

# Play Book



A Guide to Simple Games

Sometimes the simplest activities can have the greatest effects on our lives and communities. That's the idea behind this book. Playing is something we take for granted—something that all children do naturally, but sometimes the act of “play” requires a little encouragement.

Healthy play can create the experiences in a child's life that allows them to explore, grow, and develop in a positive way. Just as importantly, the way that we create and promote play opportunities can influence the way children interact with and understand their surroundings. Play not only helps individuals grow, but it creates community spaces and fosters a safer, more vital neighbourhood.

The Hackney Council and groups like Albion Kids Show and The Learning Trust are working hard to create fun, safe, and exciting play opportunities, both by building playgrounds and bringing mobile play equipment to communities around the borough. However, as parents, play workers, caretakers, siblings, or even friends, we can have a direct impact on the play experiences in the spaces around us. The games that follow are simple, easy to learn, and fun ways for children of all ages to interact with the open spaces around them. There are even spaces for you to add your own games!

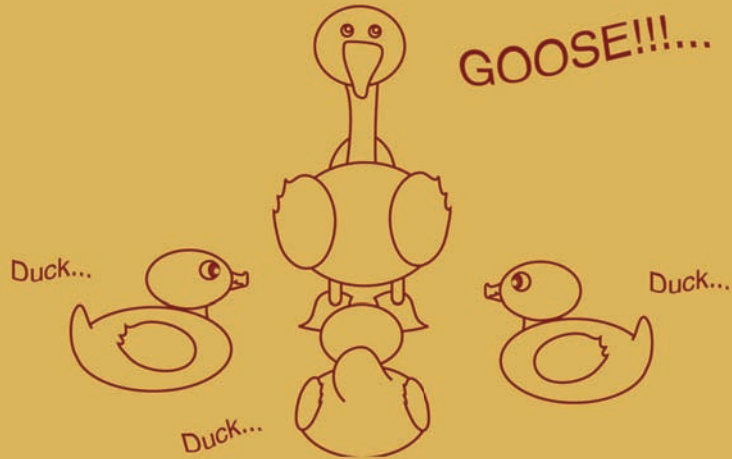
Here's how the book might work for you and the child under your care:

1. Explore your area: Take a map (one is included in the centre page of this book) of your neighborhood and something to mark it with. Highlight possible places to play and trace the paths you might walk to get there. Or just take a walk! You can even bring a friend or neighbour, and point out places where you can play.
2. Pick a game: The games in this book are appropriate for a variety of spaces, even indoors. But some are better suited for wide-open spaces or wooded areas. Remember, the first and most important goal is just to have fun
3. Find new games: One way to fill some of the blank pages of this book is to seek out games from different people. Ask a grandparent or family friend, maybe a neighbor. Part of the fun of games is discovering new ones, and this is a good way for children to connect with other generations.
4. Share: The more children play, the more energy we can bring to the community. Encouraging play won't just help children get to know their neighbourhood, but can help adults create a healthy community, too.

**Have Fun!**

## Duck, Duck, Goose...

- 1) Get your players to sit in a circle except 1
- 2) This player is the "tapper". Have them secretly choose a "goose"
- 3) They must then walk around the circle tapping each player on the shoulder saying "Duck" except the person they chose to be the "goose"
- 4) When they reach the "goose" they must tap them on the shoulder and yell "Goose!" The goose must stand up and chase the "tapper" around the circle to the empty space that the "goose" previously occupied.
- 5) The last person to make it to the empty space and sit down is the "tapper" in the next game



## Hide and Seek

- 1) Choose 1 player - they will be the "seeker"



- 2) Advise the "seeker" that they need to turn their back to the rest of the players, close their eyes and count to 50



- 3) While the "seeker" counts, you tell the rest of the players to go and hide.

- 4) After the "seeker" reaches 50 they must go and find the other players.



- 5) The last player to be found becomes the seeker in the next game



## Freeze Tag

- 1) This game should be played with more than 2 players.



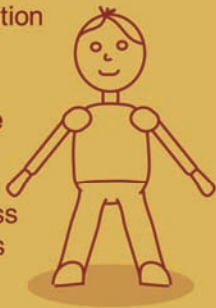
- 2) Choose 1 person to be "it". The rest of the players will be chased and tagged by this person.

- 3) When you say "go" the other players will run around while the "it" person chases them with the intention of tagging them.

- 4) When a player is tagged, they must freeze on the spot with the legs apart

- 5) The frozen player must remain there unless an unfrozen player crawls under their legs

freeing the player to run around again.



- 6) The game is over when all players are frozen. The last person frozen is "it" next game

## Hopscotch

- 1) Use chalk to draw a hopscotch pattern on the ground or masking tape indoors

- 2) Each player has a marker such as a stone, beanbag, bottlecap, shell, button, etc.

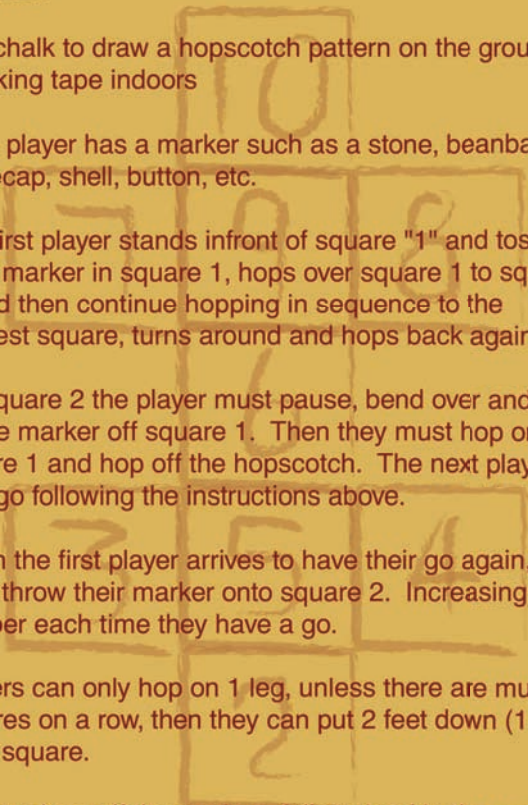
- 3) The first player stands in front of square "1" and tosses their marker in square 1, hops over square 1 to square 2 and then continue hopping in sequence to the highest square, turns around and hops back again.

- 4) On square 2 the player must pause, bend over and pick up the marker off square 1. Then they must hop on square 1 and hop off the hopscotch. The next player has their go following the instructions above.

- 5) When the first player arrives to have their go again, they must throw their marker onto square 2. Increasing the number each time they have a go.

- 6) Players can only hop on 1 leg, unless there are multiple squares on a row, then they can put 2 feet down (1 in each square).

- 7) A player is out if the marker: fails to land in the proper square, the hopper steps on a line, the hopper loses balance when bending over to pick up the marker - putting a second hand or foot down, the hopper goes into a square where a marker is, or if a player puts two feet down in a single box. The player will have to join the back of the line and retry that turn again until completed correctly.





# I Spy

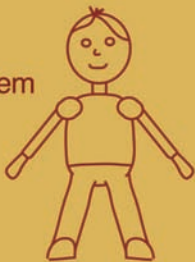
- 1) Choose a player to start
- 2) Get them to secretly choose an object they can see
- 3) Then they must say: "I spy with my little eye, something beginning with..."
- 4) Depending on the beginning letter, the other players must guess what it is from the objects they see around them



Apple



Tree



Boy



Cat

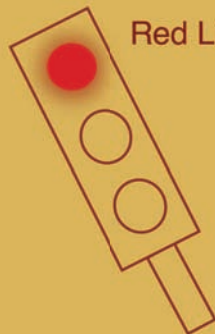


Guitar



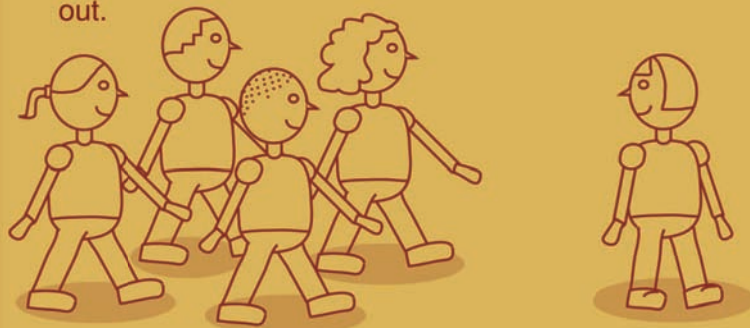
Coin

...I spy with my little eye...



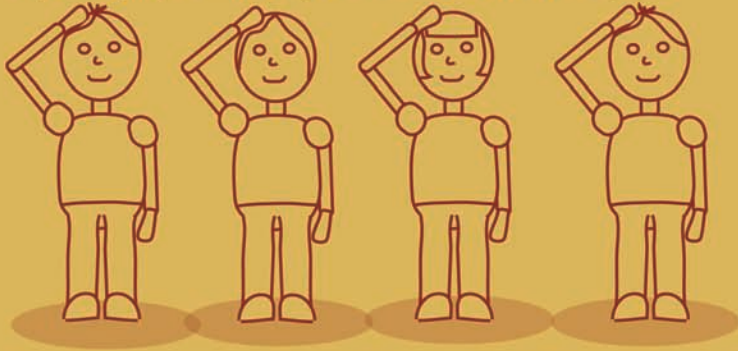
# Red Light, Green Light

- 1) Choose 1 player to be "it" and have them turn their back to the rest of the players
- 2) Each time the "it" player has their back to the other players, he/she must say "green light", this indicates to the other players that they can move forward.
- 3) As the "it" player turns to face the others, he/she must say red light, indicating to the other players that they must stop.
- 4) Any player seen moving after "red light" is called will be out.
- 5) The goal is to be the first to touch the "it" player's back before being called out.



## Simon Says

- 1) Choose 1 person to be "Simon"
- 2) Have the other players line-up and face "Simon"
- 3) When "Simon" says: "Simon says.... [an action], all the players must do what "Simon" says
- 4) A player is out if "Simon" calls for an action without putting "Simon says..." in front of the action.
- 5) Last player standing is "Simon" in the next game



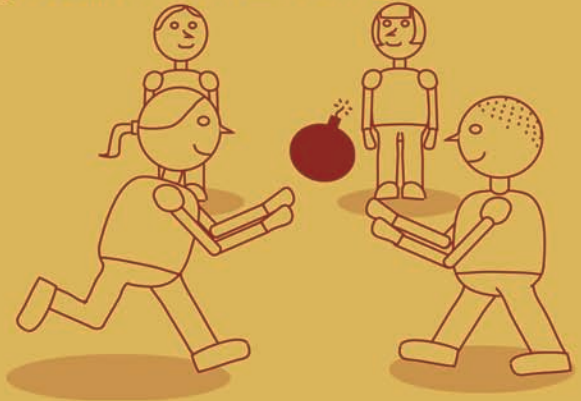
"Simon says..."



"...touch your head  
with your right hand"



- 1) For this game, you will need a ball
- 2) Have all your players stand in a circle
- 3) The object of the game is to have the players throw the ball to their neighbour within the circle. When a certain command or mistake is done, the person with the ball in their hand is out.
- 4) For example, using a stop watch, countdown from 60. When the clock reaches 0, the person with the ball is out. (Try counting down from 10 aloud to add excitement!)
- 5) You can also use multiplication tables (having each person call out the next number in the multiplication when the ball is in their hand, eg. 3,6,9...) or a memory game: red...red, blue...red, blue, green...red, blue green, yellow, etc. A player is out when a mistake is made.



This book was the culmination of a research endeavour with the Masters course in Environment and Sustainable Development at University College London's Development Planning Unit. The project, entitled "Mapping Change for Sustainable Communities," is in its second year of operation in the Wick and Kings Park Wards of Hackney. Unlike more traditional research on the Olympic development and its effects, the DPU is specifically concerned with the members of the communities and how their needs and aspirations are being represented.

While the broader focus was on the changes facing Hackney Marsh and its effect on the community, the group studying Wick Field and its surroundings discovered that the smaller open spaces throughout the ward were equally important to the day-to-day experiences of the community. Working in partnership with Albion Kids Show, an organization devoted to mobile adventure play, a research group consisting of Sara Henry, Alizay Jaffer, Rita Lambert, Rylan Henriques, Michael Roberts, Tatianna Rodrigues and Nneka Aurelia Nwogu sought to investigate the dynamics between the community and its open spaces.

What the group found was a number of perceived barriers to the access of open spaces that were only marginally or not addressed by existing plans for development related to the Olympics. The simple physical construction of play equipment, for instance, was not enough to foster activity in open areas. Though equipment helped, it was the direct participation of play organizations like Albion Kids Show and parents that helped foster an inclusive relationship with open spaces in the area. Because the research found play to be an important element in breaking down barriers to accessing open spaces, this book was produced as a sort of invitation to rediscover the spaces available to us in the community. The DPU sees its research as a work in progress, and invites the community to move forward with the skills and ideas that work for fostering a more inclusive and empowered society.





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