

## What's The Time, Mr. Wolf?

### Equipment:

None

### Suitable for ages:

All. A good game for little children.

### How to play:

A leader is the "wolf". He stands at one end of the field, with his back to the other children, who are at the other end of the field.

The children will try to walk up to the wolf and touch him before they can be seen. If any child does this, they have won. The wolf can turn around when he wants – and everybody must stop moving. If the wolf sees anyone move, they must return to the end of the field and start again. Then the wolf turns his back again, and children can start moving again.

All the time, the children all call out "What's the time, Mr. Wolf?" The Wolf answers and calls out a time, e.g. "four o'clock!" The children then ask again. But when he wants to, the wolf can answer, "Dinner Time!" and then he will turn and chase the children back to the end of the field. If he catches one, that child is now the new "wolf", and the game starts again.

## A Few Words Explained

**"tag"** - in a chasing game, this means "touch"

**being "it"** - in a chasing game, this means you are the person doing the chasing.

# The Big Book Of Kids' Club Games

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These are all games we have tried in our own children's clubs. Send your own ideas or improvements to: [david@dw-perspective.org.uk](mailto:david@dw-perspective.org.uk), or to David Anderson, PO Box 170, 30100 Eldoret, Kenya. In the contents below, similar kinds of games are normally close to each other in the pages.

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## Non-Stop Cricket

### Equipment:

One soft ball (e.g. tennis ball), one bat, four sticks.

### Suitable for ages:

All

### How to play:

Place three sticks standing upwards in the ground together. These are called the "wicket". Then place the fourth stick about seven metres away in the ground.

Everybody gets one turn to bat. Everybody else stands in the field. When they are batting, the leader throws them the ball (gently). If they miss and the ball hits the wicket, they are "out" - they return to the field.

If they hit the ball, they must run around the fourth stick. The fielding team must get the ball back to the leader as quickly as possible. As soon as the leader receives it, he can throw it again towards the wicket. The batter has to try to run fast so that he will be back in time to hit it away before it hits his wicket! The game continues until the batter is out. (The batter is also out if the ball is directly caught off the bat).

## Head it / Catch it

### Equipment:

One football

### Suitable for ages:

All

### How to play:

Get all the children standing in a circle.

A leader goes round the circle, throwing the ball to each child in turn. He must also say "head it" or "catch it" (he chooses which).

If he says "head it", the child must catch it.

If he says "catch it", the child must head it.

If the child does the wrong thing, he is out and must sit down.

## Pass-Ball

### Equipment:

One football. Ribbons to mark the teams.

### Suitable for ages:

8 and above – this game can be rough.

### How to play:

Mark the ends of two lines at the each end of the field. (Posts are best – see if you can find some big sticks).

This is like “chair-ball”, except that:

- 1) You can move with the ball. (You can pick it up, kick it, throw it – anything you like).
- 2) You score by running over the line whilst holding the ball. (Throwing the ball over the line is not enough). There are no “goalies”.

The game starts with the referee (a leader) throwing the ball in the air. After each point, teams should return to stand on their lines.

Be careful – this game can be rough.

### Make it more fun:

If the ball gets stuck in between many people, the leader should stop the game and re-start it. If one team is winning easily, leaders can join the other team.

## Rounders

### Equipment:

One small, soft ball. 4 posts/sticks. All ages

### Suitable for ages:

### How to play:

Make two teams. One team is in the field; the other takes turns to bat.

A leader throws to the person batting (the “batter”). If they hit the ball (give them 3 attempts), they must try to run round the outside of the diamond, before the team in the field gets the ball to touch the final post in the diamond. If the batter runs all the way around, his team gets a point and he can try again – if not, he is out. When the whole team is out, the teams swap over.

### Make it more fun:

A proper game of rounders has many more rules, but there are too many to explain here. You can try to use the Internet (e.g. Google or Yahoo) to find out all the proper rules. Make sure nobody stands near the bat or they may get hurt.

## Instructions

The games in this book are for suitable for children's clubs, with children aged mostly from 5 to 12. Some are more suitable for the younger children; others are better for the older ones. Each game in this book gives you some advice about ages.

This book is just meant to be an introduction. You can learn some ideas from it, and then change and adapt them for your own club. Do not treat this book like the Bible – it is only a beginning to help you get started! You will learn over time which games suit your club better.

**Equipment:** These games do not need much equipment. Where something is needed, it is easy and cheap to make yourself. Many of the games need bean bags, ribbons or skittles. These can be made easily from material, beans and empty plastic bottles. Therefore, you can play these games on a very low budget. When we have played these games, the prizes are normally sweets for the winners. Where each game tells you its equipment, we have not mentioned the prizes each time.

**Good Order:** It is most important to have good order. If the children are allowed to cheat, or run around for no reason, then there will be chaos! Therefore, as well as the leader of the games, the other helpers should always be watching for good order and making sure cheating is penalised.

**Changing the games:** With lots of these games, you can make up your own ideas. You can keep score in the teams. You can run the game a few times and add up the points. You can keep the same teams between different games. You can introduce cheering and try to make the children enjoy the competition. Use your imagination! Younger children will enjoy just playing the game; older children will enjoy competition more.

**Teams:** Sometimes it is difficult to organise the children into teams. One way is to have some coloured ribbons, and just walk round giving each child a ribbon. Or, get them in a circle (call out, “1, 2 make a circle, 3, 4 a big circle” until everybody joins in). When they are in a circle, walk round the circle giving everybody a team (e.g. “lions, tigers, lions, tigers, lions...”).

**Organising:** One big mistake is if the adults who are not the game leaders say, “there is nothing for me to do – let me just watch!”. Children will often be moving out of their places, or getting confused. They always need help to keep in line, or to be ready for their turn. If all the adults are always watching closely for what needs doing (and not just leave it to one leader), the games will run much better.

## Tug Of War

### Equipment:

One long rope, three ribbons

### Suitable for ages:

All (put smaller ones at the front of the team)

### How to play:

Choose two teams of about equal size and strength.

Tie one ribbon in the middle of the rope. Tie the other two ribbons an equal distance either side, at least two metres.

Place two markers on the ground equally far from the middle of the rope. To begin, call out "Ready, take the strain, PULL!" When one team pulls the other team's first person past its marker, they have won the round.

### Make it more fun:

Cheer and chant. Add people (including leaders) to the teams to make them equal if one side wins easily. Play more than 1 round.

### Prevent cheating:

Do not let the teams pull before you have shouted "PULL!". Make sure the teams are lined up straight.

## Stuck in the Mud

### Equipment:

None

### Suitable for ages:

All ages (but very little ones may get hurt)

### How to play:

Choose one or more children to be "it" (a chaser). When you shout "go", these children need to try to "tag" (touch) as many children as they can.

When someone is tagged, they must stand still, with their legs and arms wide apart (like in an "X" shape). They are now "stuck in the mud". They must stay like that until another child crawls through their legs. Of course, whilst another child is crawling through their legs, that child might also itself get "tagged", and be "stuck".

The game continues until every child is stuck. If the children are all remaining free, then add more children to be "it".

### Prevent cheating:

Some children will keep running even after being "tagged", or decide they will stop being "stuck" even though they have not been freed.

## Deep And Wide

### Equipment:

None

### Suitable for ages:

All

### How to play:

All the children must stand, facing the leader.

The leader sings this song: "Deep and wide, deep and wide, there's a fountain flowing deep and wide" (x2), then "For you, for me, for you, for me, there's a fountain flowing deep and wide" (x2). There are actions with the words – make signs for "deep", "wide", "flowing", "for you" and "for me". Of course, you also need to discover the proper tune!

The leader gets faster and faster with each verse.

This game is just a piece of fun – though you can see which children can keep up with the words and actions when it becomes faster. It is a good game to use to move from finishing the games and beginning your teaching/singing programme.

## Chair-Ball

### Equipment:

Two chairs, one football. You can also use ribbons to show who the teams are.

### Suitable for ages:

Need to be big enough to throw and catch a football.

### How to play:

Put the children in two teams. Each team must choose one "goalie" who must stand on a chair at the other end of the field.

The rules of the game are that you cannot move if you have the ball. You must stand still and throw it. (You will try to pass it to someone on your team). You score a point by throwing it to the "goalie", and the goalie must catch it. For this reason, the goalies ought to not be too small, and must be able to catch!

### Prevent cheating:

Watch out for children running or walking when they are holding the ball.

## Dodge-Ball

**Equipment:**

A football, and markers for an area. All ages

**Suitable for ages:****How to play:**

You need to mark out an area, about 25 metres long and 10 metres wide. This is the play area – if any child steps outside, they are “out” and must leave the game.

One or more leaders must stand at each of the two ends of this area. They roll the ball from one end to the other. If the ball touches any child, that child is out.

Be careful not to throw the ball hard or in the air if there are still small children in the game. They may get hurt. Once they are out and the children are finding it easy, you can instead throw faster or in the air.

**Prevent cheating:**

Some children will not leave after the ball touches them – or they will try to join again later. Make sure there is a leader watching to prevent this happening.

## Bean-Bag Catch

**Equipment:**

One or more bean-bags (or a ball) All ages

**Suitable for ages:****How to play:**

Get all the children standing in a circle.

A leader then throws a bean-bag to a child. The child must catch it and throw it back. If the child drops the bag, he is “out” and must leave the game. The leader then goes to the next child. The winner is the last child remaining in the game.

If there are many children, then you need more leaders who can all be moving and throwing round the circle at the same time.

**Make it more fun:**

If the children are all catching easily, the leader can make harder throws, or try other tricks (e.g. looking at the wrong child when throwing). Instead of being “out”, you can also make a child kneel on one knee if they drop.

**Prevent cheating:**

Some children may try to return to the game after they are “out”.

## Chain Tag

**Equipment:**

None

**Suitable for ages:**

All ages

**How to play:**

Choose one or more children to be “it”.

When you shout “go”, these children must chase the others are tag them.

If a child is tagged, he is now also “it”. He now holds hands with the child who tagged him. They run and chase together. When they tag another person, the chain will now have 3 people, then 4, then 5...

The game continues until every child has been tagged and joined a chain. If the children are all remaining free, then add more children to be “it”.

**Prevent cheating:**

Those who are in chains must keep holding hands. Do not let them break up the chain. Therefore only the children on the ends of the chains can actually tag someone.

## Running Races

**Equipment:**

Markers for the finish line.

**Suitable for ages:**

All ages

**How to play:**

Put the children in equally-sized teams. (How many teams depends on how many children you have – if teams become very large, then children will spend a long time waiting, and it would be better to just have more teams).

Then line them up each team in height order (smallest first). Then one person from each team will run in each race. When you say “Go!”, they will run to the finish line. The winner is the first person to reach the finish.

**Make it more fun:**

The winners of each race can run against each other in a “final”. They will be different sizes, so you can make some start from further back to make them equal.

**Prevent cheating:**

Do not let anyone run before the “Go”.

## More Races

### Equipment:

Markers for the finish line.

### Suitable for ages:

All ages

### How to play:

You can change the “running races” in many different ways. You can do whatever you can imagine!

For example, instead of running, do hopping.

Or have two people from each team run with their legs tied together (using ribbons). Or one carrying another (a “donkey race”) or holding their legs (a “wheelbarrow race”).

Or they can use a spoon to carry a bean bag to the finish – if they drop it, they lose the race.

Or you can have an “obstacle race”: use obstacles (e.g. a chair, hoops) to run round or through.

You just need to use your imagination to think of something!

## Relay Races

### Equipment:

Markers for the finish line.

### Suitable for ages:

All ages

### How to play:

This is like the running races. Instead of one race after another, the race runs continuously.

Each person runs to the finish, and then returns. When they return, the next team member runs. (Or instead, you can place half the team at the finish. When a child arrives, the next child then returns).

You can use all the ideas from “More Races”. One idea is to have a bucket of water at the half-way mark, and a bowl at the end. Each team has one cup, and each runner must fill the cup from the bucket, and put it in the bowl. A team overflows its bowl first to win.

### Prevent cheating:

Children may set off running before their team member arrives. Each team needs someone watching to prevent this. If they cheat, send them back to delay them. Also, make sure children sit down after they have run.

## Team Ribbon Chase

### Equipment:

A coloured ribbon for each child

### Suitable for ages:

All

### How to play:

This is the same game as “Ribbon Chase”, but the children play in teams.

The ribbons must all be of two or more different colours. Then when you say “Go”, children must try to get ribbons that are a different colour. They should not try to get ribbons from their own team.

There will then be a winning team – the last team with any members who are remaining.

## Are You Sleeping?

### Equipment:

A towel

### Suitable for ages:

Smaller children

### How to play:

Put all the children in a circle, holding hands. One child is then chosen to be the “lion”.

The “lion” has a towel placed over his head. The other children then walk around (still holding hands). They call out “One two three, one two three, are you sleeping – can't catch me!” When the “lion” hears “me”, he throws off the towel and chases to catch one other person.

When he touches that other person, that child is now the new “lion”, and you can play again.

## Collect the ribbons

### Equipment:

Lots of ribbons or pieces of material

### Suitable for ages:

All

### How to play:

All the children must sit down in a group together.

A leader then runs around the field (a small distance away from the group), dropping lots of pieces of material.

When he says "Go", the children must all try to collect as many ribbons as they can. The winner is the child who gets the most. Or you can give a sweet to any child who collects (for example) 10 or more.

### Prevent cheating:

Some children may try to steal another child's ribbons – or join them if they can get a sweet when combined. Or they may try to keep ribbons in their pockets ready for the next game.

## Ribbon Chase

### Equipment:

A ribbon for each child

### Suitable for ages:

All

### How to play:

Each child has a ribbon. They must attach it to their clothes so that it can be easily seen, and easily pulled out. (Do not let them tie it, or hide it).

When you say "Go", they must try to remove other children's ribbons and give them back to the leaders. If a child's ribbon is taken, they are "out" - they must sit down.

If only a few children are left in a big field, you can join everybody who is out in a circle, and put all the remaining children inside the circle until there is a winner.

### Prevent cheating:

Some children may try to steal a ribbon after losing their own. Or they may hide their own ribbon so nobody can see it, or tie it to their clothes so that it cannot be pulled out. Or for a second game, they may try to keep a "spare" ribbon for if they lose theirs.

## Bean-Bag Throwing

### Equipment:

A few bean bags.

### Suitable for ages:

All ages

### How to play:

This is just like the running races, with one change.

Instead of running, each child in the "race" is given a bean bag. When you say "Go" the children in the race throw their bean bag as far as they can.

The winner of the "race" is the child who throws their bag furthest.

### Make it more fun:

If one child is much bigger and wins easily, move him further back to give him a "handicap".

### Prevent cheating:

Make sure that no child is getting ahead by standing in front of the "start line".

## Throwing Relay

### Equipment:

A few bean bags.

### Suitable for ages:

All ages who are old enough to catch a bag.

### How to play:

Make two (or more) equal teams.

Organise the teams into long lines. Each child should be a few metres from the next child. (The teams should be parallel to each other).

The first child in each team is given a bean bag. When you say "Go!", they must throw it to the next child along the line. The bag is thrown all the way to the end, and then must return again to the beginning.

The first team to get the bag back to the first child wins.

### Make it more fun:

If one team wins too easily, add more people to that team.

### Prevent cheating:

Make sure the children do not run with the bag; they must throw it. Do not let them throw it over the next child and miss him out.

## Passing Relay

### Equipment:

A few bean bags. (Alternative games: one cup each, a bucket and bowl, or a long string.).

### Suitable for ages:

All ages.

### How to play:

This is very like the throwing relay. Instead of throwing, have the children stand close together in a line. They pass the bean bag backwards, between their legs, from the front of the line to the back – and then return.

In another version of this game, they can instead all have a cup, and the first person has a bucket of water. They must then pass water from cup-to-cup to the back of the line. The person at the back places the water in a bowl. The first team to overflow the bowl wins.

In another version, the team has a long string from front to back. When you say “Go!”, they pass a bead from the front of the line to the back, and return it.

### Prevent cheating:

Do not let the smallest children be missed out.

## Ladder Race

### Equipment:

None.

### Suitable for ages:

All ages

### How to play:

Place the children into two teams. Arrange the teams in lines, in height order. Then give them each a number, beginning from 1 upwards.

Make the two teams sit down, facing each other, with a small gap in between. Everybody should be sitting directly opposite the child with the same number (1 sits opposite 1, 2 sits opposite 2, etc.). Their lines make a “ladder”.

Then you will shout out a number. The two children with that number must turn to the outside, and run to the top of the ladder, then run down inside the ladder to the bottom, then run up the outside back to their place. The first child to sit down wins.

### Prevent cheating:

Make sure children always run the right way!

## Simon Says

### Equipment:

None.

### Suitable for ages:

All ages

### How to play:

All the children must stand up in front of the leader (an adult).

The adult gives instructions. Normally he begins with “Simon says”. Sometimes, he won't. e.g. “Simon says, touch your head. Simon says, jump. Touch your knees!”

If the adult says “Simon says”, then all the children must obey. If they do not obey (or are too slow), then they are “out” and must sit.

However, if they adult does not say “Simon says”, then the children must not obey. If they do obey, they are “out”. The adult must always do what he himself says – this is so that the children watch him, copy and make mistakes!

The adult can go faster to make it harder. The winner is the last child remaining.

### Prevent cheating:

Watch carefully – the children may not be honest if they are “out”.

## Skittle Fetch

### Equipment:

Seven skittles.

### Suitable for ages:

All ages

### How to play:

Place the children in four equal teams. Then place them in height order. Give each child a number (1, 2, 3...).

Place 7 skittles in the middle of the playing area. Each teams must then line up in a different corner of the playing area. Each team must have a “hoop” that is their home. You can make this hoop out of a ribbon.

You will then shout a number. Each child with that number runs to take one skittle, and return it to their hoop. When the hoops are gone from the middle, they must take from another team's hoop. A team wins when it has 3 skittles inside its hoop. Keep a team score.

### Prevent cheating:

The runner may take more than one skittle. Teams will sometimes try to stop other teams taking their skittles, or try to help their runner somehow. Throw a team's skittle back to the middle whenever you see them cheating.



## Musical Chairs

### Equipment:

Some chairs, a music player.

### Suitable for ages:

All – but careful about little ones getting hurt

### How to play:

Place the chairs in a long line (facing different directions). There need to be a few less chairs than there are children. The music is played. When the music is playing, the children must walk around the line of chairs. They must not touch the chairs.

When the music stops, everybody must sit down on a chair. If somebody does not find a chair, they are “out” and leave the game.

Each time the music starts again, remove a chair. This makes sure that there is always somebody “out” each round.

### Prevent cheating:

Watch out for big children pushing small children out of their chairs. Watch out for children who touch chairs or stop walking before the music has stopped. When only one chair remains, you can move them away and make them race for it when the music stops.

## Bulldog

### Equipment:

Some markers to mark the ends of two lines.

### Suitable for ages:

All – but careful about little ones getting hurt

### How to play:

All the children must stand along one line. Make another line opposite them, about 20 metres away. Choose one child to be the “bulldog”.

The “bulldog” stands near the far line. He then chooses one other child, and shouts its name. That child must then try to run to the opposite line without being touched. If he is touched, he becomes an extra “bulldog”, and they choose again.

If he reaches the line without being touched, then you shout out “bulldog!” Then everybody must try to run to the opposite line. Anyone who is touched also becomes “bulldog”. Those who reach the other end continue, and another child is chosen.

The game continues until everybody has been caught, or until you have one “winner” who is the last to be caught.

## Circular Racing

### Equipment:

You can use some ribbons (optional).

### Suitable for ages:

All

### How to play:

Place all the children in a good-sized circle. Choose three or four of equal size. When you say “Go”, they will run around the outside of the circle. The first one back wins.

### Make it more fun:

You can make it a relay, by choosing two runners to be partners. When one partner has returned, he must “tag” his other partner. That partner now runs. The first pair to have both runners complete their run is the winner. If you do this, you may need to give them ribbons so that you can see who is partner with who.

Many variations are again possible – you can make them carry water, or a bag on a spoon.

### Prevent cheating:

You can use a bean bag to be like a “baton” to prevent someone running away before their partner has tagged them.

## Wink Murder

### Equipment:

None.

### Suitable for ages:

Younger children may be confused.

### How to play:

Put all the children in a circle. Choose one child to be the “policeman”. Take him away so that he cannot see or hear.

Then choose one child to be the “murderer”. That child must be able to wink (close only one eye at once). Try asking them to show you.

The detective then returns and stands in the middle of the circle. The “murderer” will wink at people. If he winks at anyone, that child must fall down (“die”). The more noise and drama, the more fun!

The detective has 3 opportunities to guess who the “murderer” is. He may need encouraging from a leader to make a guess. Afterwards, choose another detective and play again.

### Prevent cheating:

Do not let the policeman see or hear when the murderer is chosen.

## Circular Team Racing

### Equipment:

None.

### Suitable for ages:

All ages

### How to play:

Get all the children sitting in a circle. Then go round and give them each an animal name, in turn. About 4 or 5 different names is right – e.g. “lion, tiger, elephant, giraffe, lion, tiger, elephant, giraffe, lion, tiger, etc.”

Then tell a story. Every time you mention the name of an animal, all the children who have that name must run all the way round the circle. The first child to return to its place each time is the winner.

### Make it more fun:

There are many variations you can think of. You do not need to use animals – you can use your own idea.

### Prevent cheating:

Some children will try to sit down before they have run all the way around – they will sit in someone else's place. So it needs the leaders to all be watching carefully!

## Circle Chase

### Equipment:

None.

### Suitable for ages:

All ages

### How to play:

Get all the children sitting down in a circle.

Choose one child. He is the “chaser”. He must walk slowly round the outside of the circle. Then he must choose and touch one child. Then he runs.

The child who is touched must also stand up and run. They must both run all the way round the outside of the circle. Whoever reaches and sits down in the place first is the winner. The one who loses is now the “chaser” and the game continues again.

### Make it more fun:

It is best to begin with a big child. Normally the bigger children will win, so the children running will get smaller and smaller as you continue.

If a child loses 3 times, make him sit down and begin the game again with another child.

## Pirates

### Equipment:

A skittle

### Suitable for ages:

All

### How to play:

Get all the children sitting in a circle. Put a skittle in the middle – this is the “gold”. Then take one child away to be the “pirate”.

Then choose another child to be the “chaser”. The “pirate” must not hear or see when you choose this child.

Tell the “pirate” to come back. He must walk round the circle, and choose a place to enter. He must then go to the “gold”, pick it up, and run out of the circle at the same place he entered.

When he touches the “gold” (not before!) the chaser can now get up and chase him. He must catch him before he leaves, to win.

Whoever wins is the new “pirate”. If the same child wins 3 times, begin again.

### Prevent cheating:

Do not let the “chaser” move before the pirate has touched the gold.

## Musical Statues

### Equipment:

A music player.

### Suitable for ages:

All ages

### How to play:

The music is played. When the music is playing, the children must dance.

The music will then stop (suddenly – it must be a surprise). When it stops, everybody must be really still. If any child carries on moving, he is “out” - he must sit down and finish.

Soon only quick children will remain. You can then decide that every time, the last child to be moving must be “out”. This will keep the game progressing. The winner is the last child left.

### Prevent cheating:

Some children will cheat by hardly moving at all. You can tell those children to sit down and finish. Or, you can make all the children “follow the leader” - have an adult that they must all copy. The adult can run, jump and dance – and if the children refuse to copy him, they must sit down and finish.