

5 minute Filler Games

Whether it's the start of a meeting while Leaders are setting up, at the end of a meeting or just to get everyone moving, 5 minute games are a great way to fill small pockets of time. You may know some of these games already or may know slightly different rules to one of them (different units may play them differently). Below is a list to inspire you whether you're new to Leading, a Young Leader or you just need a reminder. *Remember some games may not be appropriate for different ages or abilities so you may need to adapt them*

Simon says – 1 person is 'Simon' (could also be Brown Owl says or any other names) and gives simple instructions such as 'Simon says put your hands on your head'. All the players should then do this. If Simon says 'put your hands on your hips' (without the 'Simon says' at the beginning) then the players should not do this. Anyone who does do these actions is out! Keep going until you have 1 left

Duck duck goose – everyone sits in a circle apart from 1 player. This person goes around the outside of the circle counting each sitting player as 'Duck' one by one in order. After a few sitting players they will count the next one as 'Goose' (they can choose how many ducks before they say goose but maximum of 5-10 based on group size). The Goose will jump up and race the first player around the circle back to their space. Whichever one wins will get to sit in that space and the other player will continue round the circle to choose the next Goose.

Ladders – players need to pair up and sit on the floor in a line, facing their partner with their legs out flat in front of them (knees should be flat to the floor and fingers should be kept out of the way). The Leader will call out numbers (pair number 1 will be closest to the Leader, then 2 and so on). When your number is called both members of the pair will race to get back to their spots first (side with the most winners will win overall). The players should jump/run over the legs of anyone above them on the ladder and then round the outside of the group when they get to the top, then over the legs of anyone below them to get back to their spots.

Musical chairs – ask all the players to get a chair first. A Leader will play music and all the players must walk around the chairs until the music stops. A Leader will have removed 1 of the chairs in this time (for larger groups or when limited time you might want to remove more than 1 chair at a time). When the music stops everyone has to get to sit on a nearby chair, anyone without a chair will be out. Keep playing until there is only 1 chair left, whoever gets this chair is the winner.

Musical bumps – all the players have to dance to the music until the Leader stops it and then sit down as fast as they can. Last person to sit down is out, keep going until you have a winner.

Musical statues – all the players dance to the music until the Leader stops it and then have to stand still like statues. Anyone who wobbles or players who are slow to freezer are out, keep going until you have a winner.

Sharks – 1 or 2 players are sharks, the rest of the players are divided into 4 teams, standing in the 4 corners, and choose a name for their team (for example jellyfish, mermaids, dolphins etc). The Leader will call out the names of 2 groups who will have to swap places (you can make this more complicated by moving more than 2 groups at once but you'll have to specify where each group is going). The sharks will try and catch as many players as possible, making them 'rocks' (they have to sit on the floor at the point they were caught). Any players who are between bases can use the 'rocks' as temporary bases. Keep going until there is only 1 person left who has not been made a rock.

Stuck in the mud – 1 or 2 people are the chasers and the rest are runners. When a runner is tagged by a chaser they have to stop where they are and stand in a star jump position (legs wide and arms out). Another runner can free someone who has been caught by going between their legs or under their arms. Keep going until all the runners have been caught (this might take a while so try switching chasers so they don't get too tired out).

Heads down, thumbs up – choose at least 2 people to be thumb squeezers and everyone else should be sitting. When the Leader says all the sitting players should shut their eyes and put their heads down so they cannot see but leave their thumbs sticking up obviously (on top of their heads or just in front of their heads). The squeezers will then creep round and squeeze 1 thumb each and then creep back to the Leader who will let everyone know when they can open their eyes. Anyone who has their thumb squeezed will then take it in turns to guess who squeezed their thumb. When everyone has guessed the Leader will ask any squeezer who was guessed correctly to swap with the person who guessed them correctly, keep going until you run out of time.

Beans – each type of bean has a different action, the Leader will call out a type of bean and the players will all do the action for that bean (if you want to have a winner anyone who does the wrong action can be out). Feel free to add more types of beans and related actions.

Baked bean – curl up on the floor

Broad bean – stand as wide as possible

French bean – say 'ooh la la'

Beans on toast – lay on the floor taking up as much space as possible

Runner beans – jog on the spot

Long bean – stand as tall as you can with arms straight up above your head

Wink murder – 1 person is chosen as the detective and goes out of the room while everyone else stands in a circle and a 'murderer' is chosen. The detective is then called back in and has 3 guesses to find the murderer. The murderer tries to get as many people as possible by winking at them without being noticed. If you're winked at by the murderer you have to sit/lie down – bonus points for dramatic fake deaths! If the detective guesses correctly then they get to be the detective again and a new murderer is chosen. If the detective does not guess correctly in 3 tries or the murderer manages to get everyone first then the murderer becomes detective and a new murderer is chosen.