

Here are some ideas for quick games which can be good icebreakers or teambuilding with younger sections (or Explorer Scouts!)

Tangled Arms

Equipment required: None
Group size: Medium groups (8-10)

Everyone stands in a circle facing each other. Everyone reaches across and grabs another person's hand. Working together the group then has to untangle themselves to make one large circle without letting go of any hands.

Mime Machinery

Equipment required: None
Group size: Small groups (4-6)

Leaders call out various items of machinery and individuals or groups have to mime that item of machinery. For a variation, why not whisper to the group and get others to guess what it is. Some ideas:

- Washing machine
- Tumble drier
- Dishwasher
- Cordless drill
- Sprinkler
- Tin opener
- Microwave

Living Furniture

Equipment required: None
Group size: Small groups (4-6)

Building on the exercise "Mime Machinery" each group mimes an item of furniture in a house, arranged in rooms and laid out as if the room was real. One person acts as an estate agent and shows a leader around the house, showing off all of the features (mimed furniture).

Stand on a Sheet

Equipment required: Tarpaulin
Group size: Groups (4-12)

Open the sheet out on the floor. Everyone stands on the sheet. The sheet has to be folded in half with everyone still standing on it (having to support each other). If a foot or another part touches the floor game over! Keep folding smaller and smaller...

Minefield

Equipment required: Items to represent mines (sponge balls, cones, beanbags)
Group size: Small groups (4-6)

Leader arranges the mines across the floor. One member of the team is blindfolded and has to cross the minefield based only on the instructions of their teammates.

Bomb Disposal

Equipment required: Something to represent the bomb (approx. 150mm dia, 1200mm high), two ropes at least the length of the diameter of the circle
Group size: Small groups (4-6)

Place the “bomb” in the middle of a circle approx. 6m in diameter (could be a chalk line on the floor or a rope). The team has to safely remove the bomb without entering the circle, knocking it over, dragging it or dropping it on the ground.

Magic Cane

Equipment required: Garden cane/ bamboo/ plastic hoola hoop
Group size: Small to medium groups (4-10)

Teams stand facing each other with their index fingers extended out. The leader places the cane along all of their fingers and tells the team to lower the cane to the ground without losing contact between their fingers and the cane. If using a hoola hoop, the team should stand in a circle.

Shark Infested Waters

Equipment required: Squares or newspaper or plywood if outdoors (approx. 300x300mm)
Group size: Small to medium groups (4-10)

Leader arranges the squares across the floor or ground, these are safe stepping stones across the shark infested waters. The whole team has to cross the waters holding hands – be careful, anything touches the floor and it’s game over! For variations why not get everyone to stand on one stepping stone and then change their order (swap their order, or arrange themselves tallest to smallest etc).

Distant Communications

Equipment required : None
Group size : Small to medium groups (4-10)

Teams are asked to devise a method of non-verbal communication which can be used to send a message over a set distance (could be the length of the hall or across a field). Leaders split up the team into “senders” and “receivers” and stand teams at opposite ends of hall/ field. Leaders then tell one half of the team a secret message to send to the other. No speaking or shouting permitted, and no mobile phones! For a twist add numbers into the message as most young people will think of a system based on letters only.

Getting to Know You Bingo

Equipment required: Bingo cards
Group size: Medium to large groups (8+)

Prepare a bingo card with things to find out about other people. Individually people walk the room to ask people which of the things applies to them, if they do, the persons should sign in the box/ next to the statement. Some examples:

- Someone who has had their photo in a newspaper
- Someone with a part time job
- 2 people from a different district than you
- Someone who drove here
- Someone who has a pet
- Someone who hates One Direction
- Someone who shops at Primark

Pioneering

Equipment required: Staves or poles, ropes
Group size: Small to medium groups (4-10)

Ask teams to build a structure which can support all of the team off the ground.

Crossing the Void

Equipment required: Ropes/ cones /canes/ chalk
Group size: Medium groups (8-10)

The team splits into two halves standing facing each other approximately 1m apart. The team must get one person across the “void” between the sides without touching the ground or being supported off furniture etc. Every time someone successfully gets across, the gap is widened. The gap can be defined by ropes, cones, canes or chalk on the floor.

The Shepherd

Equipment required: Ropes/ cones /canes/ chalk, neckies or blindfolds

Group size: Medium to large groups (8+)

One person volunteers as the shepherd, all others are sheep and are blindfolded. Mark out a square "pen" with cones/ rope/ canes/ chalk which is solid on three sides and open at one side. The shepherd has to direct all of the sheep into the pen, but can only talk to everyone at the same time (for example if the shepherd says "left" everyone turns to their left, they can't single out individuals to say "Johnny, turn left"). To make it worse, all sheep will start facing a different direction! Once a sheep makes it into the pen they can remove their blindfold.

Talk For a Minute

Equipment required: None

Group size: Small to large groups (4-12)

Everyone sits in a circle and the leader asks each person to talk for one minute without stopping or repeating themselves on a topic of the leader's choice. For example the leader would say "Johnny, talk for a minute about lightbulbs" or "talk for a minute about homework". Topics can be themed or obscure!

What's Your Favourite...?

Equipment required: None

Group size: Small to large groups (4-12)

Good as an icebreaker/ getting-to-know-you game. Sitting in a circle (or around the campfire), the leader works their way around the group asking each person what their favourite is. Each person should get a different topic/ favourite thing, and topics could range from music, TV programmes, movies to more obscure things like emotion, month, temperature etc.

Group Story

Equipment required: None

Group size: Small to large groups (4-12)

The group sits in a circle facing inwards and will create a story by saying only one word each. For example the leader will start by saying "one", the next person then adds a word of their own as the next word of the story. No-one can control where the story goes or what will happen as anyone can change it within a word!

Mirror Shapes

Equipment required: Tarpaulin or sheet to divide teams

Group size: Medium to large groups (8-12)

Teams sit either side of tarpaulin or sheet (leaders may have to hold the sheet up, so that teams can't see each other). One team arranges themselves in an arrangement or the leaders arrange them. One person then has to describe the arrangement to the team on the other side, who must try to match it without looking over the sheet. When they think they have it right the leaders lower the sheet to let teams see each other.

Sit on Your Knees

Equipment required: None

Group size: Medium to large groups (8-12)

The group stands in a circle facing the same direction around the circle (ie, facing the back of the person in front's head). Everyone must shuffle in to make the circle as tight as possible. Slowly everyone sits down, the knees of the person behind will become the seat for the person in front and no-one should fall over...

Count to Ten

Equipment required: None

Group size: Ideally 10, but a few more or less would work

The group sits or stands in a circle, and has to count from one to ten, each person saying only one number in order. However, the numbers should be called out numerically but from random positions around the circle. Counting must start from the start if two people talk at the same time.

Tallest to smallest...

We will all be familiar with the quick way of dividing a big group up for games or activities. Rather than just “tallest to smallest” why not try some variations that may challenge young people in their communication and teambuilding skills?

Arrange yourselves...

- By height
- By age
- By day or month of birth
- By shoe size
- By number of siblings
- Leaders whisper an animal to each person, they then mime the animal and arrange themselves in order of size of animal
- In the order you like... meat, puppies, school etc (with “most like” at one end and “least like” at the other)

Why not try it with...

- No talking
- Blindfolded
- No talking with hands in pockets