

Patrol Games

This is a quick guide to a selection of Patrol Games. For each game there is information on the number of patrols who can play (one patrol or more, two patrols or more, etc), the type of game (team, relay, individual, etc), a list of equipment, a suggested time, and a brief description.

The Basics

There are literally hundred of games so there is no excuse to run out or indeed play the same game each week! Some Scout Troops have there favourites, but you should try introduce a new game each week, that way you can enjoy a variety. Choosing the type of game is as important as running the game. There are many different types, and like many things in Scouting it is important to choose the right game for the right task.

- **Energy release Game:** These games are usually played at the start of an activity and ensure everyone gets settled for the night, they allow the large release of energy usually through physical activity.
- **Quiet Games:** These games can help prepare Scouts for a more focused activity, perhaps a Scouts' Own or before finishing a meeting.
- **Team Challenge Games:** These develop leadership, co-operation and competitive skills.
- **Skills Games:** These sorts of games aim to highlight, facilitate or consolidate skills during a meeting or indeed to focus on a particular topical issue.

Here are some suggested tips to help you run games:

1. **Prepare:** before the game gather equipment, make sure you fully understand the rules. If you need to set things up try to do this beforehand, or else have one of the activity leaders do this while another explains the game.
2. **Explain:** Begin by quietening everyone down and carefully explaining the game. Even if it is a game you played before, remind everyone of the objective and the rules. Quickly summarise after explaining.
3. **Demonstrate:** Run a quick demonstration of the game to show everyone what is involved.
4. **Trial Run:** If possible, have one or two trial runs with everyone participating.
5. **Monitor:** The activity leaders should monitor the game carefully and make sure everyone understands the game and is following the rules.
6. **Repeat?** When a game runs well, you may be asked to repeat it or extend it, if there is time in your programme you can do so. However, do not let it go on too long; it is better to have it run well and for everyone to look forward to playing it again, than getting bored with it.
7. **After:** Tidy up and return all the equipment.
8. **Review:** If there is something important learnt about the game the activity leaders should make a note for the next PLs' Council.

Energy Release Games

Blob

Patrols: 1+

Type: All Patrol

Time: 5mins

Description: Two scouts join hands to form the "Blob." The Blob grows by chasing other players and touching them. (Note: Only the free hands at the end of the Blob can be used to touch players.) The Blob continues to grow until only one player is left untouched; that player is the winner.

Bibbity Bop Bop

Patrols: 1+

Type: All Patrol

Time: 10mins

Description: Have all the scouts sit in a circle. Someone stands in the middle and they have to then point at a scout and say "Bibbity Bop Bop". The scout they are pointing to must say "Bop" before they finish, otherwise they then become the person in the middle. If the scout in the middle says anything other than "Bibbity Bop Bop" and the scout they are pointing to says "Bop", they are out and become the person in the middle.

Crowded Circle

Patrols: 1+

Type: All Patrol

Time: 5mins

Equipment Chalk, or something else to mark a circle on the ground.

Description: Mark a large circle on the floor, comfortable to fit all the scouts playing. Call out 'Circle', and all the scouts should gather in the circle; anyone outside of the circle is out of the game. Gradually decrease the size of the circle, knocking more scouts each time until only the winner remains.

Balloon Derby

Patrols: 1+

Type: All Patrol

Time: 10mins

Equipment: Two balloons per scout; tape.

Description: Blow up the balloons to a relatively equal size, and tape two to each scout's right foot. Clear space in your Hall. The scouts run around trying to stomp on each other's balloons. If both your balloons are burst, you are out. Game ends when only one person remains.

Quarter Volleyball

Patrols: 1+

Type: All Patrol

Time: 5-10mins

Equipment: Light ball

Description: Divide the playing space into quarters. Then, divide the scouts among the quarters; each team have to stay in their own area. The scouts have to keep the ball out of their area. If it touches the floor, blow a whistle and award that team a point. The aim is to avoid scoring points. Each time the ball hits the floor, the ball is returned to the activity leader who throws it back in to restart the game.

Body, Body

Patrols: 1+

Type: All Patrol

Time: 10mins

Equipment: A card for each member of which must contain only 1 or 2 Aces (1 for a group less than 8, and 2 for group larger)

Description: Each player draws a card from the deck. Those who draw the Aces are the 'killers' and the rest are civilians. The cards are put back into the deck. Everyone spreads out and the meeting space is darkened. Everyone roams around space. The killers 'kill' people by touching their shoulder. Once killed a person falls to the floor. When someone encounters the body the must shout "Body! Body!" The lights go on and everyone goes to the body. Everyone then votes off someone they think is the killer. The dead and the voted are then eliminated. Continue until only the killers are left or are successfully voted off. The activity leader will have to know who the killers are and each killer can only 'kill' one person in each round.

Three-Person Tug-of-War

Patrols: 1+

Type: All Patrol

Time: 10mins

Equipment: A length of thick rope at least enough to make a 4ft diameter circle; 3 markers (cones, neckerchiefs etc)

Description: Tie the rope into a circle and place in the centre of the playing area. Have three marks equally distant from the rope. Have the patrols or scouts participating spread evenly out around the rope. Three scouts holds the rope at one corner with one of their hands. On signal, each Scout tries to reach their marker. Ensure the rope is thick and scouts do not hurt themselves.

Blanket Volleyball

Patrols: 1+

Type: All Patrol

Time: 10mins

Equipment: Light ball, blanket or similar, net.

This game is like standard volleyball, but each Patrol (split your patrol in two if necessary) is given a blanket or something similar. The Patrol should stretch out the blanket so it is tight. When serving the patrol places the ball on the blanket, loosening it and then tightening so the 'throw' the ball over the net. The other patrol use their blanket to catch the ball and throw it back. A point is scored if a patrol lands the ball in the other teams area and a patrol concedes a point if they fail to get the ball over the net.

Squirrels

Patrols: 2+

Type: All Patrol

Time: 10mins

Equipment: Chairs and small balls/beanbags

Description: Place the chairs, one chair per patrol, at the centre of the meeting place a few feet apart facing each other. In the centre of the chairs, have the balls/beanbags, one more than there is patrols. Get the patrols to number off. Allocate each patrol a chair and ask them to line up behind it in number order. Read out the following rules: When you hear your number you should try to get three balls/beanbags onto your team's chair. You must have one hand behind your back at all times. You can only carry one ball/beanbag at any time and can steal a ball/beanbag from another team's chair. No-one is allowed to touch the chairs. If a ball/beanbag is thrown to a chair and falls off, it is thrown back into the middle. Call out a number. The winner is the first scout to get two balls/beanbags onto their chair.

Quiet Games

Cups

Patrols: 1+

Type: Quiet Game

Time: 5mins

Description: Two scouts join hands to form the “Blob.” The Blob grows by chasing other players and touching them. (Note: Only the free hands at the end of the Blob can be used to touch players.) The Blob continues to grow until only one player is left untouched; that player is the winner.

News Quiz

Patrols: 1+

Type: Quiet Game

Time: 20mins

Description: Give each Patrol a copy of the same newspaper and the Scouter keeps one. Call out questions based on the contents of the paper, such as a headline or what programme is on etc. The first team with the correct answer wins the point.

Pointing Circle

Patrols: 1+

Type: Quiet Game

Time: 5mins

Equipment Chalk, or something else to mark a circle on the ground.

Description: All Scouts stand in a circle, when a Scouter points at somebody they must raise both arms in the air, and the Scouts on either side must raise whatever arm is closest to them. Whoever is last to raise their arm sits down. This is repeated till there is only one Scout standing.

Face ID

Patrols: 1+

Type: Quiet Game

Time: 20mins

Equipment: A blindfold

Description: Scouts stand in a circle and one Scout stands in the centre blindfolded. The circle of Scouts starts moving slowly moving around. When the blindfolded player raises their arm the circle stops, and they point outwards. Whoever is they are pointing at stands in front of the blindfolded player. Still blindfolded they must try identify who they have in front of them only by touch. If they are correct, that scout is blindfolded. If they are incorrect they start again

20 Questions

Patrols: 1+

Type: Quiet Game

Time: 10mins

Description: Scouts take it in turns to think of anything and decide what sort of category it falls into. Once they have decided they tell the other Scouts the category. The other Scouts then can ask a total of 20 questions to which the answer must be truthful yes or no, to try identify what the Scout is thinking about.

Camping Trip

Patrols: 1+

Type: Quiet Game

Time: 15mins +

Description: Scouts sit in a circle. Going around in the circle each scout must say, "I am going camping and I am going to bring a ..." The PL says yes or no (based on the secret rule e.g. legs crossed or saying ehhe beforehand). Continue around in a circle and the Scouts must try figure out what the rule is.

Foley Artists

Patrols: 1+

Type: Quiet Game

Time: 10mins

Equipment: Bed sheet or blanket hung up as a curtain, miscellaneous items for making sounds

Description: The patrols are seated on one side of the curtain. Behind the curtain are two or three scouts who produce various sounds for the Scouts to recognise and remember, such as a creaking door, turning the pages of a book, breaking a stick, striking a match, hammering a nail, and so on. After the demonstration, the patrols return to their corners to make a list of the noises they heard. Award 1 point for each sound correctly listed.

Walking Statues

Patrols: 1+

Type: All Patrol

Time: 10mins

A patrol starts at the end of the meeting space, advancing on the activity leader. They can advance only while the activity leader is facing away from them. The activity leader can turn around at will, then everyone must freeze. If they detect the slightest movement, that scout is sent back to the starting line to begin again. This continues until a scout reaches the activity leader.

Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John

Patrols: 1+

Type: Quiet Game

Time: 10mins

Description: Sit everyone in a circle. Each seat or space is assigned a name or number, starting with Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, one, two, three, four, etc. (until everyone has a number). The scout who is 'Matthew' calls out Matthew and then a name/number of another position, such as Matthew Five, or Matthew John. Then, That person must then call their name/number, followed by the name/number of another's position, such as Five Three, or Five Luke. If doesn't realised they've been called, or doesn't respond quickly enough, or fails to properly calls their own name or number, etc., they go to the last position, and everyone else moves up one space to fill the gap. Then, the game starts over. Also, you cannot repeat the call just made. The objective of the game is to become Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, and stay in that position as long as possible. If you have smaller numbers, have less named people.

Overtake

Patrols: 1+

Type: All Patrol

Time: 10mins

Equipment: Two balls.

All the Scouts get in a circle and number off (there needs to be an even number of scouts for this to work). All the even-numbered Scouts in the circle are one team and all odd-numbered Scouts are another. Hand a ball to Scout no.1 and another ball to scout with an even number who is on the opposite side of the circle. On signal, the scouts must pass, not throw, the ball clockwise to members of their team (every other Scout). Both balls will be traveling in the same direction. The object of the game is for one team to pass their ball faster than the other team and eventually overtake the other team's ball.

Team Challenge Games

Flood warning

Patrols: 1+ Type: Team Challenge Time: 15mins
Equipment (per patrol): six spars (3-5ft), five lengths of sisal/rope, one old billy, kindling, and a box of matches.

Description: The patrols are given the follow scenario: within ten minutes the whole area will be flooded to a depth of four feet. Darkness is approaching rapidly. A beacon fire must be lit to warn a local village across the valley.

Balancing

Patrols: 1+ Type: Team Challenge Time: 10mins
Equipment: A sturdy chair, crate, or similar.

Description: All the patrol must be on the chair/crate, up off the ground unsupported, for a least 10 seconds. You can time them if more than one patrol is involved.

Sisal Burn

Patrols: 1+ Type: Team Challenge Time: 20mins
Equipment: Sisal, candles, chairs.

Description: Mark off a 3m x 3m square. Tie a length of sisal across the square, at the halfway point, about 60cm of the ground. The patrol, with only sisal and a candle must burn this piece of sisal at the midpoint. They cannot enter the square. Be careful with the flame.

Lighted candle

Patrols: 1+ Type: Team Challenge Time: 20mins
Equipment: Sisal, tea-lights, jam jars.

Description: Mark out a circle 4-6m in diameter and place in the centre, about one metre apart, two jam jars, one containing a lighting tea-light. Without entering the circle, the patrol must use the sisal to swap position of the jam jars without letting the candle go out! Set a time limit to add an extra challenge.

Rope Circle

Patrols: 1+

Type: Team Challenge Time: 5mins

Equipment: Thick Rope (long enough to fit the whole patrol/troop)

Description: Tie the rope in a large circle. Have everyone hold onto the rope and lean backwards until the rope is tight. With care, everyone should be able to sit down together, then stand up together again.

First-Aid Kim's Game

Patrols: 1+

Type: Skills/Team Challenge

Time: 10mins

Equipment: Pens, paper, and a collection of first-aid/emergency related items (eg. gauze, bandages, scissors, survival bag, whistle); have at least four items per scout in the patrol with least members.

Description: Explain the task to the PLs and give them two minutes to make a plan. Spread all items on a table or on the floor and cover them with a tarp. Gather the patrols around, making sure everyone has a clear view; if you have a separate room available set it up there and bring one patrol in at a time. Remove the cover for exactly one minute. Each patrol must then write down all items they can remember, and add an example of what each is used for in an emergency situation.

Scoring: The patrol with the most complete list wins.

Giant Table Football

Patrols: 2

Type: Team Challenge

Time: 20mins

Equipment: Cones to mark Goals

Description: Mark a Goal at each end of the hall and assign a goal to each Patrol. Divide each Patrol into attack and defence, and stand each patrol member in a location in the hall relevant to their position. Once in position the Goalies may move from side to side but not forwards or backwards; all the other players may not move, but they can rotate on their non-dominant foot

Scoring: The Patrol with the most Goals wins.

Noising the Ball

Patrols: 2+ Type: Team Challenge Time: 10mins
Equipment: Several Tennis Balls

Description: Each Patrol lines up at one end of the hall as for a relay race. For the first race each patrol gets a tennis ball which they must race by crawling on all fours pushing the ball the length of the hall with their nose. Once all team members complete this they are declared the winners of the game. This game can be varied by; holding the ball between your knees.

High-Low

Patrols: 1+ Type: Team Challenge Time: 5mins
Equipment: None

Get each patrol to stand in line. Tell them they are to arrange themselves from high to low, in different categories, but they cannot talk. Here are some categories: Height, Date of Birth (Calendar or chronological); Alphabetical—last name; Distance from home; Number of siblings; Number of pets.

Whackers

Patrols: 2+ Type: Team Challenge Time: 10mins
Equipment: 6 whackers (made up from rolled up newspaper) and a puck (made from a sponge wrapped in tape) and two chairs

Description: Line one patrol up on each side of the hall and number off. Place a chair at each end of the hall with 3 whackers on each and the puck in the centre of the hall. Call out a number. The player from each patrol with that number runs to their chair a grabs a whacker, they then race to the puck and try knock it through the legs of the chair. Once a point is scored the players return to their spot an another number is called. Having 6 whackers allowed for 3 people from each Patrol to play at a time.

Balloon Bouncing

Patrols: 1+ Type: Team Challenge Time: 5mins
Equipment: Balloons

Each patrol has a balloon. They must try to keep their balloon in the air as long as possible by hitting it back and forth between themselves. A patrol is out when their balloon touches the floor or bursts. They cannot catch or hold a balloon.

Guide Trail

Patrols: 1+

Type: Communication Time: 10-15mins

Equipment: Blindfolds and various obstacles, eg: chairs, cones, ropes.

Description: One scout leads another blindfolded scouts through a 'maze'. No one speaks during the activity, the 'guides' can use only the pressure of a single fingertip to direct the blindfolded scout. The scouts pair up, and one of them is blindfolded. A simple obstacle course or maze is set up with ropes and objects such as chairs, cones, and tables. In turns, each pair must go through the maze. The guide has to lead the blindfolded scout without talking, but by touching through one finger tip. Then, get the scouts to reverse roles and modify the course before they start again.

Corners

Patrols: 2+

Type: Team Challenge Time: 10mins

Equipment: Buckets; beanbags or ping pong balls.

Description: Divide your hall into the number of patrols you have and allocate each patrol a space (eg 4 patrols – 4 corners; 2 patrols – divide hall in half). Divide the number of beanbags evenly among the patrols and then start the timer. The aim of the game is for each Patrol to get as many beanbags into their bucket in the allocated time, while the patrol defends their bucket.

Scoring: The Patrol with the most bean bags at the end wins.

Foggy Harbour

Patrols: 1+

Type: Team Challenge Time: 5mins

Equipment: None

The patrol must guide an 'oil tanker' (a scout) through the 'harbour' without bumping into the other 'ships' (the remaining patrol members). The oil tanker scout is blindfolded and moves on their hands and knees. They are not to touch any of the other ships, who remain still and are spread across the harbour. As the oil tanker nears a ship, the ship must give a warning signal, such as a foghorn, a call, or a whistle. The oil tanker then approaches more cautiously and tries to manoeuvre through the harbour without colliding.

Skills Games

Blindfolded Knots

Patrols: 1+

Type: Skill Time: 5mins

Equipment: Rope

Description: The Patrol lines up in pairs and everyone is blindfolded. Each scout must tie a bowline on themselves, then they must tie their ropes together with a reef knot in their pairs.

Knot Relay

Patrols: 1+

Type: Skills Time: 20mins

Equipment: A tent per patrol and a pair of goggles for each scout.

Description: Patrols line up and run, in turn, to a Scouter (or someone else) to tie a knot. The Scouter names a knot and once the Scout ties it they return to tag off the next Scout. Select a number of knots at the beginning, such as: reef knot, bowline, sheet bend, clove hitch, round turn and two half hitches, and sheep shank.

White Out

Patrols: 1+

Type: Skills/Team Challenge

Time: 20mins

Equipment: A tent per patrol and a pair of goggles for each scout.

Description: Your Patrol have been caught out in a dense fog. With the changing weather you'll need to set up camp quickly, despite the fact you can't see anything. Each scout wears a pair of swimming goggles that has been smeared with Vaseline to obstruct sight. Each scout will be able to see blurred images at close range. The Patrol have a limited amount of time to erect their tent.

Tripod 'Bowling'

Patrols: 1+

Type: Skills/All Patrol

Time: 20mins

Equipment: sisal, 3-4ft spars, balls.

Description: Each patrol should make 3 tripods, without supports/braces. Set up the tripods in triangular formations at the end of your meeting space. Line the patrols up opposite each set of tripods (patrols should be lined up against another patrol's tripod). Give everyone a go at rolling or throwing balls at their set of tripods. Record how many are knocked in each round.

Getting Your Bearings

Patrols: 1+ Type: Skill Time: 10-15mins

Equipment: Maps; compasses; paper & pens,

Description: In turn, a scout from each patrol runs to a map. The activity leader names or points to two locations or features on the map (buildings, rock outcroppings, hilltops, bridges, etc.). The Scouts take a bearing from one to the other, and (quietly) says it to the activity leader. When done, they run back to tag the next patrol member. The winning patrol is the one with the most compass bearings correct within 5 degrees.

Knotting Pairs

Patrols: 1+ Type: Skills Time: 10-15mins

Equipment: Rope

Description: Scouts face one another in pairs with one hand in their pocket. The Patrol Leader calls out the name of a knot. Using only their free hand the pairs must work together to tie the knot. The winning pair is the first to tie the knot correctly.

Sliced Countries

Patrols: 2+ Type: Skills Time: 10-15mins

Equipment: Cards; half marked with names of capitals and half marked with country flags.

Description: Hide the flags or capital cards around the hall before the Scouts come in. When you are ready to play the game give out the Country Cards. Each participant then has to find their matching card. The winning Patrol is the first one with every member that has their matching card.

Chain Gang

Patrols: 1+ Type: Skills Time: 10-15mins

Equipment: String

Description: Scouts sit in a circle with their feet apart, touching the feet of the Scout next to them. On the word GO each scout tries to tie a clove hitch around the ankle of the Scout to their left, while prevent the Scout on their right from tying one around their ankle.