



## Ten Alternatives to Tag

**Principals and schools continue to give unsatisfactory reviews to tag at recess. Below are 10 game alternatives for elementary school recess.**

1. **Jumprope-** A jump rope used in the game of skipping played by children and sometimes young adults for exercise. One child jumps over a spinning rope so that it passes under their feet and over their heads. Two participants turn the rope. Children often chant jump-rope rhymes while jumping rope. Participants may simply jump until they tire or make a mistake, they may improvise tricks, or they may have to carry out a predetermined set of tricks.
2. **Jogging** the field provides great exercise for children. Running along the fence of the field can form a running track. Adding popsicle sticks so that children keep track of their laps is a motivational tool.
3. **Hopscotch-**The first player tosses the marker (typically a stone, coin or bean bag) into the first square. The marker must land completely within the designated square and without touching a line or bouncing out. If the marker lands in the wrong square, the player forfeits a turn. If the marker is successful, the player hops through the court skipping the square with the stone in it. Single squares must be hopped on one foot. For the first single square, either foot may be used. Side by side squares are straddled, with the left foot landing in the left square, and the right foot landing in the right square.
4. **Kickball-** The pitcher rolls the balls towards the catcher, the "batter" kicks it with his/her foot, then runs to first base. The opposing team players in the field may tag a base they are running towards or touch the runner with the ball as they hold it in their hand to make an out. As in baseball/softball, catching the ball in the air after it is kicked results in an out. An inning consists of three outs and the fielders and runners change places. Runs are scored when a player circles all the bases and makes it home safely.
5. **Cooperative Catching-** Two students throw the ball back and forth cooperatively. They score points by counting each successful catch. When the ball drops the counting starts over. Goal is to see which team can score the most points cooperatively during recess.

6. **Cat's in the Cradle.** The game begins with the first player wrapping a loop of string around the hand (around the fingers or wrists) and taking one side of the string and circling the hands again. Then this player performs the last two moves of Opening A: taking the string which runs on the inside of the left arm onto the first finger of their right hand, then, reaching through the triangle created, the loop on the inside of the right hand is taken onto the first finger of the left hand). The aim of the game is to make the cat's cradle. This is created by two sets of crossed string between both hands.
7. **Chinese Jump rope-**The game is typically played by three players with an elastic rope that has been tied into a circle. Two of the participants (holders) face each other about 3 meters apart, with their feet together, and position the rope around their ankles so that it is taut. The third player (the jumper) then stands between the two sides of the rope and must accomplish a specific series of moves without making an error or pausing. The game begins with choosing the jump pattern to follow and with the holders holding the rubberband around their ankles.
8. **Telephone-** Telephone is a game in which each successive child secretly whispers to the next a phrase or sentence whispered to them by the preceding child. Cumulative errors from mishearing often result in the sentence heard by the last player differing greatly and amusingly from the one uttered by the first.
9. **Follow the Leader-** First a leader or "head of the line" is chosen, then the children all line up behind the leader. The leader then moves around and all the children have to mimic the leader's actions. Any players who mess up or do not do what the leader does are out of the game. The last person standing other than the leader is now the new leader.
10. **Reverse Dodgeball or Keep Away-** . Two or more players must pass a ball to one another, while a player in the middle attempts to intercept it. The game could be considered a reverse form of dodgeball, because instead of trying to hit people in the middle with the ball, players attempt to keep the ball away from them.