Hot Potato

HOW TO PLAY?

Hot potato is an easy-to-play game that builds hand-eye coordination and teamwork. To play hot potato, players pass a ball in a circle while music is playing. When the music stops, whoever is holding the ball is out! You can also put a twist on the traditional game, like using a water balloon, to make the game even more challenging and fun.

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Instructions

1. Gather 3 or more people and stand or sit in a circle.

You need at least 3 people to play hot potato, but the game is even more fun with more people. Get your friends together and form a circle in a room that has enough space for everyone.

2. Get a cell phone, radio, or device that can play music.

One person has to sit out of the game and play the music while the other players pass the potato around the circle. Change the person who plays the music after every game so that everyone has a chance to play.

* If you are a teacher or counselor playing with children, you should be in charge of the music.
* Make sure the music is loud enough so that all players can hear it clearly.

3. Play the music and pass potato around circle.

Turn the music on and start passing a ball, bean bag, or potato around the circle. Pass the ball as fast as you can without dropping the ball or potato on the ground. If you drop the ball on the ground, you are out of the game.

* If you don’t have music, you can sing the hot potato song. Just yell “Hot potato, hot potato, hot potato” again and again at different speeds.

4. Stop playing the music and see who is out.

After the ball gets passed around the circle a couple of times, stop the music. The person holding the ball when the music stops is out of the game.

5. Keep passing the potato around the circle until 1 person is left.

Once the first person is out, restart the music and start passing the potato around the circle again. Stop the music again to get another person out of the game. Keep playing until only 1 person is left in the circle.

* Each round can last between 30 seconds and 2 minutes, depending on how many people are playing.

6. Use a water balloon as the potato if it’s hot outside.

Instead of using a ball or potato, pass a water balloon around the circle. Whoever breaks the balloon is out of the game. After the water balloon breaks, use another one to continue the game.

* This version of the game is a great way to cool down in the hot weather.
* You don’t need to play this version of the game with music but you can if you want.

7. Step back after each toss if you have limited players.

If you’re only playing with 3-4 players, the classic hot potato game may not be challenging enough. To increase the challenge, have each player take a step back after they pass the ball. Eventually, you'll be far apart from each other which will make catching the potato harder.

8. Set a goal if you’re playing with older players.

For instance, you can say something like, “Let’s see if we can pass the ball around the circle twice in under 30 seconds.” This will give a greater sense of motivation for older players who may be bored by hot potato.

* Once you hit your goal, see if you can break your record!

9. Play the game to build hand-eye coordination with young children.

If you’re playing with younger children, you can shift the focus of the game away from people being out, to simply passing the potato around in a circle. Encourage the children to pass the ball as quickly as they can without dropping it.

* When the ball is dropped, start the game over rather than excluding someone from the circle.