk on concrete outdoors.
* Imaginary games: let children use their own imagination to create a horse or motor bike game.

**10. Markers or cones**

**Make your own:** For marking out a space use empty, cleaned ice-cream or yoghurt containers. Paint them to make them stand out more.

**Games to play with markers/cones:**

* Create an obstacle course
* A field for balloon volleyball (see above)
* Underarm relay (see above)

**Sharks and islands**

* Children can draw islands on paper or cardboard and place them on the floor.
* One person calls out ‘swim’ to the other children and they pretend to swim around the islands.
* When ‘shark!’ is called out the children must find an island to stand on. Those that don’t find an island are out and an island is removed.

**11. Skittles**

**Make your own:** Clean plastic bottles e.g. milk containers, water or drink bottles

**Games to play with skittles:**

**Ten pin bowling**

* Collect ten plastic bottles or milk cartons. For a creative activity paint and number them 1 to 10.
* Set them out on a flat surface. Stick a line of tape or draw a start point line with chalk to mark the bowling line.
* Children can use a tennis ball or larger rubber ball to bowl.
* Some sand or rice in each bottle will make them harder to knock down.

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This is a Healthy Tasmania initiative