

SCOUTS

Activity: Play Escape The Jail (Beavers, Cubs, Scouts)

🕒 15 mins

Be active

Look after your body by being physically active.

Be happier

Be cheerful, have fun, and love your life.

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](#).

Dark

Provide some light, so the environment isn't completely dark. Everyone must be able to see others and move around the area safely.

Get active and use teamwork and tactics to win in this wide game.

Equipment

- Whistles
- Something to mark lines (for example, chalk, masking tape, or rope)
- Torch or phone

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 here. 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 area

- Find an area with plenty of safe hiding spaces, without people leaving the agreed boundaries.
- Set boundaries with your group for during the game, which you could mark out with cones or natural features, such as walls and hedges.
- Remember to check the terrain and make sure the game area is free of hazards. For example, hazards could be roads, dips in the grass, steps, rocks or rivers if you're playing outside.

Introducing the playing area

1. Explain the boundaries of the playing area and where the no-go zones are. Tell people how they can use the space respectfully, without disturbing the wildlife or other people enjoying the site if you're in a public space.
2. Tell everyone where adults will be around the site and what people should do if anyone in their team needs help. This should include setting memorable spot where an adult will always stay.
3. Explain the signal to stop play and how long the game will go on for. A long blast on a whistle works well as a signal to stop the game.
4. If playing in a public space, young people should be paired up so no young person is left alone, and they should run or move together.

Play the game

1. Mark out a square jail using cones, hoops or chalk. It can be around two metres by two metres square, or bigger or smaller depending on your group size.
2. Tell everyone what any signals mean. For example, that if the whistle is blown two times, everyone should come out from their hiding places and meet back at the starting point.
3. Divide everyone into two even teams. One team will be the robbers, while the other team will be the jailers.
4. The jailers should close their eyes and count to 60. Meanwhile, the robbers should find a hiding place within the boundaries.
5. Once the jailers have finished counting, they should set out to try to find the robbers.
6. When a jailor thinks they're near a robber, they should try to catch them.
7. If the robber thinks they're going to be caught, they should run to another hiding place. The jailor should try to catch them.
8. If a jailor catches a robber, the jailor should walk the robber to the jail.
9. The robbers should try to free the people in jail. They can do this by running to the jail, putting at least one foot inside the jail and saying, 'escape the jail'. The robbers could also tag the robbers in jail to free them. If they succeed, without being caught themselves, the robbers inside the jail are free to hide again.
10. Jailers can't stand guard in front of the jail, but some jailers may want to stay close by to it.
11. The game ends when all of the robbers have been caught and are in jail – or when time's up.
12. If there's time, everyone should switch sides so the jailers have a turn at hiding and the robbers become the jailers.

Reflection

This game was all about moving your body while having fun. Ask hidrs to share some of the techniques they used to escape jailers. People might have crept lightly on their tiptoes, crawled, or turned sharply in their wheelchair. Moving in these different ways is a great way to develop agility. Take some time to share different ways of moving that are typically done in sport or exercise but which hidrs could use to escape jailers. People could think about different yoga poses, dance techniques, or martial art stances that are intended to develop flexibility and posture.

Change the level of challenge

- You could experiment with varying the size of the teams. What happens if there are more hiders than there are jailors?
- You could also experiment with how long the hiders have to find a hiding place. What happens if they only have 30 seconds?
- If it's warm (and everyone's come prepared) you could try water pistols. Some groups have been using soft balls covered in flour (don't forget to check for allergies) or the leg from a of tights filled with chalk dust.
- If it's dark, you could use torches for the jailor to catch the hiders. If they shine a torch and find a hider, the hider goes to jail.

Make it accessible

Think about the accessibility of the area you're playing in. Can everyone move around it? Do you need to make some areas out of bounds?

