

Game Time In Limited Spaces

The Awana Game Circle is a tradition which makes the Awana a ministry unique. It focuses on physical activity as one of the key elements of the program. But in some cases, the Awana Game Circle and its specifically designed games are not possible because of limited space. In these instances, a different approach to games must be used.

Following are some suggestions for those clubs which must function in smaller facilities. Hopefully, these suggestions will show that the program need not be limited by lack of space.

There are three main considerations in designing games for limited spaces. The motions, distances, and participation must all be scaled down.

Limited Motions

Instead of speed, one of the objects of limited-motion games is agility. Examples would be races with: one leg, leapfrogging, crosslegged, crossed hands on knees, hands on ankles, jumping, skipping rope, balloon between knees, and wheelbarrow (partner needed). Simple games can be made more challenging by adding combinations of motions and introducing equipment and/or obstacles. Some of these include: obstacle course under blankets or over/around chairs, plank walk, tennis ball under chin, key ring on straw, ping-pong ball on plastic spoon in mouth, bean bag or Frisbee on head, marble on back of hand, pushing partners on dollies, ball between backs or foreheads (partners), and rolling hula hoops or tires or balls.

Limited Distances

A Circle takes up a lot of room. Instead, races can be organized in linear fashion to make optimal use of space. The distance covered in a race is not as crucial when these are races of agility rather than speed.

Races can be set up as shuttles. The same participant can be instructed to reach a progressively longer distance. He/she returns each time to the starting position until the final long shuttle back to start the next person's turn.

Distance may not even be required if the race is a "pass-along" type. In this activity, participants simply stand in a straight line, perform their task, and "pass-along" the activity to the person next to them.

Obstacle courses make ideal use of space by weaving through every nook and cranny in a place.

If the facility allows, the race can become vertical through the use of stairs, ropes, or ladders. Take great precaution in allowing this type of activity. Limit the climbing heights to four feet or just a few steps. Make sure you place adequate padding on the floor.

Limited Participation

A small spaced may only be able to accommodate a few participants at a time. If this is the case, the participation can be limited without putting a damper on the activity. Each participant's turn may be limited in duration, but turns can be cycled through more than once in a race. Races can also be held with only one team at a time racing against the clock.

Final Remarks

A limited space need not limit the fun of Awana Club. Keep in mind also that children are very adaptable to most situations. They will amaze discouraged adults with their positive attitude toward the limitations in life. Enjoy games in limited spaces with your clubbers.

Games For A Limited Space

Running Games

Limited Motion

- ...one-legged
- ...leap frog
- ...cross-legged
- ...hands on ankles
- ...hands clasped between legs
- ...hooked arms (partners)
- ...long jump
- ...wheelbarrow
- ...skipping rope
- ...izzy dizzy (spin 5 times first)
- ...sack race
- ...plank walk
- ...stepping stones (on large cardboard squares)
- ...balloon between knees
- ...ankles together (large rubber bands)
- ...obstacle course (under blankets, over around chairs, etc.)

Running and Passing

- ...tennis ball under chin
- ...key ring on straw
- ...coin on back of hand
- ...clothespins between fingers
- ...ball on plastic spoon in mouth
- ...shaving cream or whipped cream on chin

Balancing

- ...bean bag or Frisbee on head
- ...cardboard roll in hand
- ...marble on back of hand
- ...button on fingertip
- ...basketball on cardboard roll

Rolling

- ...basketball (or dribble)
- ...tire inner tube
- ...hula hoop
- ...lawn mower wheels
- ...skateboards or dollies

Carrying

- ...coin over eye
- ...tennis ball on Frisbee
- ...tennis ball in cardboard roll
- ...rubber ball between paintsticks (one-handed)
- ...balloon between backs (partners)
- ...foam ball between foreheads (partners)

- ...small rubber between knees (then drop into can)
- ...tire inner tube around waist
- ...metal, rope or wooden ring twirled around finger
- ...small ball in pie tin with holes cut out
- ...anything and everything (additive)
- ...small pieces of paper at end of straw

Batting and Blowing

- ...ping pong ball or rubber ball on cardboard square
- ...balloons through tires, into bucket
- ...paper cups on strings
- ...soap bubbles (until they pop)
- ...fanning balloons with cardboard squares]

Think and Run

- ...old testament or new testament (books or characters)
- ...true or false (statements)
- ...northern or southern hemisphere (countries)
- ...odd or even (multiplications, addition, etc.)
- ...east or west of the Mississippi River (states)
- ...air, land or sea (animals)

Run and Do

- ...hunt for ping pong balls amid Styrofoam "peanuts"
- ...find specific ads in magazines or newspapers
- ...drop coin from chin or waist onto target on floor
- ...drop cardboard from waist onto coin on floor
- ...drop clothespin into jug or carton
- ...throw tennis ball through tire
- ...knock over pin with tennis ball (underhand throw)
- ...stack cans one by one

Run and Do

- ...hook paper clips together one by one
- ...tie pieces of string together (end to end)
- ...transfer clothespins using mouth only
- ...sort pages of magazine into correct order
- ...lay down index cards with letters of the alphabet in order (or playing cards of a given suit)
- ...open jar, blow whistle, close jar
- ...catch thrown ball in cup or cone
- ...thread nuts onto bolts
- ...pound nails into wooden block
- ...inflate and pop a paper bag

Contest Games – Individual

1. Table Blow...blow ping pong ball over opponents goal line
2. Sock 'Em...knock opponent off plank with pillow
3. Stick Pull...pull seated opponent holding stick to his feet
4. Bombardment...knock down pins in opponents territory first
5. Flags...grab opponents flag (back pocket) while protecting your own
6. Tug of War (variation...back to back push with arms hooked together)
7. Mole Hunt...find pin on floor while blindfolded
8. Wait a Minute...walk steadily closer to goal line (no stopping) without crossing it in 60 seconds (closest player wins)
9. Balloon Volley...bat balloon back over goal line
10. Phew...put on as many socks on one foot as possible in 60 seconds
11. Tenpin Defense...knock down one of opponents pins while protecting both of your own
12. Steal the Bacon...run back over goal line with without being tagged by opponent
13. Catch the Wind...retrieve airborne Kleenexes with straw in mouth
14. Clothespin Challenge...finish pinning clothespins on opponents pant legs first (blindfolded)
15. Can Standup...first player to spin a can until it stands upright
16. Marble Roll...first player to knock target marble off center line with other marbles
17. Blind Table Tag...chase opponent around table and tag in a shorter period of time (blindfolded)

Contest Games – Team

1. Bean Bag Grab
2. Football...both teams sit in single file facing each other and try to kick ball across goal
3. Ball Snatch...numbered players find their own marked golf balls amid bucket of others
4. Human Letters...players, lying straight, form letters of alphabet on floor
5. Word Spelling...players retrieve colored letters from basket and spell out given word by holding the letters in front of them
6. Sober Faces...team that lasts longest before all players break down laughing win
7. Snowball Fight...teams wad up scrap paper and throw as many as possible into opponents territory in a given period of time
8. Scrambled Shoes...players retrieve shoes from box in center and line up by height with shoes
9. Bucket Brigade...players pass water from cup to cup to fill marked jug at end of the line
10. Tiddlywinks...players take turns snapping discs toward goal line
11. Clapsed Hand Pass...teams line up in single file with hands clasped and try to pass object

Food Games

- ...whistle after eating crackers or cookies
- ...drink soda out of a plastic jug through
- ...small straw (take turns until finished)
- ...chew along the length of a piece of string until reaching a piece of candy tied to the other end
- ...finish eating a donut hung by a piece of string (no hands)
- ...players in single file feed each other 10 raisins (or jellybeans) with a toothpick
- ...roll hard-boiled egg with nose or paintstick
- ...push peanut with nose
- ...carry chocolate kiss on plastic spoon, unwrap and eat
- ...unwrap a stick of gum with gloves on
- ...unwrap and chew gum until blowing a bubble
- ...carry paper cup, partially filled with soda, in mouth and drink after finishing
- ...spell words using alphabet macaroni

Target Games

Air Hockey...knock wooden discs across floor and through standup target
Sailing Saucers...toss paper plates into wastebasket or box
Ring Toss...use wooden, wire or rope rings and broom handle
Skee Ball...roll tennis balls over ramp and into different size of containers
Bean Bag Toss...into box or wastebasket
Ball Bounce...into box or wastebasket
Bell Ring...suspend small bell from ceiling and ring by hitting it with ping pong balls or small rubber balls
Shuffleboard...use beanbags or shoe heels
Balloon Pin Pop...bat balloons into cardboard target with pins
Skittle Bowling...knock down 2 x 2 x 6 inch wooden bowling pins with tennis balls
Ping Pong Crate...bounce ping pong balls into multi-colored target of egg cartons (plastic)
Go Fish...hook wooden discs using poles with key ring at end of string
Golf Putting...putt golf balls through standup target
Marble Shoot...shoot marbles through standup target
Coin Toss...into pie tin or angel food ring

Novelty /Puzzle Games

Turtle Racing...tighten and relax strings to move heavy cardboard "turtles" along floor
Mirror Writing...players write letters or numbers on paper while looking into mirror
Shake the Can...guess the contents by sound
What's in the Bag...guess the contents by feel
Send a Telegram...whisper a message along a line of teammates, changing as little as possible
Art in the Dark...draw a given object on paper with the lights out
These and Those...complete a series of phrases like "salt and (pepper)", "up and (down)", etc.
States and Capitals...pair together
Hidden Bible Books...locate within sentences or multiple columns of letters
Labyrinths...players take turns making their way through a maze on paper
Map Numbers...players find and connect several cities in sequence to form a letter or number
Powers of Observation...identify the differences between two seemingly identical sketches
First Letters... players write down a flower, fruit, color, name, etc. that starts with a given letter or letters

Game Equipment

Basketball, tennis balls, cans, ping pong balls, paddles, foam balls, golf balls, balloons, small rubber balls, bean bags, shoe heels, Frisbees, mower wheels, marbles, inner tubes, hula hoops, pillowcases, feathers, rope, string, bells, paper clips, coins, drinking straws, key rings, clothespins, buttons, pins, paper plates, index cards, paper towel rolls, cardboard pads, scrap paper, newspapers, magazines, carpet rolls, broomhandles, paintsticks, kleenexes, plastic spoons, pie tins, plastic cups and jugs, paper cups, soap bubble kits, whistles, paper bags, coffee cans, old towels and socks, boxes, egg cartons, wastebaskets, nuts and bolts, styrofoam 'peanuts', gloves, etc.

Indoor Track Meet (Part 1)

- 1. 100-yard dash.** At signal, clubbers hold onto loose end of thread, drop spool of thread to the floor, and unwind as quickly as possible. First to finish wins.
- 2. Shot Put.** Use regular shot put form. Contestants thrust sponge from behind designated starting line. Longest throw wins team points.
- 3. Pole Vault.** Clubbers hold glass full of water in left hand and empty glass in right hand. At signal, competition begins. Pole-vaulting skill consists of inhaling and exhaling water via straw "pole" from glass to glass. Player with most water in "empty" glass at end of designated time wins.
- 4. Endurance Race.** Each contestant is given two crackers. At signal, players chew and swallow crackers as quickly as possible. First contestant to whistle "clearly" wins.
- 5. Aquatic Race.** Each contestant is given small glass of water and teaspoon. At signal, players begin drinking the water, one teaspoon at a time, as rapidly as possible. If water is dribbled, contestant is disqualified. First to finish wins.
- 6. 880-yard Race.** Each contestant is given small card with column of figures to add totaling 880. Players are instructed to write answer at bottom of card. At signal, action begins. First to call out correct answer wins. If first answer is incorrect, players may continue to compete until correct answer is given. The "880" answer must be kept a secret.
- 7. Lightweight Race.** Each contestant is given lightweight equipment. Lit candle is the "light" and full glass of water is the "weight." At signal, players race entire length of floor and back to starting point. Extinguishing the light and/or spilling water disqualifies player from race.
- 8. Walking Race.** Contestants hold one newspaper in each hand. At signal, they race length of floor and back to starting point. Players are permitted to step on their newspapers only as they alternately lay them on the floor step by step.
- 9. Hammer Throw.** Use regular hammer throw rules. Contestants throw "hammer" as far as possible from behind designated starting line. Hammer consists of large inflated paper bag tied with four-foot string. Longest throw wins team points.
- 10. Discus.** Contestants throw "paper-plate" discuss for distance from behind designated starting line. Greatest distance wins team points.
- 11. 50-yard Dash.** Each contestant holds handle of spoon in mouth with "hard-boiled egg on end of spoon. At signal, players run length of laid-out course and back to starting line. If egg is dropped (and not broken), player may pick up egg and reposition it on spoon and continue competing. First to return to starting line wins. (Smashed eggs make event more fun!)

Equipment for Indoor Track Meet

- 4-100 yard spools of thread**
- 2-straws, 2 glasses filled with water**
- 2-empty glasses**
- 8 crackers**
- 2-small cards with columns of figures totaling 880, 2 pencils**
- 2-candles, 2-glasses of water**
- 1-pkg. paper plates**
- 2-teaspoons, 2 hard-boiled eggs**
- 2-sponges**
- 2-teaspoons, 2 small wide-mouthed glasses filled with water**
- 4-newspapers**
- 2-inflated paper bags tied with 4'string**

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Indoor Track Meet (Part Two)

- 1. Bean Toss.** Contestants are positioned behind starting line, given 10 navy beans each, and instructed to toss beans one at a time into quart jar six feet away. Team with most “beans in jar” earns points.
- 2. Floor Race.** Individual teams form separate team lines. At signal, players stand with their feet touching each other: heel, toe, heel, toe, and so on. Team measuring greatest total length wins points.
- 3. Fifteen-inch Dash.** Each team contestant is handed 15” string with marshmallow tied to end. At signal, players begin “chewing.” First contestant to “chew” his/her string and lick marshmallow earns team points.
- 4. Bounce Ball.** Players are positioned behind starting line three yards away from cardboard box. Each is handed five different sized rubber balls. Balls are bounced one at a time into box. Each ball “in the box” is worth two points. Team with greatest total wins. Size of box and distance from playing line depends on sizes of balls.
- 5. Twenty-yard Relay.** Players are positioned behind starting lines at opposite ends of 20-yard playing area. At signal, contestants position egg in teaspoon, extend carrying arm full length in front of themselves, and race toward opposite starting line. When first lap is completed, egg is relayed to second player who continues the action. If egg is dropped, player must pick up egg and reposition before continuing. First team to finish earns team points.
- 6. Sharp Shooters.** Players are positioned behind starting line, given five small pebbles each, and instructed to toss pebbles one at a time into small bucket, can, or box six feet away. Each pebble “in the bucket” is worth two points. Team with greatest total wins team points.
- 7. Hobble Race.** Players are positioned behind starting line with ankles loosely bound together. At signal, each contestant hobbles toward goal line 30 yards away. First player to finish earns team points.
- 8. Rub-out Race.** Players are positioned behind starting line and each given large cloth. At signal, each contestant races to blackboard in his playing area at end of course, rubes out chalk marks drawn ahead of time by leaders, and runs back to starting line. First player to finish earn team points.
- 9. Six-yard Dash.** Players are positioned behind starting lines at opposite ends of six-yard playing area. Each is given a ruler (or yardstick) and an item which can easily be rolled, such as hard-boiled egg, coconut, lemon, etc. At signal, players “push and roll” their object to opposite starting line. When first relay lap is completed, second player continues the action. First team to finish earns team points.
- 10. Standing Broad Grin.** Width of contestants’ grins are measured with tape or ruler. Widest grin wins points.
- 11. Sixteen-pound Shotput.** Players are positioned behind starting line. At signal, each contestant “shot puts” inflated lunch bag from the shoulder. Longest shotput distance earns team points.
- 12. Swimming Relay.** Players are positioned behind starting lines at opposite ends of 20-yard playing area. Starting players are handed glass of water. At signal, each contestant hops with glass of water in hand toward opposite starting line. When first lap is completed, glass of water is relayed to second player who continues the action. First team to finish earns team points. Players who spill water are disqualified.

Equipment for Indoor Track Meet

- 1. 1 lb. navy beans, 4 quart jars**
- 2. 4 tape measures or rulers**
- 3. 30 pieces 15” length string, 30 marshmallows**
- 4. 4 each of 5 different sized rubber balls (assorted sizes may vary from 1” jack ball to basketball or beachball), 4 boxes (sizes vary according to rubber ball size)**
- 5. 4 eggs (extra for breakage), 4 teaspoons**
- 6. Bag of pebbles as nearly equal in size as possible**
- 7. 4 cloth strip ankle ties (three legged race Velcro ties work well, too)**
- 8. 4 small portable blackboards, box of chalk, 4 large cloths or rags (dish towel or face towel size)**
- 9. 4 rulers or yardsticks, 4 of one of the following items: lemons, hard-boiled eggs, coconuts, etc.**
- 10. 4 tape measures or rulers**
- 11. 4 stuffed tied lunch bags**
- 12. 4 water glasses or tumblers**