

5 Best Active Indoor Games for Rainy Days

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Summer rain storms can derail a well-planned day outside at summer camp, especially when they pop up despite the weather report for a clear day. When this happens, there is no reason to panic. With a little indoor space and some creativity, you can have just as much fun inside as you would outside. All you need is a couple of great indoor games in your back pocket.

As a physical education teacher and former camper and counselor, I can attest to the benefit of rainy day plans. I always had a couple of go-to plans kept in a folder for rainy days. In fact, where I teach there is no gym. So on cold or rainy days, I have had to get very creative with my activities in order to still teach. Below you will find some general guidelines to follow for indoor games, as well as some great go-to rainy day activities. These work for both summer camp counselors and PE teachers!

General Guidelines for Indoor Games

Safety First - When doing any indoor activity, whether in an open space or a space filled with items, safety is the number one priority. It is important to stress to campers that they are in a confined space and that accidental bumping may occur. Let them know that you'll know when it's not an accident, and manage the concern.

Set the Rules - To ensure fair and safe play, establish clear rules that everyone understands and check for their understanding.

Mark of Danger Zones - If there is an area that has sharp edges or is wet, put up a barrier to keep campers away. Clearly identify these danger zones to avoid injury.

Keep It Simple - As you will see with the activities below, they are very simple. The simpler you keep it, the more fun and safe the activity will be. The more complex the game is, the greater the chance for confusion, which can lead to someone getting hurt.

Indoor Games

Fitness Bingo:

This is a sure-fire way to have campers active and on the go on a damp day. This game combines the fun of bingo with creative fitness movements that campers will love.

Equipment:

- Bingo sheets with exercises on them (they even make [Move Bingo for Kids!](#))
 - 1 writing instrument per camper
1. Each player gets a copy of the bingo sheet with a pencil or crayon to mark off spots on the sheet.
 2. The sheet can have nine different physical activities. Be creative! This can include jumping jacks, bear crawling, running in place, hopping on one foot, and more. Feel free to draw pictures to represent the activities to make it easier for younger campers. It's okay if each sheet you create is exactly the same.
 3. Pick a camper to call out the bingo exercises.
 4. Each time an exercise is called, all campers must perform that exercise. Select the number of times you want them to perform each exercise.
 5. The first camper to call bingo when they win gets to call out the exercises during the next round.

Variations: Let the campers create their own bingo cards to play with in small groups.

Silent Speed Ball:

If done right, this game will not only have campers quiet but also breaking a sweat when the time is up. This is a fun game that engages campers in a small space.

Equipment:

- 5-7 [Gator Skin balls](#)
1. Have the players form a group in a circle. They must not talk.
 2. The campers are to throw the ball across the circle to another camper.
 3. If the other camper fails to catch the ball, they are out. If a camper talks, they are

also out.

4. The goal is to be the last one left at the end.
5. Add more balls as the campers become more comfortable with one ball. This adds more competition and challenge!

Variations: Instead of being out, have whoever drops the ball do ten jumping jacks to get back in the game. You can also use different types of balls.

Paper Airplane Bonanza:

Paper airplanes are a childhood rite of passage. If you were never bored enough in class to make one, you missed out! Students use them to be class clowns, pass notes, or get someone's attention. Now it's time to unleash the joy of making and throwing paper airplanes on a rainy day. This may sound cheesy, but I've used this activity in limited spaces many times to teach safe throwing, and it works wonders! This activity combines art, physical movement, and pure go-to fun for a rainy day!

Equipment:

- [Construction paper](#) or regular paper of different colors
- Glue
- [Crayons](#)
- Scissors

1. Teach the campers how to make a basic paper airplane. If you don't know how, search the internet or ask if one of the campers knows how.
2. Allow the campers 10-15 minutes to create and design their plane.
3. Line the campers up at a designated spot.
4. Let them throw the planes.
5. Repeat several times.

Variations: Get creative and let the campers do one-on-one races. You can also see who can throw it the farthest or who can keep theirs in the air the longest. There are so many more possibilities!

Sit Down Tag:

This game involves standing up and sitting down. It's not only fun but also keeps students constantly moving. At first, students may look at you funny, but after a quick demonstration they will want to be the taggers!

Equipment:

- One chair or [big ball](#) per camper to sit on
1. Have students spread out as if they are in a classroom and stand in front of their chair or ball. You can also decide to just have campers sit on a specific spot on the floor.

2. Pick one camper to be the tagger. The tagger's job is to quickly run around and tag the other students before they can sit down. Tagging should only be with two fingers on the other camper's shoulder or upper back.
3. Students who are not taggers start the game standing in front of their chair. They cannot sit down until the tagger attempts to tag them.
4. If tagged, the camper has to do ten jumping jacks in their spot to get back in the game.
5. If the camper sits down before the tagger tags them, they have five seconds to stand back up.
6. The tagger may not babysit or stand over those they just tagged.

Variations: Change the amount of time a camper can stay down to three seconds or less. You can also add a second or third tagger or change the type of exercise they must do if tagged.

Hula Hoop Tic-Tac-Toe:

Who doesn't love tic-tac-toe? This game will have campers filled with excitement over a timeless game with a modern twist. This is one of our favorites of all the indoor games.

Equipment:

- 9 hula-hoops
- 6 beanbags (3 beanbags of one color and 3 beanbags of another color)
- 2 batons
- 2 cones

1. Line the campers up in two equal lines. You can do boys vs. girls, bunk vs. bunk, or half and half.
2. Set 9 hula-hoops like a tic-tac-toe board five to ten yards away.
3. Have campers line up by teams behind their respective cone.
4. Place the three colored beanbags and one baton in front of each line.
5. The first child in each line picks up the baton and a beanbag and runs to the tic-tac-toe board where they place the beanbag in a hoop of their choosing.
6. The student runs back to the line and hands the baton to the next person in line. That person runs out with the second beanbag and places it in a position to try and block the other team from winning. They then run back and hand the baton to the next person.
7. The third person picks up the last beanbag and places it on the board in an attempt to block the other team or get three in a row first. They then run and hand the baton to the fourth person in line if need be.
8. Person four runs to the board, picks up one of their beanbags, and tries to place it in a different hoop on the board to block the other team or to get their team closer to winning.
9. This continues until you have a winner. It's just like regular tic-tac-toe but with hoops and beanbags.
10. Repeat for multiple games.

Variations: Have the players skip, hop, run, gallop, crawl, or do some other type of movement instead of running. Or eliminate running to the hoop altogether and have the players underhand toss the beanbags to the hoop. You can add more beanbags to allow everyone to underhand toss if space is limited.

View our step by step [tutorial of this game](#), including a video!

Keeping campers active on a rainy day is simple and fun. With a little space, some safety considerations, rules and fairness, and some creativity, rainy days can be one of the best days ever!

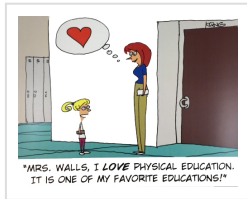
Tell us which of these indoor games is your favorite!

About the Author:

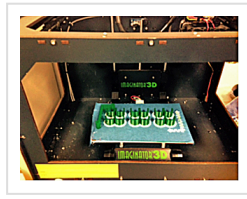


Charles Silberman is a physical education and health teacher with 14 years of teaching experience. He has become a leader and advocate for incoming physical educators by running workshops on teaching in limited space at staff in-services and conferences, assisting with new teacher orientations, and other initiatives. He has experience writing curriculum from scratch and writing published information specific to physical education in state and nationally recognized publications and websites. Charles has also created a niche as a physical education specialist who fuses technology and primary instructional subjects into physical education lessons. Learn more about him at www.charlessilberman.com. Contact info: charlessilberman@gmail.com

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