



TEAM BUILDING ACTIVITIES



When Scouts engage in an activity that requires them to work together in order to satisfy an objective, team building comes into play. Many of the [Scout Skill Challenges](#) as well as many of the games in this compilation provide a genuine team building opportunity.

In order to complete any of these activities, Scouts will need to use teamwork, pool their resources, and share leadership—all qualities of a well-working patrol and troop. (When accepting any of these team building challenges, a patrol that cooperatively works together can be considered a winner.)

“wide” = large indoor or outdoor setting for those activities requiring a greater amount of space

“small” = small area for those activities that do not require as much space, or can be carried out in close quarters, or with a smaller number of Scouts

“in” = indoor activity

“out” = outdoor activity

ALL ABOARD (*small, in or out*) [View Video](#)

- *Materials:* 12-inch square board for each patrol
- *Method:* Six to eight patrol members attempt to fit on the board at the same time. They must have both feet off the ground and try to remain on the board for at least 10 seconds.

AMOEBIA WALK (*wide, in or out*)

– *Read the following:* This challenge demonstrates the basic biology concept of a cell, requiring cooperation and close physical interaction. There are three parts to the amoeba:

- 1) The protoplasm made up of a lot of Scouts who don't mind being close. The protoplasm gather together inside the cell wall.
- 2) The cell wall consisting of Scouts who like to contain themselves and others. The cell wall surrounds the protoplasm, facing outward, linking elbows.
- 3) The nucleus who is a Scout with good eyesight and the ability to keep on top of things. He is seated on the shoulders of some of the protoplasm.

– *Method:* Each patrol or group of patrols, forms an amoeba and makes their way through a field or around a course.

BLIND SQUARE (*wide, in or out*)

– *Materials:* 50-foot rope for each patrol, blindfolds for each Scout.

– *Method:* All patrol members are blindfolded and a 50-foot rope is thrown on the ground next to them. They are then instructed to make a square, using the full length of the rope lying on the ground next to them. No other instructions are given.

– *Note:* This can be a very challenging activity!

BLIND TENT (OR TARP) PITCH (*wide, out*)

– *Materials:* for each patrol, one tent (or patrol dining fly tarp) with all equipment needed to set it up; blindfolds for each Scout

– *Method:* All patrol members are blindfolded and a troop tent in its bag (or patrol dining fly tarp) is placed in front of them. On signal, they must pitch the tent (or patrol dining fly tarp).

– *Scoring:* The first patrol to set up its tent (or dining fly) “wins.”

BLIND TRAIN (*wide, in or out*) [View Video](#)

– *Materials:* winding, roped off, 4-foot wide track, blindfold for each Scout

– *Method:* Patrols line up in single file at the start of the track, with each Scout grasping the belt of the one in front of him. All Scouts except the first -or- last in each line are blindfolded. On signal, that appointed patrol member must direct his patrol through their course. The leader may only use verbal directives and may not touch individual Scouts.

– Note in the woods, or at a Scout camp, you might be able to take advantage of a built-in, winding, over-under course.

COAL MINE MAZE (*wide, in or out*)

– *Materials:* blindfold for each Scout, and a rope course course with many changes of direction

– *Method:* Blindfolds are placed on each Scout before entering the “mine.” Patrol teams will be placed next to the start of the rope maze (lifeline). Hands will be placed in two places. The right hand grasps the rope and the left hand is on the shoulder of the person in front of you. The Scout who is first in line uses his left hand to feel in front him and avoid obstacles. If at anytime, someone does not feel a hand on their shoulder, they must say, “stop!” The patrol team must stay together at all times. Once the group is back together, the group can move on again.

– *Scoring:* Patrols win if they learn how to move together along the rope. Working together is the most important thing. If they get to the end of the maze and out of the mine, they win too!

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HANDICAP OBSTACLE COURSE (*wide, in or out*) [View Video](#)

– *Materials:* deck of playing cards, winding, roped off, 4-foot wide track, a supply of blindfolds

– *Method:* Shuffle a normal 52 playing card pack. Each Scout takes a card from the pack which denotes which disability he will have:

- Clubs = not able to use their legs
- Spades = not able to use their arms
- Hearts = not able to speak

- Diamonds = not able to see

In accordance with the handicaps they all have, each patrol is instructed to navigate the track, working together and helping one another.

HELIUM STICK (*small, in or out*) [View Video](#)

– *Materials:* a 6-foot long, thin, light rod (lightweight plastic tube or lightweight bamboo pole, referred to here as a “helium stick”) for each patrol

– *Method:* Patrols line up in two rows facing each other. The “helium stick” is introduced, and Scouts are asked to point their index fingers and hold their arms out. The Helium Stick is laid down on their fingers. The group needs to adjust their finger heights until the Helium Stick is horizontal and everyone’s index fingers are touching the stick. The challenge is to lower the Helium Stick to the ground. The catch is, each person’s fingers must be in contact with the Helium Stick at all times. Pinching or grabbing the pole is not allowed. It must rest on top of fingers. (The tendency is to exert an upward force to keep the tube from falling, and hence the operation of lowering it to the ground is more challenging than it appears.)

HI-LO (*small, in or out*)

– *Method:* Patrols stand in line with patrol members shoulder to shoulder. They are to arrange themselves in whatever order they’re instructed, by:

- height
- age
- amount of merit badges
- number of pets
- number of siblings
- in alphabetical order by last name

When they have completed the task, they should give the Scout sign and shout their patrol yell.

HOT ISOTOPE TRANSPORT (*wide, out*) [View Video](#)

– *Materials:* for each patrol, one can filled to a mark 1/2-inch from the top with water, in the middle of a circle 20 feet in diameter, six 15 foot cords, elastic band (ends of a short bungee cord joined together works well)

– *Method:* The patrol assembles a “Hot Isotope Transporter” by attaching the cords to the elastic circle with two half hitches. They then line up around the can staying outside the circle at all times, and under the direction of their patrol leader, the Scouts pull the cords to stretch the elastic band. The object is to bring the expanded elastic band down over the can, then relax the elastic band to fit tightly over the can. They then lift and deposit the can upright to a point outside the circle, without spilling any water.

– *Scoring:* Each patrol scores a point for transporting the can without spilling any water. All knots correctly tied earns an additional point. The fastest patrol earns an additional point.

ISLAND HOPPING (*wide, in or out*)

– *Materials:* Two sheets of 8-1/2 x-11-inch paper for each patrol member, one extra sheet of paper for each patrol

– *Method:* Place the sheets of papers in a single line on the floor, perpendicular to the finish line. Each patrol member stands on two

of the sheets, facing the finish line. One sheet should be left unused at the rear of the patrol line. On signal, the extra sheet of paper is passed up the line from the last Scout to the first, who places the sheet down in front of him and steps onto it with his rear foot. Each Scout in line advances by moving his rear foot to the newly vacated sheet ahead of him. The remaining empty sheet is passed forward and the process is repeated. If a Scout steps off a sheet of paper, the entire patrol must move back and start over.

– *Scoring:* The first patrol to cross the finish line is the winner.

MOON BALL (*wide, in or out*)

– *Materials:* inflated beach ball for the whole troop or one beach ball for each patrol

– *Method:* As a team building activity, the object is for a patrol to keep the beach ball aloft as long as possible. Scouts are not allowed to hit the ball twice in a row. This activity becomes exciting as the Scouts count out loud the number of hits and attempt to surpass their personal best.

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NIGHT CROSSING (*wide, in or out*)

– *Materials:* a blindfold for each Scout except the patrol leaders, ten 4-inch diameter cardboard or plastic cylinders, 18 to 24 inches long for each patrol

– *Object:* to provide an opportunity for patrol leaders and their patrol to put their verbal communication and listening skills into action

– *Method:* The cylinders are set up at irregular intervals across the course for each patrol. It is the patrol leader's job to coach his patrol across the course without bumping over a cylinder. The patrol leader cannot get on the course. If a cylinder is bumped over, that Scout must start over. Once a Scout has successfully navigated the course, he is allowed to take off his blindfold. All members can be on the course at once, or one at a time.

NITRO TRANSPORT (*wide, in or out*) [View Video](#)

– *Materials:* for each patrol, a 16 oz can filled with water about 1/2-inch from the top, a 1-foot-square board with either four or eight 6 to 8-foot braided nylon cords tied through a hole drilled equidistant along the edges, (marking pen to draw a fill line for each can)

– *Method:* The patrol must move a can of radioactive nitro (the can full of water) from point A to point B (a distance of about 25 to 30 feet) by lifting the can on the board without spilling any water. If any water spills, the Scouts must start over. It can be run as a relay or simply a challenge for the best time.

– *Scoring:* The fastest time wins.

SKY HIGH (*small, in*)

– *Materials:* a pile of newspapers and a role of masking tape for each patrol

– *Method:* The challenge is for each team to build the highest freestanding structure they can using only those materials they have been given. All structures have to be able to stand upright without help for at least one minute.

STEPPING STONES (*wide, in or out*)

- *Materials:* 6-inch-square wooden block ("life-support capsule") for each patrol member, except the patrol leader
- *Method:* The patrol must get from point A to point B, about 15 to 20 feet, without touching the ground, using the life-support capsules as stepping stones. If anyone touches the ground, the patrol must start over. Each life-support capsule must be in contact with at least one Scout at all times. The capsules can be touched by more than one person. If a capsule loses contact with a person, it is taken away.
- *Scoring:* The first patrol for reach point B wins.

ZULU TOSS (*small, in or out*) [View Video](#)

- *Materials:* lightweight balls enough for each patrol to have one for each Scout, a presenter for each patrol who has access to the ball supply
- *Method:* Team members form a circle. One Scout tosses one ball across to another Scout of his choosing who in turn tosses it to a different Scout and so on until everyone has touched the ball one time. The last Scout tosses it back to the first, thereby completing the circuit. The team tosses one ball around the circuit a few more times until everyone knows the order of who they are "receiving from" and "sending to." The first Scout starts the 1st ball on it's journey again and when it is midway through, their Presenter hands him a 2nd ball which he sends along. There are now 2 balls being sent around the circuit. The Presenter slowly hands the first Scout more balls until a maximum number of balls are in play.

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