

# Children's Games

*Game instructions are provided here for some of our featured countries. Not all countries may be included.*

*You'll find many similarities among the games of different countries. No matter where they're from, children seem to enjoy the same types of games.*

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## Lesson 1: AFGHANISTAN

### Hopping Game

Everyone holds one foot behind their backs. They hop around, trying to push the others off balance.

### Eagle

One player is appointed to be the eagle and sits on a rock. The others are pigeons. They have an area where they are safe. The pigeons have to come out of the safe area to feed. They pretend to be pecking at the ground for grain. The eagle comes off the rock and tries to catch a pigeon. If a pigeon is caught, that person is the eagle for the next round.

### Pebble Game (sang chill bazi)

This game is much like the U.S. game of Jacks, and is traditionally played by girls only.

Two girls play against each other. Each player finds 5 pebbles. The first player puts 4 pebbles on the ground. She tosses the remaining pebble into the air and tries to pick up one of the other 4 and then catch the pebble she tossed before it hits the ground. If successful, she tries again, continuing until she either misses or has picked up all 4 pebbles. If she misses, the other girl has a turn.

Stage 2: Once a girl has managed to pick up all 4 pebbles, she puts the pebbles back on the ground. This time she must pick up 2 pebbles and catch the one she threw.

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## Lesson 2: TAIWAN

### Catch the Chicks

One child pretends to be an eagle, another is a hen, and the rest are the chicks. The chicks stand behind

the hen, who tries her best to protect the chicks. The eagle tries to catch the chicks. If a chick is caught, the eagle wins the game. The chick who is caught becomes the eagle for the next game.

### Commander

This game is like the U.S. game of Red Light-Green Light.

One person is chosen to be the "commander." He stands with his back to everyone and counts to three. While he counts, the others move closer to him. When the commander stops counting, he turns and looks at everyone. Everyone quickly stops. If the commander sees someone move, he can point to that person and that person is out. If someone is able to reach and touch the commander while the commander is counting, that person wins.

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## Lesson 5: SPAIN

### Tiente (Tag)

Played just like the U.S. version of Tag.

### Tiente envenenada (Poisoned Tag)

Played just like Tag, only when a player is tagged and becomes "It," he must run with one hand touching the part of his body where he was tagged.

### Corazón (Heart)

This game is similar to the U.S. game of Freeze Tag, with some variations. One player is "It." "It" tries to tag the other players. At any time, a player can call out "Corazón!" and stop like a statue, linking his hands in front of his chest. He must remain still until another child frees him by tagging him. If "It" is able to touch another child, that person becomes the new "It."

## **La araña (The Spider)**

This game is similar to the U.S. games of Pom-Pom-Pull-Away and Chain Tag.

Two parallel lines are drawn on the ground some distance from each other. One person is “It” and stands in the middle, between the two lines. The rest of the players stand behind one of the lines.

When “It” shouts “Araña!” the players must run across to the other line while “It” tries to tag them. Any player that is tagged must link hands with “It” to become the spider (araña). They are not allowed to break the link while they continue to try to tag other players. The game ends when everyone has been touched.

## **El escondite al revés (Hide & Seek in reverse)**

This game is played in a big place, often covering an entire village. One person is “It” and hides. The rest of the players look for “It.” When someone finds “It,” he/she hides in the same place. The last person to discover the hiders is the new “It.”

## **Zapatito inglés (English Little Shoe)**

This game is like the U.S. game of Red Light-Green Light.

One person is “It” and stands near a wall. A line is drawn on the floor some distance from the wall. The other players begin behind the line.

“It” must face the wall and say, “Uno, dos, tres, zapatito inglés” (one, two, three, English little shoe). During that time, everyone moves forward toward the wall. “It” quickly turns around and tries to see someone moving. He points to that person, who must return to the line and start over.

The first person to reach the wall must touch the wall and say “Chorizo” (a type of salami). This person is the new “It.”

In a variation of the game, when someone touches the wall and says “Chorizo,” everyone hurries to return to the start line without being tagged by “It.” If “It” tags someone, that person is the new “It.”

## **Moros y Cristianos (Moors & Christians)**

Two lines are drawn some distance from each other. The players are divided into two teams. Each team stands behind a line. A player from Team 1 goes across to Team 2. The members of Team 2 all stand with a hand in front of them. The player from Team 1 walks down the line, in front of Team 2. He suddenly hits the hand of one team member, then runs back to his own team.

The person whose hand he hits must chase him and try to tag him. If the player from Team 1 is tagged, he is out. If he is not tagged, the chaser is out. The game ends when all members of one team are out.

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## **Lesson 6: BRAZIL**

### **Queimada**

This game is much like Dodgeball.

Players form two teams with a line dividing them. Behind each team is a place called the “cemetery.” Players throw a ball, trying to hit a member of the opposite team. When someone is hit, he is “dead” and must lie down in the “cemetery.” The game is done when every member of one team is in the cemetery.

### **Cinco Marias (Five Marias)**

This game is like the U.S. game of Jacks. The instructions are exactly the same as the Afghanistan Pebble Game on page 1.

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## **Lesson 9: BURKINA FASO**

### **Strategy Game**

Children make their own playing “board” on the ground by scooping out dirt to form 36 “pockets,” 6 wide and 6 long. One child uses 12 pebbles for playing pieces, another uses 12 small sticks. The players take turns placing a piece in a pocket, trying to make a row of 3, either vertically or horizontally. Each time a player makes a row of 3, he can remove one of the opponent’s pieces. When one person has only 2 pieces remaining, he is the loser.

## **Laissez tomber (Let It Fall)**

The children form into pairs, with one member riding piggy-back on the other. A ball is thrown from one pair to the next while half the children chant “Laissez tomber” (Let it fall) and the other half chant “Ne laissez pas tomber” (Don’t let it fall). There are no winners or losers, but lots of laughter, especially when the ball falls to the ground.

## **Le renard (The Fox)**

This is similar to the U.S. game of Duck Duck Goose.

The children sit in a circle. One person goes around the outside of the circle carrying a ball and chanting “Passe passe” (pass, pass). At some point, he calls out “Le renard!” and drops the ball against the back of one of the sitting children, then runs around the circle. The sitting child must get up and chase the runner, trying to tag him before he reaches the empty spot. If the runner is tagged, he must stand in the center of the circle on one leg.

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## **Lesson 10: COSTA RICA**

### **The Little Chicks**

Preschool children like to act out the words of this song:

The little chicks say “Pio pio pio” when they are hungry (rub tummy),  
And when they are cold (hug arms around self).  
The mother hen looks for corn and wheat (move head up and down as if pecking corn).  
She gives them food and grants them shelter (hold out hand, then wrap arms around self).  
Under mama’s wings, huddling up (put arms around each other),  
Sleep little chicks until the next day (put face on folded hands and close eyes).

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## **Lesson 11: CAMBODIA**

### **Tres (Jacks)**

A person holds a ball, throwing it up and catching

it with one hand. With the other hand, he tries to catch sticks that someone throws to him. The sticks are usually small, like pens or chopsticks.

## **Chab Kon Kleng (Eagle Grabs Chicks)**

One child is chosen to be a “hen,” another is an “eagle,” and the rest are “chicks.” The “eagle” tries to catch the “chicks” before they can escape to safety behind the “hen.”

## **Leak Kon Saeng (Hide the Handkerchief)**

This is similar to the U.S. game of Duck Duck Goose.

The players form a circle and crouch down with their hands on their knees. One person (“It”) walks around the outside of the circle carrying a large piece of cloth (a kramah) that has been twisted to form a stiff loop. He must quietly place the kramah behind someone’s back and keep walking.

When a player realizes the kramah is behind him, he must jump up, pick up the kramah, and chase “It,” trying to hit him on the back with the kramah. If “It” reaches the empty spot, he sits in it, and the chaser becomes “It.” If “It” is tagged by the kramah, he must try again.

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## **Lesson 12: MEXICO**

### **Sol y Hielo (Sun & Ice)**

This game is much like the U.S. game of Freeze Tag.

Players form two teams. Players from each team try to touch players from the opposite team. When a player touches someone, he says, “Hielo” (YAY-loh). That person must stand completely still until a member of his own team touches him and says “Sol” (sohl). Then he is free to run again.

### **The Blind Hen (Gallinita Ciega)**

One person (the “hen”) is blindfolded. He/she must catch someone and then say what that person’s name is. If the blind hen is right, that person becomes the new blind hen. If not, the game continues.