

## Balloon and Bean Bag Games

### Balloons

Balloons can be easier to catch as they travel slower and give the child longer to react.

**Balloon catching:** Blow up two balloons and number some bits of paper. Sit in a circle and hand out the numbered paper, leaving one person to be the thrower. The thrower throws both balloons up in the air and calls out two numbers. The two people with those numbers rush to catch a balloon before it falls down. If someone fails to catch a balloon, then they lose a life; three lives lost and you're out. The thrower has 5 throws and then changes place with someone. This game can be modified to one balloon, animal names or colours instead of numbers and any amount of lives or throws, according to the group's needs.

**Fan the balloon:** This is a relay race using two balloons and two newspapers. Each player takes it in turn to fan a balloon from one end of the room to the other, using a folded newspaper as a fan. The first team to complete the course wins. On no account must the balloon be touched. This game can be modified to only one team, split between the ends of the room. With each player only doing one length of the room instead of two. To increase the competitiveness, players can be timed doing their lengths.

**Balloon heading race:** Each player has a balloon and lines up. On the word "Go" they start down the course heading their balloons all the way. Anyone who handles a balloon is out of the game. If this proves an easy game, then it can be made more challenging by adding obstacles or a rope pattern to follow. Players can be timed if it is appropriate.

### Bean Bags

#### **Warm up**

1. Do some arm stretches - first standing with feet on the ground, seeing how far you can stretch. Second, stretch standing on your tiptoes.
2. March on the spot, swinging your arms and bringing your knees up high.
3. Hop around the bean bags on the floor.

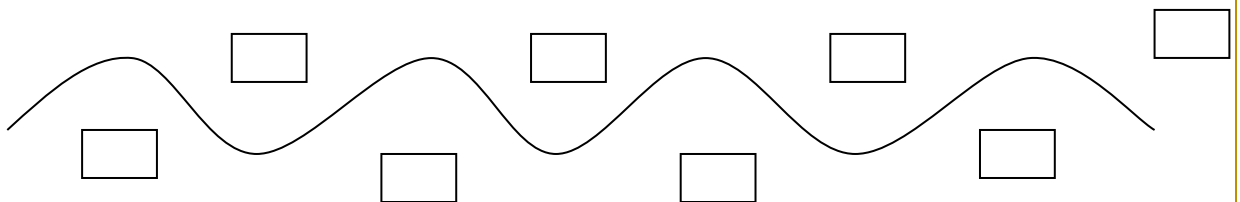
#### **Bean Bag Games**

1. Throw the bean bag, so that it is a challenge to catch it, i.e., throw to the side, throw high or low.
2. Throw the bean bag back through the legs, then get into the "crab position" to reach behind to pick up the bean bag.

3. Swap the bean bag from hand to hand. Add the movement of touching your raised knee which is opposite to your free hand.
4. Throw bean bag up in the air to catch it. Keep a record of your score.
5. Pass the bean bag around your body. Change the direction of the pass. Carry on passing the bean bag around your body but standing on one leg. Change which leg you stand on. Change the direction of the bean bag around your body. Do all of this whilst hopping on alternate legs.
6. Play follow the leader with the above activities - take it in turns to be the leader. Do one activity for a few times, before changing to the next.

### Bean Bag Challenges

1. March on the spot. Lift your knees hip high. Swing your arms as you march.
2. Keep marching and as you lift your left knee touch it with your right hand. When you lift your right knee touch it with your left hand. Keep this pattern going for as long as you can – don't forget to cross over with your arms!
3. If you can do the above task slowly gradually speed up until you can do it well at a quicker moving pass or even a jogging pace.
4. The next challenge is to hold a bean back in one hand and touch the knee with the hand that isn't holding the bean bag. Swap the bean bag over into your other hand before you touch your knee. Again, you are crossing over to touch your knee with the opposite hand.
5. Using only three bean bags as stepping stones, make your way across the room. You are not allowed to touch the floor or to stand on one bean bag with two feet. Do this activity in bare feet.
6. Lay a line of bean bags on the floor with spaces in between. Choose a pattern to weave in and out of the bean bags.



7. Begin as above but this time jump astride the bean bag and hop in the space.

What other movement sequences can you think of?