

Games for Beaver Scouts



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Games are essential for the full development of children and the creation of fun through games is necessary for their growth and happiness.

There are so many things children can learn about themselves and their playmates while enjoying themselves and learning to interact with others in a meaningful way. Beaver Scouts having a tug of war must co-operate with each other to play the game. Co-operation leads to the improvement of the group as a whole. The important fact is that the Beaver Scout has learnt to co-operate while having fun.

Individually Beaver Scouts can understand their own capabilities through individual competition. Beaver Scouts should participate in a game for the fun and the experience of playing, not just for the sake of winning. They can develop a sense of fair play and be reconciled to the fact that they cannot always win. This is a tough lesson for this age group to accept and has to be learned gradually. The outcome of games is less significant than the fact that a child has participated to the fullest and enjoyed it. If these aspects can be stressed to the Beaver Scouts, they will gain more from the games they play and not just be caught up in inter-personal competitiveness.

Keeping control

It is important that all games are played with good order and discipline. Some ways of keeping control of the various types of games and ensuring they are fun for all concerned are:

- Have all the necessary equipment ready before the game starts.
- Have the Beaver Scouts sitting down whilst you explain the game. They fidget less that way and you have more command of the situation. Have complete silence before you start to explain.
- Choose games with simple rules. Make sure that the Beaver Scouts understand them before you begin. Have a trial run if it will help you to make sure that everyone knows what to do. Be quite certain you know how to play the game yourself!
- Knockout games are undesirable if they leave children idle on the sidelines where they are sure to start up a rival game of their own. Arrange that they shall only lose a life and return to the game.
- If the game goes wrong, stop it immediately and explain the rules again. Be firm about keeping the rules.
- Beaver Scouts should learn that fair play and good sportsmanship bring rewards.
- Introduce new games gradually; lots of new games all at once can be confusing.
- Do not play the same few 'favourite' games too often.
- Be aware of the capabilities of the Beaver Scouts; ensure challenge as well as fun.
- Praise and encourage the Beaver Scouts when they have tried very hard.
- Beware of adults joining in the games as this can overexcite the Colony.

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Types of games

Playing games is an ideal way to give the Beaver Scouts experience of working in different sizes of groupings. Some games focus on the individual, others require pairs to work together, others are organised with the Colony divided in half, some promote team work while others are enjoyed as a whole Colony. Some promote competition between individuals or teams; others rely on the Beaver Scouts co-operating together to succeed.

A good Beaver Scout Colony will offer over the three to four month planning period, a wide range of games, run in a variety of ways and balancing competitive and non-competitive games.

Here are a few examples of different types of games.

Energetic games

This type of game can help a Colony release energy; something all Beaver Scouts have in great abundance.

Relay games can be adapted to suit any theme, (assault courses, dressing up, carrying objects, hopping), and are easy to organise.

Snowball fight. The Colony forms up on the banks of the river, defined by two ropes or chalked lines. Both groups are equipped with a supply of stocking balls or newspaper balls and at the appropriate signal, throw the 'snowballs' at each other. Any snowballs that fall in the river are deemed to have melted and cannot be used.

Link-up tag. When a Beaver Scout touches or catches another, the second Beaver Scout is captured and they join hands and chase the remainder. As each new captive joins, the chain gets longer.

Quiet games

This type of game can calm the Colony and be an opportunity for the less agile to do well.

Leader of the band. Beaver Scouts sit in a circle, an object is passed round (a stick, cloth or piece of rope). When the whistle is blown or the music stops, the Beaver Scout with the object has to mime an action using the object. The rest of the Colony has to guess the action e.g. a paper plate as steering wheel, flying saucer, clock, mirror, etc.

Games of skill

This category can be split into two: physical skills and sense training skills.

Team games involving throwing stocking balls into buckets or boxes from a distance. Dress up a receptacle as a clown's mouth or attach a small bell which should be hit before the ball goes in.

Crab football. This is the same as ordinary football, except the Beaver Scouts move around with their bottoms and their hands on the floor.

What's that? The Beaver Scouts listen to household sounds taped on a recorder. How many can they identify?

What's in the bag? Everyone in the team can feel the bag together. As soon as they recognise an object by feel, they run up and tell the Leader who marks it off a list. The first group to guess all the objects is the winner. This game could have a seasonal touch by using objects Beaver Scouts would possibly find on festive occasions.

Outdoor games

Most indoor active games can be played out of doors, taking advantage of a larger playing area. It also gives the opportunity for collection games, e.g. collect six objects that are coloured red, different leaves, grasses, stones; the large scale ball games or chase games; and for treasure hunts and trails.

Colony games book

Leaders should endeavour to build up their own book of games, which are popular with their own

Beaver Scouts. The book should be divided up with sections for easy reference. It could be divided by grouping i.e. individual games, 2-team games, relay games, circle games, Colony games. Or by purpose; coming-in-games, quiet games, energetic games, outdoor games, sense training games etc.

New games can be obtained from a variety of sources including books, both Scouting and general, other Beaver Scout Leaders, Leaders from other Sections, your own experience as a child or from your own children, and from the Beaver Scouts themselves.

Games equipment

The Beaver Scout Colony will play a whole host of games using a wide variety of equipment. A games box or cupboard is an essential part of the Colony's resources.

The following items will prove useful in lots of different games:

large and small balls - foam, rubber, tennis, football, ping-pong; lightweight bats; newspaper balls; unihock or old hockey sticks; bean bags; hoops; skittles and plastic bottles; marker cones; blindfolds; big dice; ropes - long and short; tiles and carpet squares; sacks; old sheets; parachute or play canopy; counters; whistle; chalk and board; coloured tape - for marking the floor.

Some games for your Colony

Shapes Articles are placed in a bag and the Beaver Scouts have to try to guess the contents.

Fishes In the net Two Beaver Scouts in the centre of the room hold hands. Arrange the rest of the Colony in two teams against the walls at each end. The Beaver Scouts run from one end to the other without being caught in the net. If caught they join the end of the net.

Find your partner Cut out small cards with names on them, e.g. 'fish' and 'chips'; 'horse' and 'cart'; 'bat' and 'ball'. The Beaver Scouts pick up a card and find their partners by shouting out the word on their own card. They make a line with their partners down the centre of the room. This can be repeated as required.

Word game (Beaver Scouts, Colony, Lodges, etc.) Cut approximately 24 spills or coloured straws to different lengths. The Beaver Scouts in relay, run to a given base and make up the word by placing a long or short spill over the appropriate letters which are written on large cards.

Pea walks The Beaver Scouts in relay team, transfer peas from one source to another by sucking up a straw.

Guard the chair Some Beaver Scouts guard the chair while the rest of the Colony try to hit it with a soft ball. Time this, and then change the Beaver Scouts to see who lets through the most hits.

Fishing A magnet is attached to a string. The Beaver Scouts try to catch a cardboard fish with a paperclip attached. The team with the fastest catch wins.

Clock time Large cardboard clocks are placed in the centre of the room with moveable fingers. The Beaver Scouts are in a circle and numbered off 1, 2, 3 and so on. A number is called together with a time. The Beaver Scouts run up and alter the fingers to the correct time.

Mini-obstacle course Place obstacles round the room. The Beaver Scouts, in teams, are timed around the course.

Centipedes In relay team formation, each Beaver Scout bends down and holds on to the ankles of the Beaver Scout in front. They race to the other end of the room.