

★★★ AMERICAN  FLAG RUGBY ★★★



**TAG WARM UP GAMES & ACTIVITIES  
FOR YOUNG PLAYERS**

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## INTRODUCTION

This section aims to provide teachers and coaches with an easy to follow practical guide to a selection of simple games and activities using tags.

The games and activities can be played on grass or hard surfaces and provide an excellent opportunity for players to enjoy using tag belts whilst at the same time developing dodging, chasing and evasion skills, an awareness of space and other players, and fitness levels.

### General Assumptions

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The following assumptions have been made when describing these games and activities.

- » That all players are correctly wearing a tag belt.
- » For the whole class activities (Games 1 to 7) the players are divided into 4 equal teams, distinguished by the color of the ribbons they wear.
- » To catch (tag) another player you must simply remove one of the two ribbons from that player's belt, hold it above your head and shout tag for all to hear.
- » Once the tag has been acknowledged the ribbon is then presented back to the player.
- » Note: the player who has made the tag can take no further part in the game until they have returned this ribbon (except in game 1 Tails). It is important that players make a habit of remembering to receive back their ribbon as no player can take any further part in the game without both ribbons properly in place.

### Handy Hints for Teachers and Coaches

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#### Organizing the players into smaller groups:

- » The different colored ribbons they wear can distinguish teams; there is no need for players to be wearing bibs.
- » Organizing players into pairs at the beginning of the session can make further organization into groups of 4, 6, 8 etc. easier. If there are an odd number of players, there can be one group of three.
- » By grouping players according to ability for the Group Games (games 8-10) it makes it easier for teachers and coaches to differentiate (make the tasks either slightly easier or harder to match players' ability).
- » If it is necessary to swap players between teams, it is simply a case of them exchanging their ribbons; there is no need to take off the whole belt.

#### Equipment:

- » When dealing with young inexperienced players, it is suggested that balls are not pumped up too hard. A slightly deflated ball makes it easier for youngsters to pass and catch, and is less painful if a ball accidentally hits somebody.
- » If there are an insufficient number of rugby balls available, then netballs, footballs or volleyballs can be used as a substitute.

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## Playing area:

- » If space is restricted, the games can be played at a fast walking pace only for safety.
- » When using grids, 10 meters x 10 meters are a good size. *Note: One average large adult step is roughly equivalent to one meter.*
- » Placing a different colored flexible marker disc in the middle of each grid makes it easier for the players to recognize the grid areas. Simply instructing players to stand by a unique colored disc will help organize groups.

## General Safety Points

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Ensure play area is large enough. If space is restricted the games and activities should only be played at a fast walking pace. Keep players away from hazards such as goal posts and structural columns and, if playing inside, heaters and walls. Keep any spare equipment not being used well away from the playing area.

Players need to be reminded that it is the ribbon only they are allowed to touch and there is definitely:

- » No contact or pulling of clothing.
- » No hand-offs.
- » No swiping a defender's hand away.
- » No deliberate barging into defenders.
- » No diving on the ball.
- » No kicking the ball.

## General Teaching/Coaching Points

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- » When being chased by 'taggers', encourage players not just to run in a straight line but instead use changes of direction and pace to get away.
- » Look where you are going and avoid running backwards.
- » Try shifting your hips sharply to one side to avoid a 'tagger' getting your ribbon.
- » Run at spaces not faces. In other words run at spaces and not at defenders.
- » When using a ball, carry it in two hands. This gets players into good habits for when they play the full game of Tag Rugby. Carrying the ball in this position makes the act of passing much quicker and easier and keeps defenders guessing about whether you are going to run or pass. The ball should be carried in a near vertical position with fingers spread around the body of the ball and thumbs pointing skywards. Contact with the ball should be with the 10 finger pads only and not the palms of the hands – dirty fingers, clean palms. Elbows should be slightly bent and relaxed and the ball should not be touching the chest.
- » When scoring a 'try', players should hold the ball in two hands and press it firmly into the ground. Bouncing or dropping the ball does not count. *Note: Beginners can often find this a difficult skill to perform at pace. Greater success can be achieved by encouraging players to bend their knees and put the ball down to one side, and not directly in front of them.*
- » For safety, when playing on hard surfaces, players merely have to hold onto the ball and run over the goal line to score a try.



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## Game 1 – Tails

(Whole class activity)



### Number of players

Whole class/group (approximately 30) or less.

### Aim

How many "tails" (ribbons) can you collect from the other players in 30 seconds?

### Size of area

For whole class/group, use half a school soccer/rugby pitch, approximately 30 meters x 30 meters (30 large steps x 30 large steps).

### Player organization

Start spread out in the designated area.

### Activity explained

It's all against all. On the signal to start, the players chase after each other and attempt to collect as many 'tails' (ribbons) as possible by tagging other players. After 30 seconds, count up the number of 'tails' (ribbons) collected.

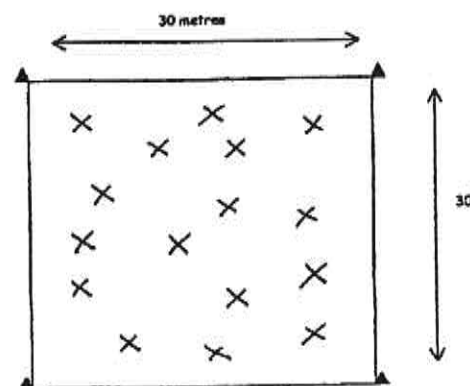
Add to this total any ribbons you may still have remaining on your belt. The winner is the player who has collected the most number of 'tails'.

#### Note:

*Players are not allowed to pull off their own ribbons.*

*Players still remain in the game even if they have had both their ribbons removed. This is the only game where players keep hold of the ribbons they remove.*

*In all others, they must give back the ribbon to the player they have tagged.*



### Equipment

- » Tag belts
- » Marker discs/cones to mark playing area.

### Game changes

Easier – Players are only allowed to move at a fast walking pace. Make the playing area larger.

Harder – Make the playing area smaller.

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## **Similar games**

- » Team tails—Make it a team event, e.g. how many 'tails' can the yellow team collect from the rest of the players in 30 seconds?
- » Scarecrow Tag (see Game 2)
- » Octopus (see Game 3)

## **Teaching points**

- » Always be aware of where you are running.
- » Avoid running backwards as this is a relatively slow way of moving and could lead to collisions.
- » When being chased by a tagger, don't just run in a straight line but use changes in pace and direction to get away.

**Game 2– Stuck in the Mud (or Scarecrow Tag)** (Whole class activity)



**Number of players**

Whole class/group (approximately 30) or less.

**Aim**

Teams of taggers (one quarter of the group) try and tag as many players as possible in a given time (e.g. 30 seconds).

**Size of area**

For whole class/group use half a school soccer/football pitch, approximately 30 meters x 30 meters.

**Player organization**

Divide class into 4 colored teams. One team are the taggers, all others are free. Start spread out in the designated area.

**Activity explained**

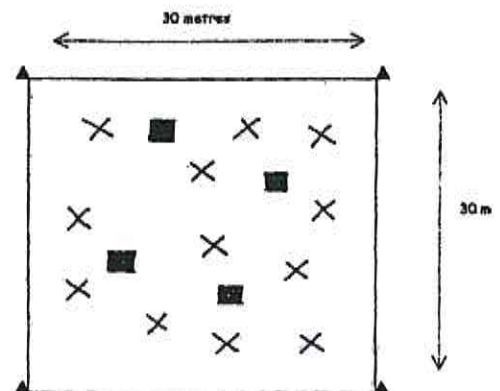
On the signal to start, the tagging team chases after the rest of the group and attempt to tag as many players as possible.

When players are tagged, they become 'stuck in the mud', i.e. they stand with their feet and legs spread apart and must remain 'struck' in this position.

To become 'unstuck', a player who is still free must crawl through your legs. Both players can then rejoin play.

*Note: If playing on hard surfaces, players merely have to duck under the player's outstretched arms to free them.*

*At the end of the 30 seconds, the number of players still stuck is tallied. Other teams now have their turn at being the chasing team and try to beat this score.*



**Equipment**

- » Tag belts
- » Marker discs/cones to mark playing area.

**Game changes**

Easier: Make area smaller so it is easier to catch players.

Harder: Make area larger. Decrease the number of taggers.

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## Similar games

Same game but this time using rugby balls. Here each member of the tagging team carries a ball and rather than catch players by removing a ribbon, they touch them with a ball.

*Note: The ball must be held in two hands and, for safety, the touch must be soft and below shoulder level.*

*Octopus (see Game 3).*

## Teaching points

- » Don't forget to shout 'tagged' when you catch somebody, and then hand the ribbon back to him or her.
- » Can the tagging team work out a strategy to catch the others? e.g. zone marking or 'hunting' in pairs (allow some time for discussion).
- » By pushing your hips away from the chaser just as they are about to grab your ribbon, you can sometimes avoid being tagged.
- » If you get tagged, receive your ribbon back and stick it back on your belt. By standing with your legs and arms spread wide apart, indicate to others you have been caught.



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## Game 3 – Octopus

(Whole class activity)



### Number of players

Whole class/group (approximately 30) or less.

### Aim

To try and get past the catchers, and 'tentacles', and make it to the other end without being tagged.

### Size of Area

For whole class/group, use half a school soccer/rugby pitch, approximately 30 meters x 30 meters.

### Player organization

Divide class into 4 different colored teams. One team is the catchers who spread out in the designated area. Each catcher has a ball. The remainder of the class stands along the line A-B.

### Activity explained

The game is based on the traditional game of 'Bulldog'. On the signal to start, the players attempt to run across to line

C-D, and safety, without getting tagged. The team of catchers' gives chase and tries to touch as many players as possible with the ball.

*Note: The ball must be held in two hands and not thrown at players. Touches must be below shoulder height.*

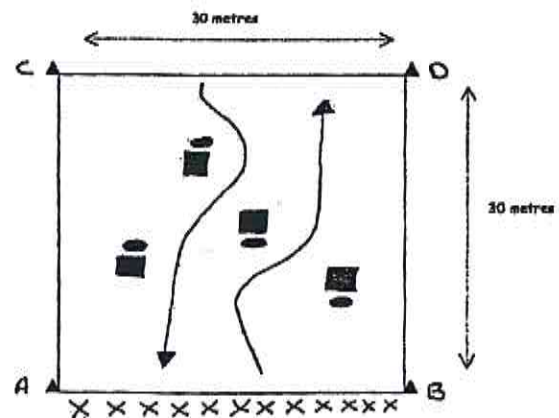
If touched by a ball, that player is then 'struck in the mud' at the place they were touched, and becomes a 'tentacle'. These 'tentacles' remain stuck in the mud but can now assist the catching team by removing the ribbon of any free player who might run too close to them. When a 'tentacle' tags a player, that player too is caught and becomes a 'tentacle'. Once all the remaining players have made it safely to line

C-D, the teacher then gives the signal for them to try to make it back to the original line, A-B. This process is repeated again and again until the last player is caught. This player is the winner. (Or, repeated for a set number of goes and all remaining players are the winners).

*Note:*

*If balls are not available, then all players are simply caught by tagging them.*

*'Tentacles' must remain stuck in the mud but are allowed to swivel around each time to face the group at the beginning of each new run.*



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## Equipment

- » Tag belts
- » Marker discs/cones to make playing area.
- » Balls (optional)

## Game changes

Easier – Make playing area larger. Reduce the number of catchers.

Harder – Make playing area smaller. Increase the number of catchers. Allow 'tentacles' the freedom to pivot on one foot as you can in netball.

## Similar games

Scarecrow Tag (see Game 2)

Continuous Tries (see Game 6)

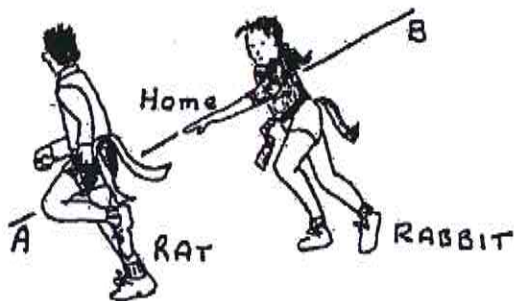
## Teaching points

- » Look to run at 'spaces not faces' (spaces not defenders/catchers). These spaces are often to be found down the edges of the playing area.
- » Can the catching team work out any defensive strategies to make it harder for players to get through?  
*E.g. positioning themselves as a defensive wall of players across the playing area.*



## Game 4 – Rats & Rabbits

(Whole class activity)



### Number of players

Whole class/group (approximately 30) or less.

### Aim

To reach your 'home' line before getting tagged by your partner.

### Size of Area

For the whole class/group, use the whole of a school soccer/ rugby pitch, approximately 70 meters x 30 meters.

### Player organization

Stand alongside a partner about your own pace on either side of the half way line.

*Note: For safety, there should be a gap of about 2 meters between the two players.  
All the players on one side of the line are 'rats'. Their partners on the other side are 'rabbits'.*

### Activity explained

The teacher/coach calls out either 'rats' or 'rabbits'. If the call is 'rats', all the 'rats' run and try to get to line A-B and 'home', their partners, the 'rabbits', chase after them and try to tag them before they can get there. If 'rabbits' is the call, the 'rabbits' try to get to their home line, C-D, before their partners, the 'rats', can tag them. One point is scored for a tag and one for a successful run 'home'.

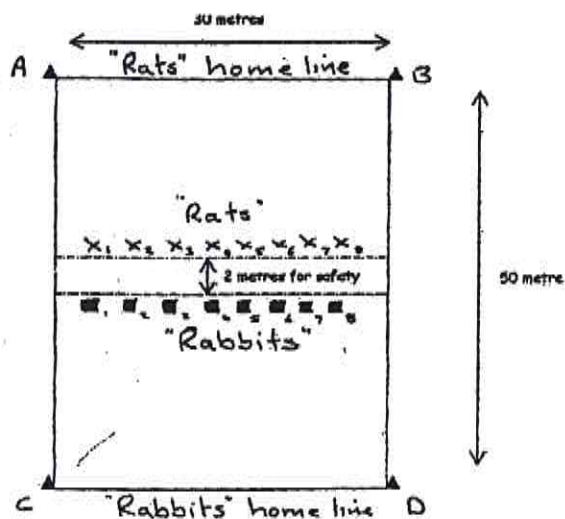
### Equipment

- » Tag belts
- » Marker discs/cones to mark playing area.

### Game changes

**Easier** – Players are only allowed to move at a fast walking pace.

**Harder** – Players start in different positions, e.g. sitting down with arms and legs crossed, lying down on their fronts or backs. Teacher/coach could tease the group by making the call "Raaaaaaats" or "Raaaaaaabbits" at the start.



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## Similar games

Rats and Rabbits using balls. Here the same game is played but this time balls are first scattered randomly in the area between the centerline and the home lines. Players now have a choice of either running directly for home, as they did before, or risk trying to bend down and pick up a ball on their way and scoring a try over their home line. If they manage to score a try without getting tagged, they score not 1 but 5 points.

*Note: Players are not allowed to kick the ball.*

## Teaching points

- » When starting in a standing position, prepare yourself to react quickly to the call by standing with your feet about shoulder width apart and sink down a little by bending your knees. Aim to get your weight off your heels and onto the balls of your feet with your heels hardly touching the ground. You should feel quite 'bouncy' in this position. Try to relax your mind and body and react instantly to the call. Avoid tensing up when waiting for the call.
- » When playing the game with the balls, try to scoop these up on the move to limit the chances of getting tagged. The technique for this is for players to approach the ball from the side. If you approach directly on, you risk kicking the ball forward. Bend down and try to scoop the ball up into two hands, initially using your rear hand to do the scooping. The action is not dissimilar to what you would use to scoop up a handful of wet sand on the beach.

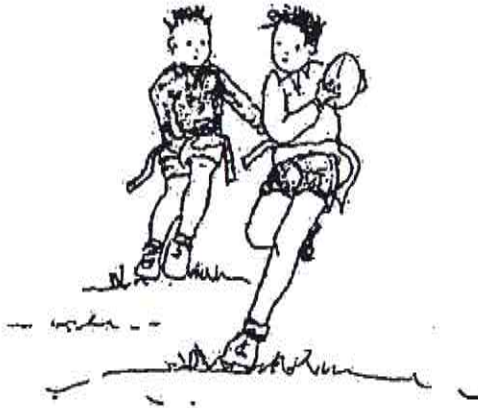


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## Game 5 – Cat & Mouse

(Whole class activity)



### Number of players

The whole class/group (approximately 30) or less.

### Aim

Can you chase after and catch your partner.

### Size of area

With the whole class/group, use approximately half of a school soccer or rugby pitch, approximately 30 meters x 30 meters.

### Player organization

In pairs with a partner of roughly the same pace and ability. One player is the 'mouse' and carries the ball; their partner is the 'cat'. Spread out in the designated area with at least 2 large steps between you and your partner.

### Activity explained

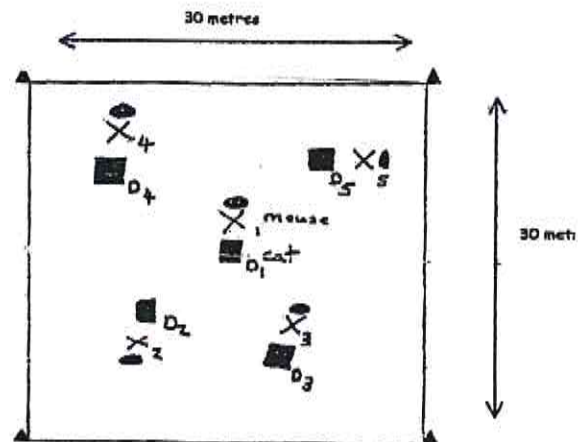
On the signal to start, the 'cat' attempts to chase after and tag their partner, the 'mouse'. If tagged, the 'mouse' hands the ball over to the 'cat' and replaces their ribbon on their belt. The players now reverse their roles with the new 'mouse' running away as soon as they receive the ball. Continue playing until the allocated time is up (e.g. 30 seconds). How many times did you catch your partner?

#### Note:

*If you do not have enough rugby balls to go around, then you can use footballs or netballs, or no ball at all.*

*Once the game is under way, it is continuous, i.e. once a tag has been made, the ball and ribbon is exchanged and the new*

*'mouse' can immediately start getting away. Their partner, however, must first replace their ribbon on their belt before giving chase. If there is a group of three, then two 'cats' can chase one 'mouse' or vice versa.*



### Equipment

- » Tag belts
- » Balls
- » Marker discs/cones to mark playing area.

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## Game changes

Easier – Make play area larger. Play in 3's or 4's with one 'cat' chasing two or three 'mice'.

Harder – Make play area smaller. Play in 3's or 4's with two or three 'cats' chasing one 'mouse'.

## Similar games

Cat & Mouse with the ball carried in two hands. This is exactly the same game but a rule is introduced stating that the ball must be carried in two hands. (This is to encourage good habits when playing the proper game of Tag Rugby). If the teacher/coach, or partner catches a player tucking the

ball under one arm, then the ball carrier immediately has to stop and hand the ball over to their partner.

Continuous tries (see Game 6)

Slalom chase (see Game 12).

## Teaching Points

- » Ball carriers, 'mice', avoid turning to face your partner resulting in you having to run backwards to get away. Instead, try to face forward and use changes of pace and direction to get away.
- » Remember, by pushing your hips to one side just as your partner tries to grab your ribbon, you can often avoid being tagged.
- » Try to learn good habits and carry the ball in two hands, a requirement in the more advanced version of the game. The ball should be carried in a near vertical position with the nose of the ball facing skywards. Fingers should be spread out around the body of the ball with thumbs pointing upwards. Don't hold the ball by the point. This makes later passing more difficult. Contact with the ball should be with the 10 finger pads not the palm of the hand; remember –'dirty fingers, clean palms'. Elbows should be bent and arms relaxed to assist with running. The ball should not be touching the chest.



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## Game 6 – Continuous Tries

(Whole class activity)

### Number of players

Whole class/group (approximately 30) or less.

### Aim

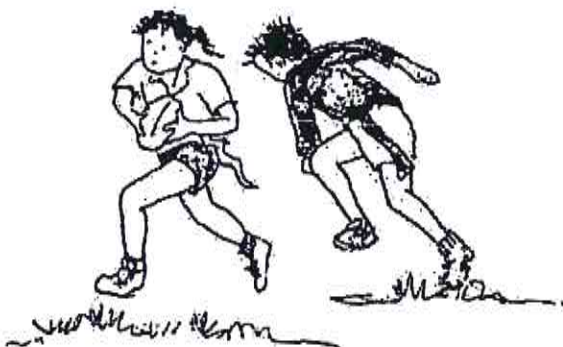
How many tries can your team score in a set period of time, e.g. 60 seconds?

### Size of playing area

With whole class/group, use about half of a school soccer/rugby pitch, approximately 30 meters x 30 meters.

### Player organization

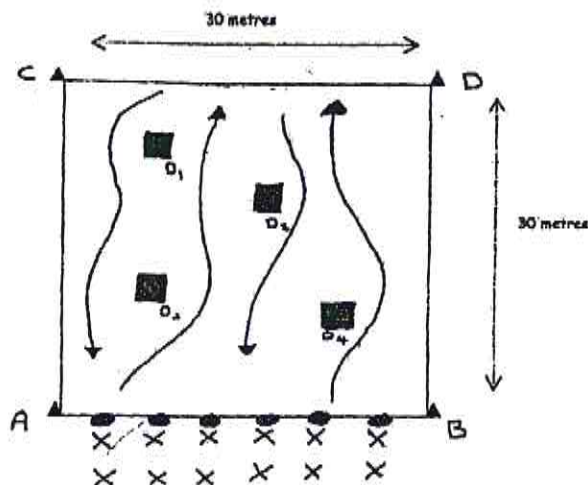
Divide class/group into 4 different colored teams. One team is the taggers (defenders). Tagging team start spread out in the designated area. The rest line up along line A-B, in teams of 2, 3 or 4 depending on the availability of balls. (Where possible try to team up with players of the same colored ribbons to make it easy to later change over the tagging team). The front player of each team has a ball.



### Activity explained

On the signal to start, all the players with a ball run and attempt to beat the defenders (taggers) and score a try over the line C-D without being tagged. Once a player scores a try, they immediately turn and again attempt to run back past the defenders and score a try back on the line A-B. The player then hands the ball over to the next person in their team who has their go, and so on until the time is up.

If a player with the ball is tagged, they receive back their ribbon from the defender. Defenders cannot anybody else until they return the ribbon. Ball carriers quickly return to their team and hand the ball over to the next player who then has their attempt. Meanwhile, the tagged player replaces their ribbon and is ready to go again on their turn. The team with the most number of tries in total, after the allocated time, is the winner.



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*Note: Make teams as small as possible to ensure maximum activity. Tagged players must carry the ball back to their team, not kick or throw it back. Ball carriers cannot be tagged once they have crossed the try lines.*

## **Equipment**

- » Tag belts
- » Balls.
- » Marker discs/cones to mark playing area.

## **Game changes**

Easier – Make play area wider and/or shorter. Decrease the number of taggers.

## **Similar games**

Continuous tries in pairs – Here players go in pairs, one ball carrier and one support player. The aim is for the pair to score a try without getting tagged whilst in possession of the ball. Players now have the option of passing to their partner when threatened by a defender. No forward passes are allowed (see Rules for Tab Rugby). If a forward pass is made, or players are tagged whilst in possession of the ball, the pair must return to the starting line and begin again (or hand the ball over to the next pair if in teams.)

*Note: Only the players with the ball can be tagged. To avoid confusion, it is advisable for players initially to score only in one direction, filtering back down the sides to the starting line. Defenders must remember to hand back the ribbon to the player after making a tag, before they can go and tag anybody else. If a defender intercepts or picks up a loose ball, then it becomes a 'dead ball'. It is then given back to the attacking pair who returns to the start line.*



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## Game 7 – Prisoners

(Whole class activity)



### Number of players

Whole class/group (approximately 30 players) or less.

### Aim

Can the 'police officers' catch all the escaped 'prisoners'?

### Size of playing area

With whole class/group, use half of a school soccer/rugby pitch, approximately 30 meters x 30 meters.

### Playing organization

Divide class/group into four different colored teams. Make one team the 'police officers', the rest are the 'escaped prisoners'. 'Police officers' have a ball each and start spread out in the playing area. 'Escaped prisoners' all start behind the A-B line.

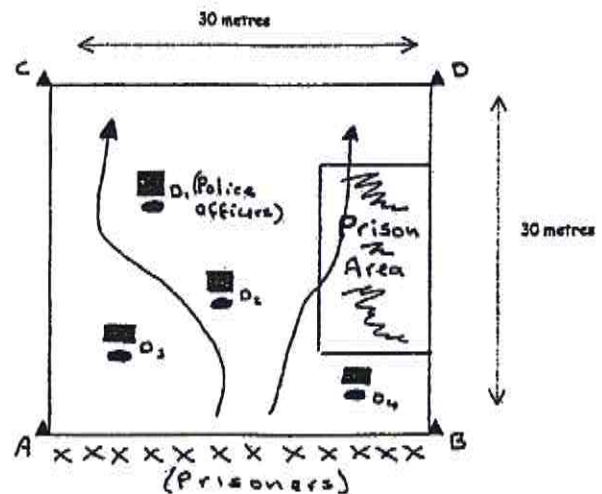
### Activity explained

On the signal to start, the 'prisoners' have to attempt to reach the line C-D and safety. The 'police officers' chase after them and try to catch the 'prisoners' by touching them below shoulder level with the ball. The ball must be held in two hands and not thrown at the players. If the 'prisoner' is caught, they must go to the prison where they remain for the rest of the game.

If a 'prisoner' makes it to the line C-D, they wait for the signal by the teacher/coach before attempting to run back to the line A-B. Again, the 'police' try to catch them. The game continues until all the 'prisoners' are caught or for a set number of goes.

If a 'prisoner', who is still free, chooses to run through the prison area, then a prison inmate can assist the 'police' and catch this 'prisoner' by tagging them. The last remaining 'prisoner' to be caught is the winner (or, all those still free if playing a set number of runs).

*Note: If balls are not available, then the 'police officers' can catch the 'prisoners' merely by tagging them. To save any wasting of time, as soon as the teacher/coach give the signal to go, the 'prisoners' can be tagged even if they remain behind the lines A-B or C-D.*



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## Equipment

- » Tag belts.
- » Marker discs/cones to mark playing area.
- » Balls (optional).

## Game changes

Easier – Make play area wider and/or shorter. Decrease the number of 'police officers' and decrease the size of the prison area.

Harder – Make play area narrower. Increase the number of 'police officers' and increase the size of the prison.

## Similar games to play

Octopus (see game 3)

## Teaching points

- » **'Prisoners'** Try to run at spaces not faces. Avoid running backwards towards the try line you started at.
- » **'Police officers'** Can you work out a defensive strategy to catch the 'prisoners'? For example, positioning yourselves as a defensive wall across the whole play area.



## Game 8 – Catch My Tail

(Group game/activity)



### Number of players

Teams of 4 or 5

### Aim

Catchers try to touch the back player of the chain with the ball.

### Size of area

Approximately 10 meters x 10 meters.

### Player organization

3 or 4 players make a chain by holding each other around the waist. One player is the catcher and is at the front, facing the group, with a ball.

### Activity explained

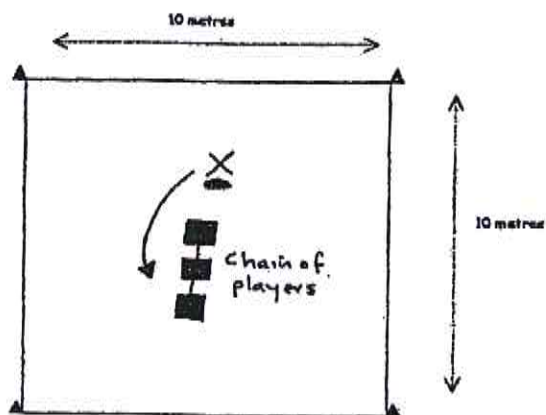
The catcher tries to catch the back player of the chain by touching that player gently with the ball. The chain must stay linked together and work as a team to protect this player. If the player is caught, the catcher wins and players change positions and start again. If, however, after 30 seconds, the catcher has been unsuccessful, the chain of players win and players again change positions.

*Note, for safety:*

*Players in the chain must remain on their feet.*

*A maximum of 4 players should make up the chain.*

*Players in the chain should only hold onto the waist of the player in front and not grip hold of their tag belt. This is because fingers could be damaged if players change direction quickly.*



### Equipment

- » Tag belts.
- » Marker discs/cones to mark playing area.
- » Balls (optional, see 'Similar games').

### Game changes

Easier – Only two players make up the chain.

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## Similar games

If balls are unavailable, the catcher can instead catch the back player by removing their ribbon.

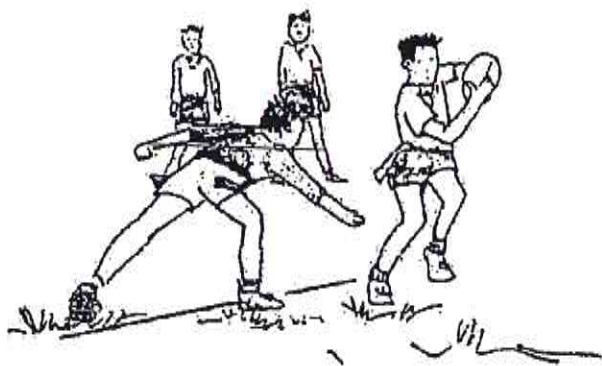
## Teaching points

- » As a player making up the chain, always try to bend your knees and keep your feet about shoulder width apart.
- » Stay on the balls of your feet, heels should hardly be touching the ground.
- » Take short steps and avoid crossing your feet over when moving.
- » Communicate to each other and try to keep the last person at the back of the chain and furthest away from the catcher.
- » Ball carrier – feint to go one way but instead go the other.



## Game 9 – Space Invaders

(Group game/activity)



### Number of players

Teams of 4 or 5

### Aim

To beat the defender and score a try without getting tagged.

### Size of playing area

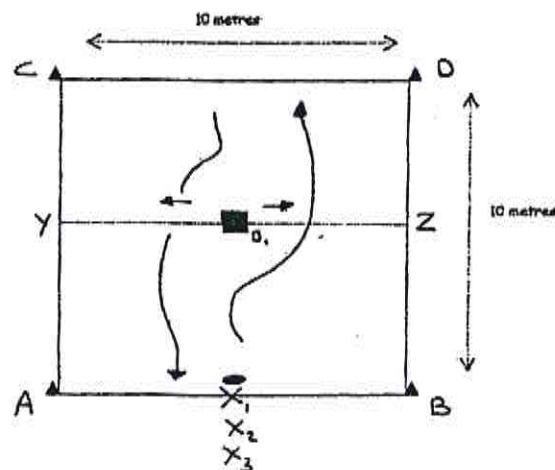
Approximately 10 meters x 10 meters.

### Play organization

One player acts as a defender, the rest are attackers and line lineup behind the line A-B with the ball at the front. The defender stands on the line Y-Z, and is only allowed to move sideways along this line.

### Activity explained

The first attacker has the ball and attempts to beat the defender and score a try over the line C-D, without being tagged. If successful, they attempt to do the same thing on the way back, this time scoring over the line A-B. The ball is then handed over to the next attacker who has his turn, and so on until all the attackers have had a turn. The defender is then changed. If an attacker gets tagged, they retrieve their ribbon back, return to the starting line and hand the ball over to the next attacker. A point is awarded to the attacker if they score a try, a point to the defender if they make a tag.



### Equipment

- » Tag belts.
- » Marker discs/cones to mark playing area.

### Game changes

Easier – Make play area wider. Two attackers, each with a ball, run at the same time.

Harder – Make play area narrower. Attackers are given only 10 seconds to score. Other attackers act as timekeepers and count 'one thousand, two thousand, three thousand', etc.

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## Similar games

- » **Bull rush** – Similar to 'Space invaders', but once the attacker enters the play area, the defender is not confined to line Y-Z but instead is free to move anywhere in the grid.
- » Either of these games can be developed into games of 2 versus 1 or 3 versus 1 (2 or 3 attackers versus 1 defender), where the attackers have to try and score without getting tagged while in possession of the ball. No forward passes are allowed.
- » Continuous tries (see Game 6).

## Teaching points

### **Attackers:**

- » Try to pretend to run hard to one side of the defender but instead push hard off your outside foot and change direction, beating your defender on the other side (a 'sidestep', see Section 3 'Skills & Practices for Tag Rugby').
- » Try to unbalance, 'wobble', the defender by making sudden changes of direction as you approach them. Then accelerate past them before they can recover their balance.
- » Try to maintain your running speed and beat the defender quickly.

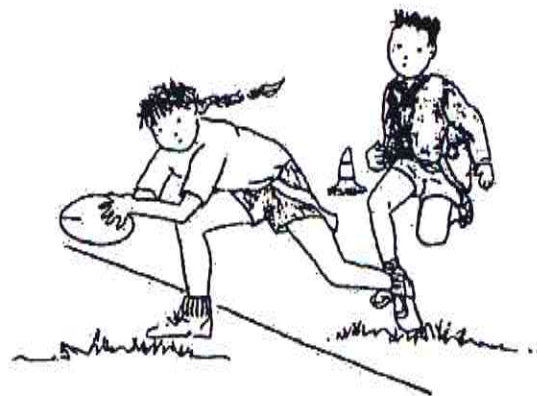
### **Defenders:**

- » Try to maintain your balance at all times. Keep your knees bent and your weight on the balls of your feet.
- » Spread your 'wings' (arms) make the space you are protecting appear smaller to the attacker.
- » Focus on the attacker's waist area. This is the part of the body that will move least of all as they attempt to dodge past you.
- » Avoid crossing your legs over as this leaves you in a weak position to suddenly change direction.



## Game 10 – Hunter

(Group game/activity)



### Number of players

In groups of 4-6, working with a partner of your own speed and ability.

### Aim

Can an attacker run around a cone, pick up a ball, and score a try before their partner, the defender, can tag them?

### Size of playing area

Approximately 10 meters x 10 meters.

### Player organization

Stand with your partner along the start/finish line, A-B. One player is the attacker, the other the defender. The ball is placed in the middle of the grid.

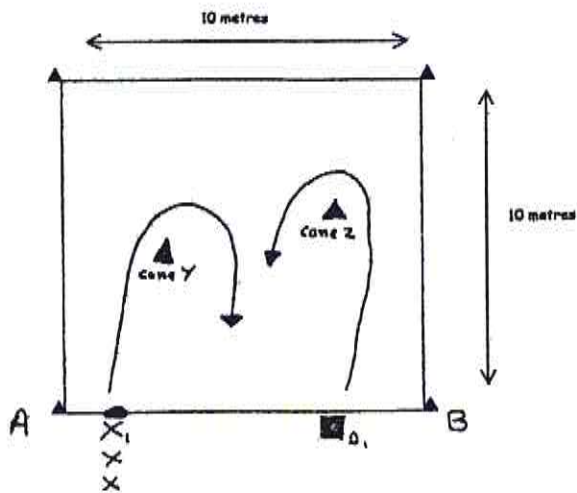
### Activity explained

On the signal to go, the attacker runs around cone Y, picks up the ball and attempts to score a try back on the line A-B before being tagged. At the same time their partner, the defender runs around cone Z and tries to tag the attacker before they score. One point goes to the attacker for a try and one to the defender for a successful tag.

#### Note:

*Be prepared to differentiate here depending on the relative strengths and weaknesses of the two players involved. This can be achieved by adjusting the positioning of cones Y & Z in relation to the start line A-B.*

*Players are not allowed to kick or dive on top of the ball.*



### Equipment

- » Tag belts.
- » Marker discs/cones to mark playing area.
- » Balls

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## Game changes

Easier – The attacker starts with the ball in their hands. Defenders start sat/lying down, thereby allowing the attacker a head start.

Harder – Rather than the attacker picking up a stationary ball, the ball is instead rolled into the playing area as the attacker rounds the cone.

## Similar games

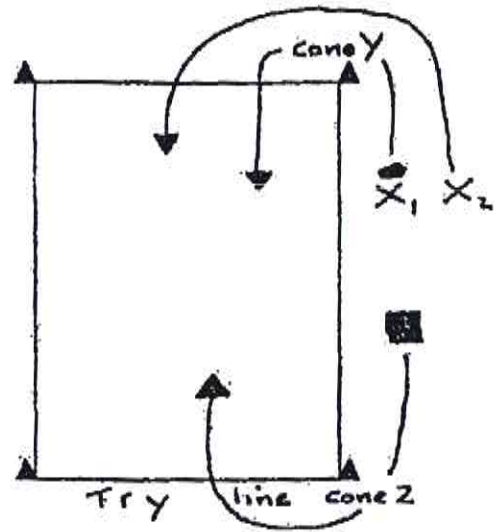
2 versus 1 – Play two attackers versus one defender. Can the attackers score without being tagged while in possession of the ball? No forward passes allowed.

*Note: This game can also be played with the attackers and defenders starting from a different position (see diagram).*

*As attackers gain in confidence, you can introduce a time limit of say 10 seconds for attackers' to score.*

## Teaching points

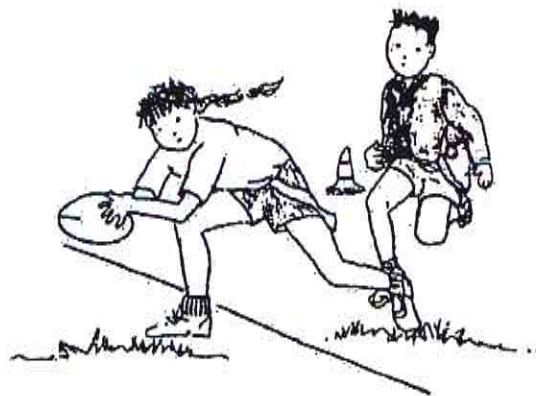
- » When waiting for the signal to start, avoid becoming too tense; instead, try to relax your mind and body and react instantly to the start signal.
- » Try to pickup the ball on the move to avoid being tagged. (See 'Teaching points' for the Rats & Rabbits' game).





## Game 11 – Rob the Nest

(Group game/activity)



**Number of players:** 12-20

### Aim

To collect as many balls ('eggs') as possible in your home hoop ('nest') in 30 seconds.

### Size of playing area

Approximately 10 meters x 10 meters.

### Player organization

Organize group into 4 teams of 3, 4 or 5 players. Players in each team are numbered 'one', 'two', 'three', 'four', etc.

### Activity explained

Approximately 4 balls are placed in each of the two middle hoops.

The players numbered 'one' compete first against each other. Their teammates are mere spectators at this stage and must not interfere in the game in any way.

On the signal to start, the 'ones' run out to the middle hoops and collect a ball that they place back in their home hoop.

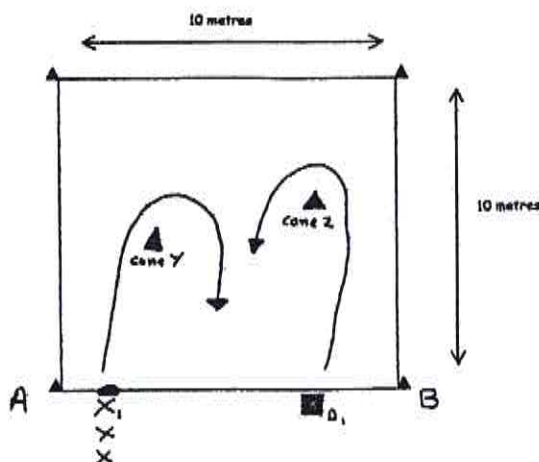
They can then choose to return to the center hoops and try to collect another ball, or they can steal a ball from another team's home hoop, returning it to their own. They continue trying to collect as many balls as possible in the 30 seconds. The number of balls in each of the home hoops is then added up. The team with the most balls is awarded 4 points, 2nd place = 3 points, 3rd = 2 points, 4th = 1 point.

The balls are then returned to the middle and the game restarts with the 'twos' who now have 30 seconds to collect as many balls as possible.

Repeat this until all the players in the team have had their turn. The team that has accumulated the most number of points is the winner.

*Note: Players are not allowed to carry more than one ball at a time. Balls must be placed in the hoops, as if scoring a try, and not thrown or bounced in. No guarding or shielding of ball is allowed. No diving on top of the balls; players must remain on their feet at all times.*

*Safety Point: Ensure that there is at least a 2-meter gap separating the two center hoops and that the balls are spread out at the start to avoid any collisions.*



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## Equipment

- » Six large hoops
- » 8 balls
- » Tag belts – only required if playing the variation described in 'Similar Games' below.

## Game changes

Easier:

Increase the number of balls in the middle.

Harder:

Decrease the number of ball in the middle.

## Similar games to play

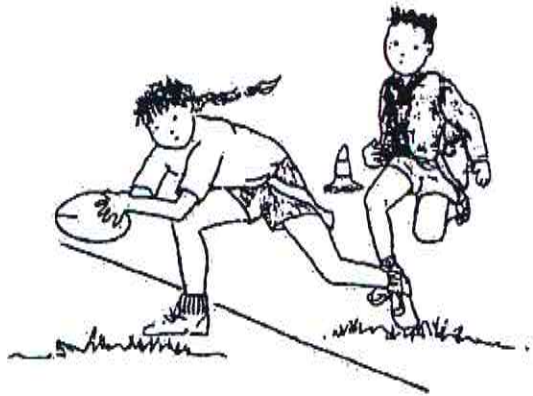
Introduce one or two catchers who can tag any player who is carrying a ball. The tagged player must then return this ball back to one of the center hoops. They can then stick their ribbon back on and rejoin the game but cannot immediately pick up the same ball that they had just held. Instead they must find one from another hoop.

## Teaching points

Ensure players place the balls down as if scoring a try and are not throwing or bouncing the balls into the hoops in an effort to same time. Encourage players to carry the ball in two hands.

## Game 12 – Slalom Run

(Group game/activity)



### Number of players

Groups of 6-8, working with a partner of similar pace.

### Aim

Can the defender tag the attacker before they score a try over the try line?

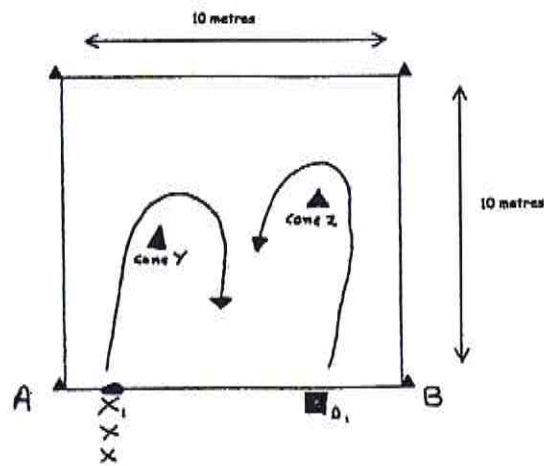
### Size of area

Approximately 30 meters x 10 meters.

### Activity explained

Players pair up with a partner of their own speed. One is the attacker and carries a ball, the other is the defender. The attacker begins on the start line, A-B; the defender stands about 2 meters behind. On the signal to start, the attacker weaves through the cones and attempts to score a try at the line C-D. The defender chases after them and tries to tag them before they score. One point is awarded to the attacker for a successful try, one to the defender for a tag. Next pair has their turn.

*Note: Both players must weave in and out of the cones, not merely run over the top of them. Use tall cones or flag posts if available to avoid this happening.*



### Equipment

- » Tag belts
- » Cones (tall ones if available)
- » Balls

### Game changes

Easier – Start the defender further back. Start the defender in a sitting/lying position.

Harder – Start the defender closer to the attacker. Place the ball five meters in front of the attacker so they have to pick it up on the move before negotiating the cones. Start players in a variety of different positions, (e.g. lying down on their front or backs, press-up position).



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## Similar games to play

**Game 10 – ‘Hunter’**, but this time both players have to weave through a series of cones before turning back for the try line.

## Teaching points

- » To aid a fast start, both players should start in a low position, with knees bent and one foot forward.
- » For the first few meters especially, players should lean forward and concentrate on pushing back hard off the balls of their feet.
- » Think ‘push’, ‘push’, ‘push’, with toes facing forward and heels off the ground. Attacker should carry the ball in two hands