

Summer Fun Activities



Fishing for Color

Ages: All Ages

Help your child develop coordination with this simple "catch and release" challenge. First, tint 3-1/2 cups of water with food coloring, then pour it into an ice cube tray and freeze it. To play, dump the colored ice cubes into a small pool. Have your child scoop up the cubes with a small bucket and transfer them to another container. Once she gets the hang of it, she can try transferring the cubes with a shovel or spoon. (For more than one player, freeze two trays of different colors.)

Sink or Float

Ages: 3 and up

Gather up a handful of waterproof toys and household items, then ask your child to predict whether an object will sink or float (be sure to ask why) before they throw it into the water. They may not understand concepts like density just yet, but they'll get a kick out of seeing what will and won't bob in the pool.

Sponge Worthy

Ages: 5 and up

Give each kid two buckets – one filled with water and one empty – and a sponge. Instruct them to transfer the water from one bucket to the other using only the sponge. See who can do it the fastest.



Water Sprayer Tag

Ages: 5 and up

This clever twist on a classic is pretty self-explanatory. Have everyone put on a bathing suit and play tag. Whoever is "it" gets the water-filled spray bottle and tries to tag the other players with a cold squirt.



Fill 'Er Up!

Divide the group into teams of two. Have teammates stand six feet from one another, one holding a small cup with a Ping-Pong ball in it and the other a water-filled spray bottle. On "go", players with bottles try to be the first to squirt enough water into their teammate's cup to float out the ball. Keep a bucket of water nearby for refilling. If teammates get closer than six feet, they must dump out the water in the cup and start over.

Water Balloon Catch

This wet and wacky game is as refreshing as a dip in the pool. On a hot day, even if you drop the ball, you're still cool.

What You Need

- Gallon-size milk jugs (one for each player)
- Tape
- Ribbons
- Water balloons

Instructions

1. Create the catchers by cutting the bottom off a gallon-size milk jug (one for each player), taping the cut edges, and decorating with ribbon, as shown.
2. Fill a bunch of water balloons to the size of a grapefruit.
3. See how many times you can toss the balloons without breaking them or how far you can catch and throw them.



Tip: Popped balloons are a choking hazard; discard the pieces promptly.



Chill Out! Rainy Relay

Forget your umbrellas -- in this game, the whole point is to get soaked.

What You Need

- Two teams with an equal number of players per side
- Two buckets per team, one empty and one full of water
- For each team, a plastic cup with 3 holes punched into the sides

Instructions

1. Provide each team with one empty and one full bucket, as well as a plastic cup.
2. Set the empty buckets at one end of the yard and the full ones at the other end near the kids.
3. At the word "Go", the first player on each team dips the cup into their water bucket and holds it over his head as he dashes to the other end of the yard. (No covering holes with fingers, please!)
4. When a player reaches the second bucket, he dumps what's left in his cup into it, runs back to the start, and passes the cup to the next player.
5. The game continues until the formerly full bucket is empty.
6. The team with the most water in the second bucket wins.

Splashdown

This sponge-toss game may turn into an all-out water battle. The goal is to get wet; winning points just adds fun.

What You Need

- 1 small bucket (ours were 2-1/2 gallons) for each player
- Water
- 1 big car wash sponge for each player



Instructions

1. Each player gets a small bucket filled with water and a big car wash sponge. Players stand about 8 feet apart with their buckets on the ground directly in front of them.
2. Each player tries to throw her wet sponge into the other's bucket (and splash the other player, of course!). Each successful toss is worth one point. The sponges are thrown back and forth until one player reaches an agreed-upon point total.



FUN IN THE POOL

PASS-THE-BALL RELAY

Two teams each form a line. At "Go", the player at the front of each line passes a ball over his head to the player behind him, who then passes it between his legs to the person behind him, who then passes it over his head, and so on. When it reaches the last player, he swims the ball to the front of the line and starts the relay again. The first line of players to return to their original order wins.

SIMON SAYS

Players line up at the edge of the pool. Simon calls out directives, but now he can mix in commands for ways to wind up in the water (jump, twist, and cannonball). Players who don't follow Simon's orders are eliminated.

CHARADES

One player quickly tries to act out a word or phrase (such as riding a bike) while she's jumping into the pool. The first contender to guess correctly becomes the next performer.

FISHY, FISHY, SHARK

In the pool version of duck, duck, goose, players chase one another through the water.