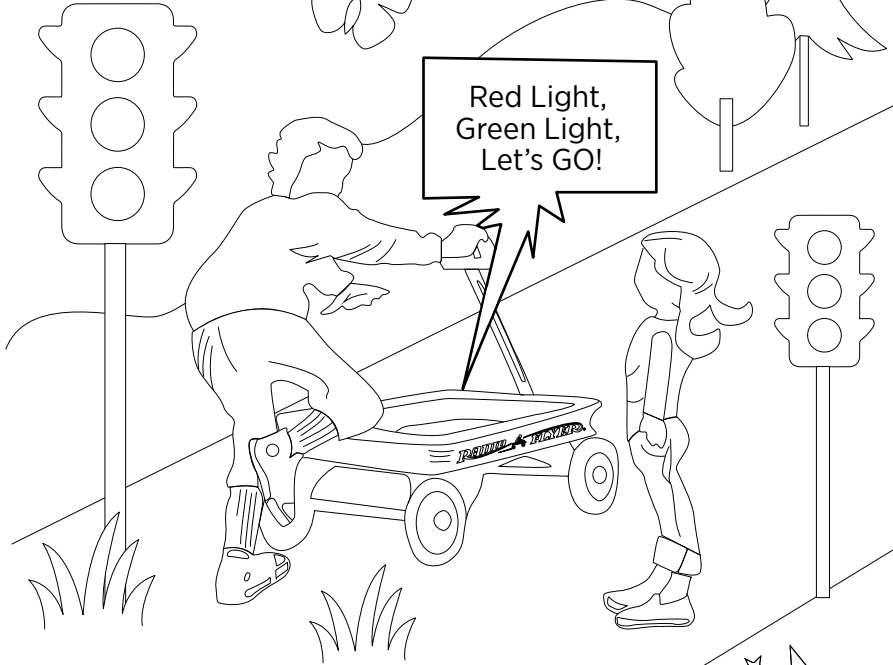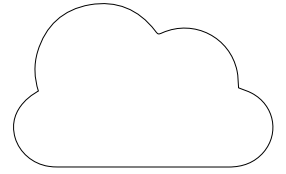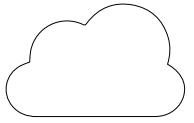# The Ultimate Outdoor Game Guide
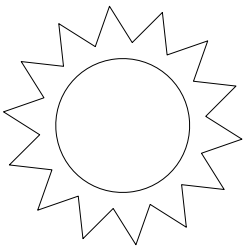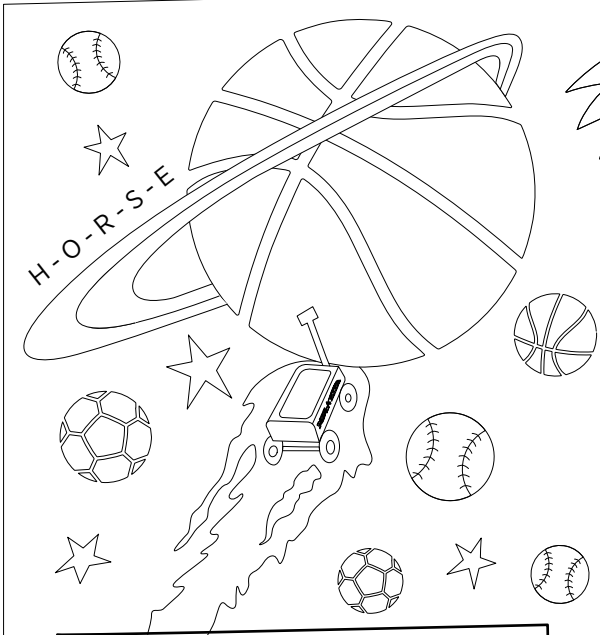
Red Light, Green Light, Let's GO!
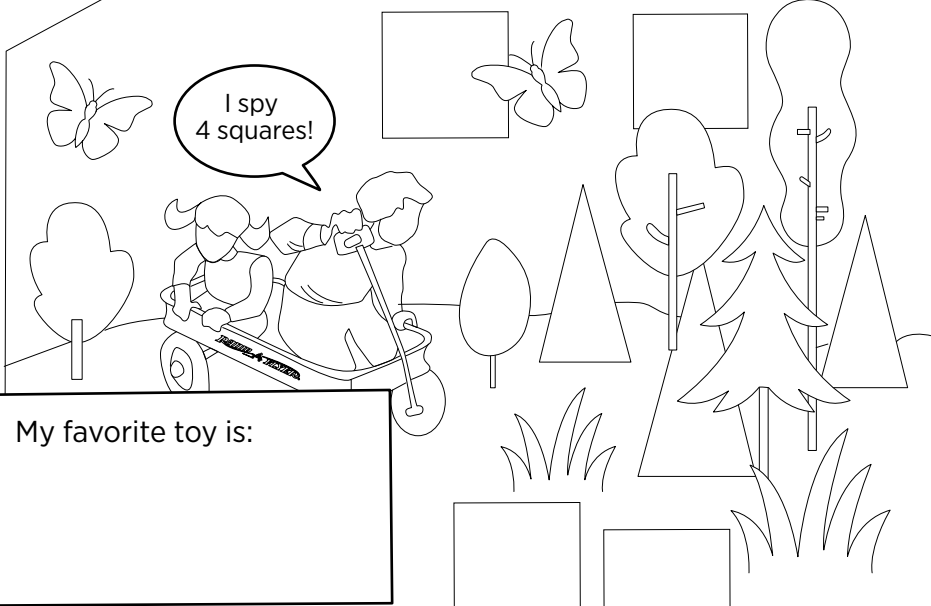
This book belongs to:

Let's Capture the Flag!

H-O-R-S-E

I spy 4 squares!

My favorite toy is:

The best outdoor game is:

RADIO FLYER
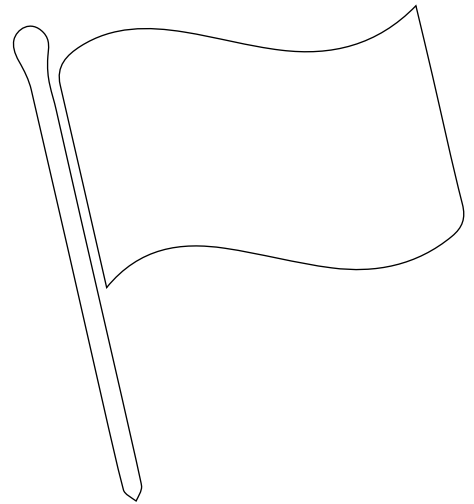
Capture the Flag

Players: 6+
Materials: 2 flags (or another marker)

Directions:

Split players into 2 teams. Divide the playing area into 2 equal-sized territories. Cones, chalk, natural landmarks, etc. can be used to mark boundaries.

Each team should hide their flag (or other marker like a bandana, dish towel, or t-shirt) somewhere in their territory. While the flag can be mostly hidden, some part of it must be visible.

The objective of the game is to capture the other team's flag and bring it back safely to your own territory. When gameplay begins, team members attempt to cross over into the opposing team's territory to find the opposing flag. If a player is tagged in the opposing team's territory, they must return back to their own territory.

The first team to successfully capture the flag of the opposing team and return to their own territory without being tagged wins!
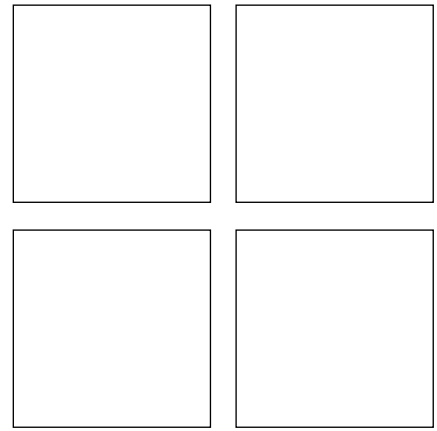
Variation: With larger groups, instead of having tagged players return to their home territory, they can be sent to the opposing team's jail (an area in each territory decided upon before the game). To return to gameplay, they must be tagged by one of their teammates.

Four Square

Players: 4+
Materials: playground ball, chalk, or tape

Directions:

Create a large 10' by 10' square out of chalk or tape. Divide the square into 4 smaller 5' by 5' squares. Label one of the smaller squares as 1 and label others 2, 3, and 4 in a clockwise pattern. Assign one player to each square.

The goal of the game is to advance to and stay in the highest ranking square, square 1. The player that is in square is the server. Gameplay begins when the server drops the ball in their square, allows it to bounce once, and then hits it into another square.

Each player needs to hit the ball into an opposing player's square after the ball has bounced once in their own square. The ball may only bounce once in any square, and hits may only be completed with the hands. Players may not catch or hold the ball.

Gameplay continues until a mistake is made – hitting the ball out of bounds, allowing the ball to bounce more than once in a square, and catching or holding the ball. The player that made the mistake moves to square 4, and all players in a square ranking lower than that player move up one square. If there are more than 4 players, then the player that has made the mistake should go to the back of the waiting line, and the person at the front of the waiting line may enter the game in Square 4.
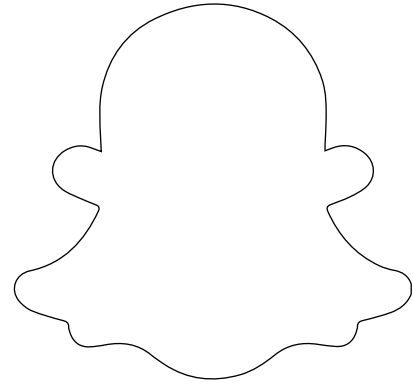
Variation: If there are a lot of players, make extra-large squares and have teams of 2 play in each square!

2

Ghost in the Graveyard

Players: 4+
Materials: playground ball, chalk, or tape

Directions:

Designate a playing area and a home base. Choose one person to be the Ghost.

To start the game, all players except for the Ghost should close their eyes and begin slowly counting aloud to "Midnight" – one o'clock, two o'clock, three o'clock, etc. During this time, the Ghost finds a place to hide in the playing area. When all other players reach midnight, they yell "Midnight!" and begin searching for the Ghost.

When a player finds the Ghost, they yell "Ghost in the Graveyard!" to signal to all other players that the Ghost has been found. Once spotted, all players race towards home base while being chased by the Ghost. The Ghost tries to tag players as they run for home base. If a player is tagged, that player becomes the Ghost in the next round. If no player is tagged, the last person to reach home base becomes the new Ghost.

Variation: Instead of starting each round over with a new Ghost, have all tagged players from the subsequent round become Ghosts and keep playing until there is only one player left.

Hide & Seek

Players: 3+
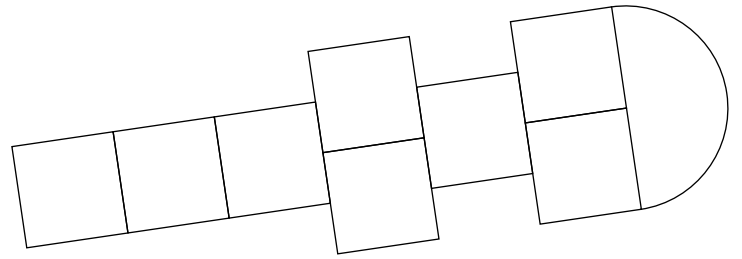Materials: none
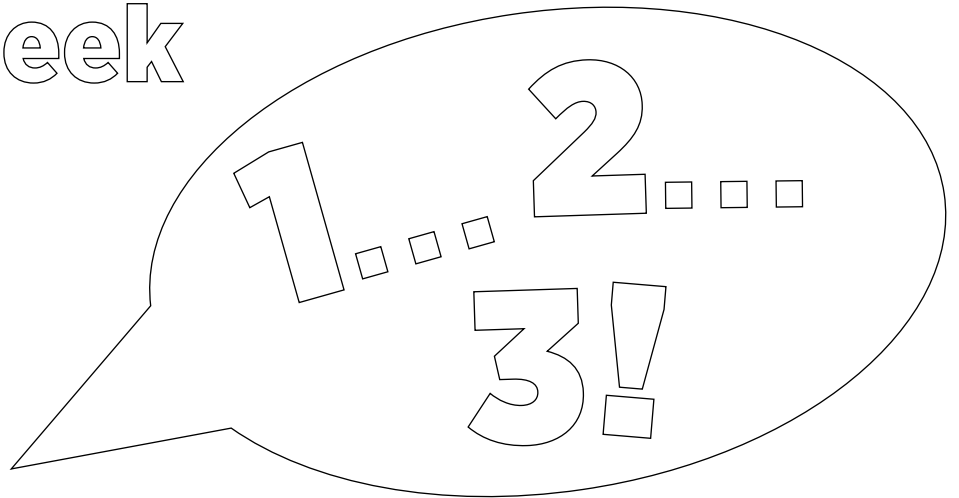
Directions:

Designate a playing area, and choose one person to be the Seeker.

To begin gameplay, the seeker counts to an agreed upon number with their eyes closed while all other players hide in the playing area. When the seeker finishes counting, they yell "Ready or not, here I come!" to signal to the other players that the searching has begun.

The seeker searches the playing area until all players are found. The last player to be found wins and becomes the new seeker!

Variation: Sardines is a fun reverse version of hide & seek for bigger groups. Instead of one seeker, there is only one person hiding. All other players must search for the hidden player. When a searching player finds the hidden player, they must quietly join the hidden player in their hiding spot. This continues until only one person is left searching. The group will look like a can of sardines in one hiding place!

Hopscotch

Players: 1+

Materials: chalk or tape, a marker for each player (rock, beanbag, etc.)

Directions:

Create a hopscotch course by drawing with chalk or using tape. For a traditional course, players can use the following sequence: single square, single square, single square, double squares, single square, double squares, single square, half circle. Label each square 1-9 in order ending with the half circle labeled as 10.

To start the game, the player should toss the marker into square 1. On one foot, the player should hop over the square with the marker in it and continue hopping into each subsequent square. At the double squares (4-5 and 7-8), the player should jump with both feet. At 10, hop with both feet, turn around, and head back towards the start of the course following the same rules.

When the player reaches the square with the marker in it, they should reach down, pick up the marker, and complete the course. If the player finishes without any mistakes, they move on to tossing the marker into square 2 during the next round and so on all the way through number 10.

If a player falls, jumps outside the lines of the course, misses a square, or forgets to grab the marker, that player loses their turn, and they must repeat the same number on their next turn. Whichever player successfully completes number 10 first wins.

Variation: Add different shapes (smaller squares, triangles, etc.) or actions (spin, switch hopping foot, etc.) to the course for added challenge!

HORSE
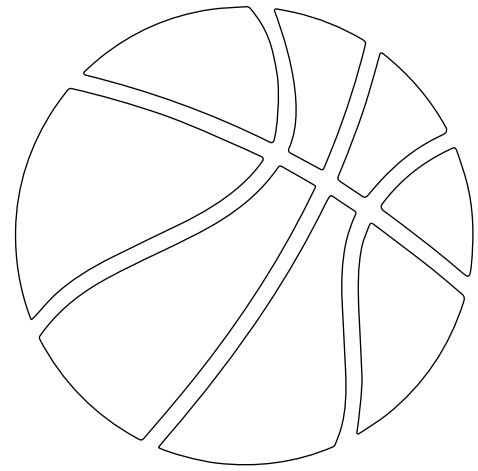
Players: 2+
Materials: basketball, basketball hoop

Directions:

Choose an order in which players will shoot. The player that goes first can shoot the basketball from wherever they want with any rules they want. For example, a player might shoot with their eyes closed or spin around 3 times then shoot.

If the first player makes their shot, the other players have to do the exact same thing. Players that miss that subsequent shot get the letter H. If the first player does not make their first shot, no letters are assigned, and it is the next player's turn to create their own shot.

The game continues as the letters that spell HORSE are added for players that miss shots. If a player spells HORSE, they are eliminated. The last person remaining who doesn't spell HORSE wins!

Variation: Replace the word "HORSE" with something shorter or longer to shorten or lengthen gameplay!
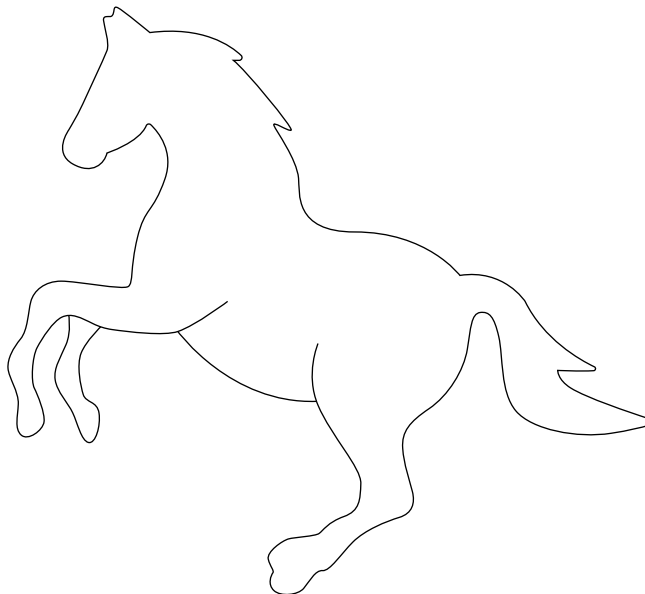
Red Light, Green Light
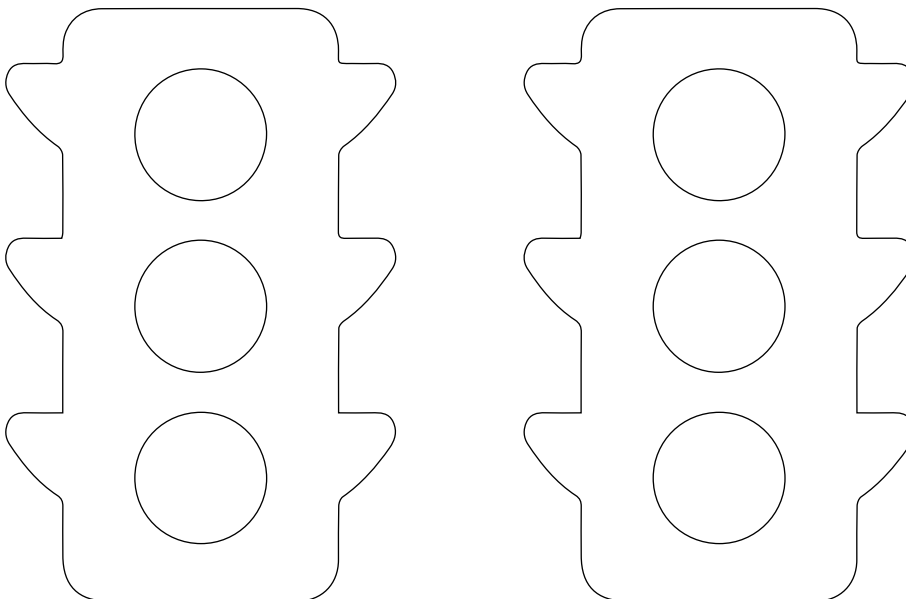
Players: 2+
Materials: none

Directions:

Designate a clear start and finish line. Choose one player to be the caller at the finish line. All other players should line up on the starting line.

To play, the caller can yell out "Red Light" or "Green Light." On "Green Light," players can advance towards the finish line. Once "Red Light" is called, all players must immediately stop in place.

If a player is still moving once "Red Light" is called, they must go back to the starting line. The game continues until a player crosses the finish line. The winner becomes the new caller.

Variation: Add "Yellow Light" (or any other colored lights) to the mix – each new colored light can mean walking, hopping, crawling, or any silly rule your group wants to add!

Tag

Players: 2+
Materials: none

YOU'RE IT!
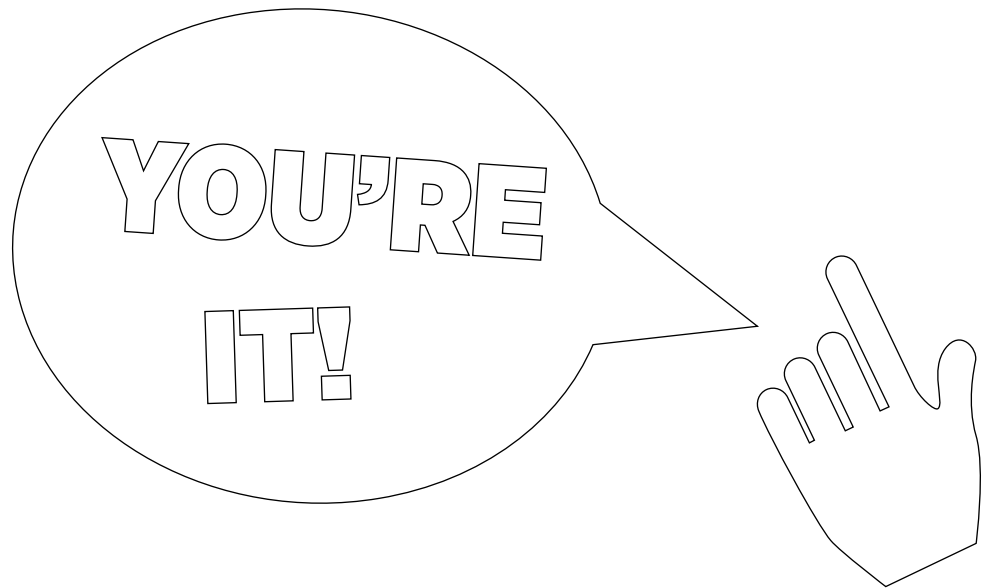
Directions:

Determine game boundaries. Designate one person as "it."

When the game begins, the player that is "it" chases other players and attempts to tag them. Once "it" has tagged another person, that individual becomes "it" and the game continues.

Variations:

Reverse Tag: when a player is tagged, instead of the tagged player being "it," both players are "it." The game continues until all players have been tagged.

Freeze Tag: when a player is tagged, they must remain frozen in place until an untagged player tags them.

Spud: Spud is best played in a large open area. Players begin in a huddle. The person that is "it" throws a recess ball into the air, and other players run. They must stop in place as soon as the person that is "it" catches or retrieves the ball and yells "Spud!". The person that is "it" may then take 3 large steps towards another player and throw the ball at them. If the ball hits the other player, then that new player is "it" and the game starts over.