READY TO USE GAMES

# Wide games

The long, light evenings mean that we can play some games in the great outdoors. Make sure your playing area is safe and secure, that the players know the boundaries, and where they can and can’t go. Big games and long evenings are great for making memories.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

## Capture the flag

**You will need:** two flags of different colours; lengths of wool in the same colours as the flag

The classic wide game. Divide the players into two teams. Give each team a flag and each player three lengths of wool the same colour as their flag. They should tie these loosely around their wrist. Send each team off to find a hiding place – a base to house their flag.

The two teams have to go in search of the opposing team’s flag, while at the same time defending their own. If a player catches or tags a player from the other team, they take one of their lengths of wool. When a player has lost all three pieces of wool, they have to return to base for two minutes before setting out again with three new pieces of wool. The winning team is the one who captures the other’s flag.

You might wish to have leaders stationed around your playing area to keep an eye on the game, especially where the terrain is rough.

## Where’s Wally?

**You will need:** lots of Where’s Wally? costumes (stripy hats and scarves, round spectacle frames); pens and paper

Dress up leaders in the Wally costumes and send them out to hide in your playing space. Give the players a piece of paper and pen each. They have to go out and find as many Wallys as possible, getting a signature from each one. The player with the most signatures at the end of the time limit is the winner. Leaders don’t have to stay in the same place; they can move around the playing space during the game.

If you can’t get hold of Wally costumes, then dress your leaders in whatever you have, as long as each leader is dressed identically.

## Hunter gatherer

**You will need:** lengths of wool in two colours; marker pens; small cards; bell

Send off five or six leaders (each with a different-coloured marker) to hide somewhere in your playing space. Split the players into two teams and give everyone in each team a piece of wool (each team a different colour), together with a card. The remaining leaders sit in the centre of the playing space, with the remaining lengths of wool. The players have to find the leaders and have their card marked by the hidden leaders. Designate one team the hunters and one the hunted. If the hunters catch the hunted during the game, they can claim their length of wool and escort the caught player back to the leaders (the common jail).

However, at various points during the game, ring the bell. This signals a swapping of roles. The hunters become the hunted; the hunted become the hunters. At this point, all prisoners are freed and given a new length of wool. Continue playing (and swapping roles) until a time limit is reached. Award points for coloured marks from the hidden leaders, as well as for captured wool. The team with the most points is the winner.

## Smugglers

**You will need:** large playing area, with places to hide throughout; some kind of contraband, such as sweets or pieces of fruit

Split the players into two teams. One is a team of customs officials, the other team is made up of smugglers. The smugglers start at one end of the playing area, the officials are scattered across the middle. The smugglers have to make it across the playing area to the other side (to a designated ‘safe house’) with as much contraband as they can without getting caught. The customs officials have to catch the smugglers in the act. If the officials catch a smuggler, they are arrested and any contraband they are carrying is impounded.

Each smuggler can carry as much of the contraband as they wish. The team may decide to spread the contraband between all their players. They may decide to entrust the whole lot to one player, hoping that the others act as decoys enabling that one player to reach the safe house.

Once all the smugglers have either been captured or made it to the safe house, count up how much contraband has been successfully smuggled, then switch roles.

## Find the torch

**You will need:** a torch; a building with many rooms

If the weather is not playing ball, this is a great game to play in a building that has many rooms (this is ideal when you’re able to go away with your group to a residential centre or boarding school). Take the torch, turn it on and hide it in a room. It should remain hidden so that you can find it only if you really look – make sure you can’t see the light as you enter the room.

The players have to search the building to find the torch. Once they do, they have to hide in the same room. Choose three pairs of leaders to be hunters. Hunters are not allowed to go into rooms, but can roam the corridors. If they catch or tag a player, they escort the player outside to a gathering point. The player has to re-enter the building and start their search afresh. The game is over when a time limit is reached or when everyone has found the torch.

**ALEX TAYLOR**

is resources editor for *Premier Youth and Children’s Work*.