

Activity: Play River and Bank (Squirrels, Beavers, Cubs, Scouts)

🕒 10 mins

Be active

Look after your body by being physically active.

Live healthily

Gain awareness and practical skills to take care of your body and mind.

Safety alerts

Active games

The game area should be free of hazards. Explain the rules of the game clearly and have a clear way to communicate that the game must stop when needed. Take a look at our guidance on [running active games safely](#).

Put your reflexes to the test in this fun warm up game.

Equipment

- Cones, chalk or other markers

Before you begin

- Use the [safety checklist](#) to help you plan and risk assess your activity. Additional help to carry out your [risk assessment](#), including examples can be found on our safety pages. Don't forget to make sure all young people and adults involved in the activity know how to take part safely.
- Make sure you'll have enough adult helpers. You may need some parents and carers to help if you're short on helpers.

Setting up the game

- Mark out a line in the middle of the space using cones, masking tape, chalk or a length of rope.

Play river and bank

1. Everyone should stand behind a line that's drawn on the floor with masking tape, chalk or similar.
2. When the person leading the game calls 'river', everyone should jump and land with both feet over the line.
3. When the person leading the game calls 'bank', everyone should jump back to the other side of the line where they started.
4. Everyone should play a few rounds like this.
5. When everyone's got the hang of the game, explain that when 'bridge' is called everyone should jump and land with one foot is on either side of the line.
6. If anyone makes a mistake and jumps the wrong way, they're out of the game.

7. They should step out the game and start help to spot people making mistakes.
8. Try calling 'river' or 'bank' twice in a row to catch people out.
9. Everyone should keep playing until there's one or two people left.
10. You could say congratulations to the winners, as well as to anyone who showed teamwork, helpfulness, care or determination.

Reflection

This activity was about testing reflexes. Everyone should think about the other skills they used to play well. For example, they had to stay focused and alert. Did they find it hard, or easy? Were they disappointed not to win, or elated that they did win? Everyone should understand that having fun is the most important element of the game, not winning.

Change the level of challenge

- You can change the speed you call the instructions – start slow, then build it up.
- You don't have to get people out. People could just correct their mistake and keep playing, especially if you want to use it as a warm up game.
- Why not see if anyone can think of other actions you can add into the game?

Make it accessible

Adapt the actions to suit the needs of your group, such as by having people move to sides of the room rather than jumping over a rope.

Take it further

You could use this game as part of your warm up along with [Mirror me: the warm up](#), before taking part in some other sports or athletics activities.

