



# **Supplementing Workouts With Games**

**For Cross Country & Track**



**WHY ARE SOME OF MY BEST  
RUNNERS CURRENT OR  
FORMER SOCCER PLAYERS?**

# Soccer is a glorified fartlek run.

Break down the game into its simplest parts.

**SOCCKER-** Kids run back and forth across a field at various speeds for 60-80 minutes at various speeds with little to no rest trying to kick a ball in a net.

**FARTLEK-** Kids run multiple miles or for time at various speeds with little to no rest.

# My Journey

**1993-1997** Played “War” in high school at BG. Traditional Cross Country Program.

**2004-2008** Big on pounding workouts. Would play “War” (Zombie Tag) only for fun, once a year.

**2009** District cut activity buses on Fridays. Instituted “Funday Friday” to get kids to come out.

# RESULTS

- 2009-2010, the size of my team went from 30-55 kids, with an increase in 7th and 8th grade runners.
- Attendance on Fridays increased across the board from being one of my worst attended days to my best attended days.
- Kids started using “Funday Friday” as a recruitment tool to get kids to try Cross Country and gave me an opportunity to recruit the kids.
- Eventually started using them in track.

# Positive Impact on Training

-Increased morale and overall mood of the season.

-Allows me to focus on an often overlooked aspects of racing.

-Games “hide” workouts.

-See weaknesses and strengths of various runners.

# Change your mindset!

## Why can't a game also be a workout?

As coaches we get obsessed with pounding workouts and don't take time for fun.

After seeing success with adding games, I started to concentrate on finding games that would provide a workout or skill along with it.



**INTERVALS/REPEATS**



# Leave it to Chance Intervals

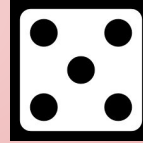


Not really a game but I add it to speed days to make it more fun.

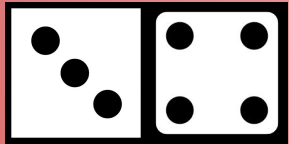
Bring a dice, choose a runner to roll the dice, the result determines what they will run. Once that interval is complete, the person who rolled the dice, chooses another person to roll.



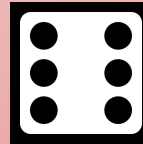
Run 200m fast  
Walk 200m



Run 800m  
Break- (TBD)



Run 400m  
Break (TBD)



Extra 30 seconds  
break.

# CHASE

My favorite of all of them. Combines interval work while working on handoffs and turns.

**Workout-** Athletes are doing intervals/repeats. They are forced to run every few minutes based on the size of the team. They will not “dog” it because the team is counting on them (track, CC).

**Skill-** Acceleration and re-establishing your pace after a turn (CC).

**Skill-** Relay exchanges (track).



Kids start in two divided teams (try to make them even) on opposite corner of a square (any size but I recommend 150m-200m around. Each team has a baton and a “Captain” who gets them in order. At “Go” the kids start running around the square, handing off to the next person in line. The object is to pass the other team. Usually do best of three, but some rounds have lasted 20-25 minutes.

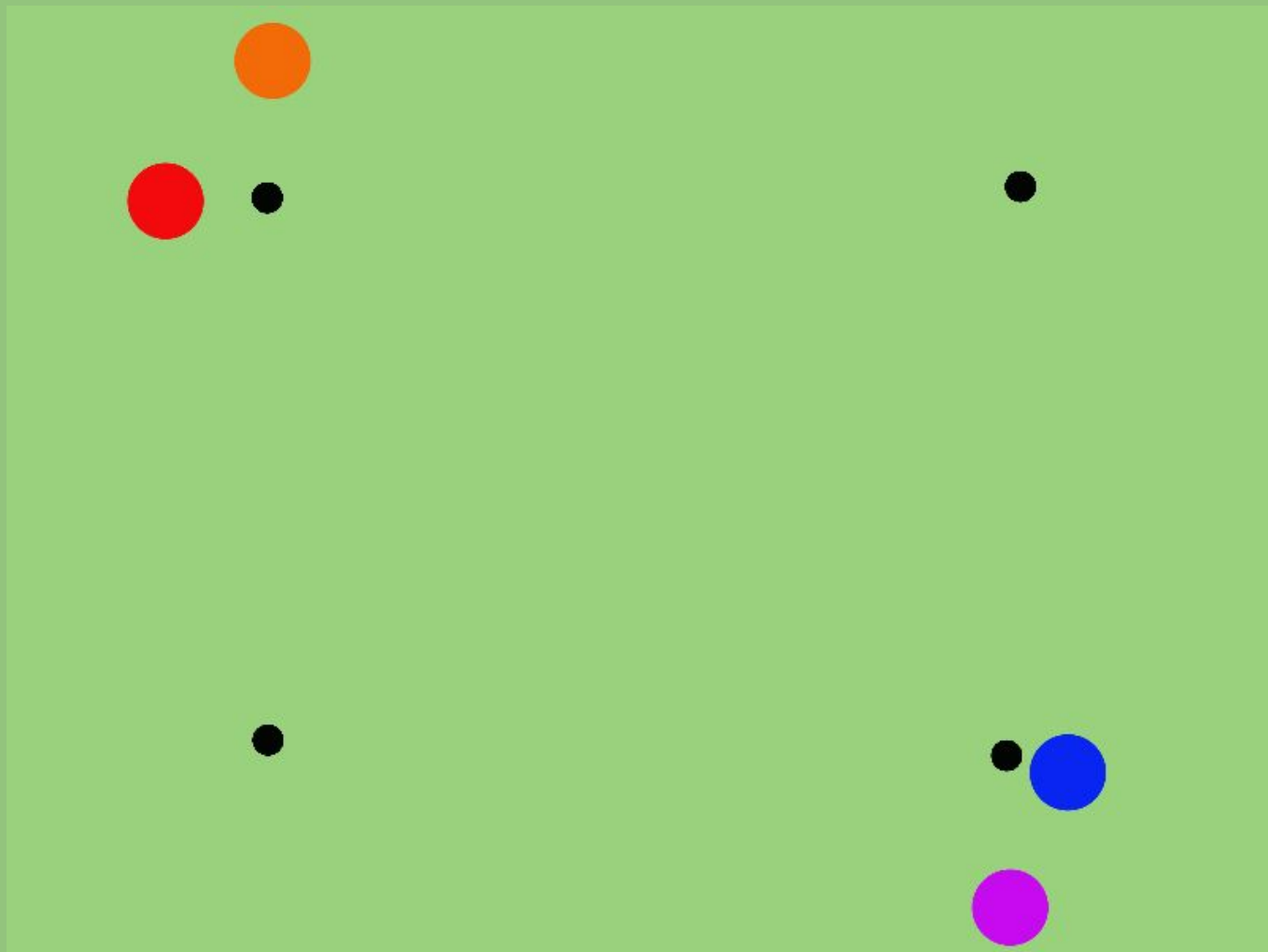
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### **Rules:**

No cutting cones (could result in 5 second “delay” of next handoff).

Must stay in order (Some exceptions).

Can't disrupt the other teams runners.







# PACK RUNNING

# Selfie Scavenger Hunt

This has gone through some revising but the kids love it. Kids are divided into teams, anywhere between 2-5 teams works best. Leveled workouts for different skill level.

**Workout-** Fast distance run. (CC)

**Skill-** Pack Running. Lifting each other up. (CC)



Kids are divided into 2-4 equal teams (I do boys vs girls with the girls always going slightly less distance) Each team has 3 groups made up of 3 or more individuals

3 different spots on a map are chosen.

#### TEAM 1

Easy Objective Group

1-1.5 miles

Medium Objective Group

1.5-2 miles

Hard Objective Group

2-2.75 miles

#### TEAM 2

Easy Objective Group

1-1.5 miles

Medium Objective Group

1.5-2 miles

Hard Objective Group

2-2.75 miles



# RULES

1. All people in your group must be in the photo
2. Text coach once you take the photo (so we know they're on your way back)
3. You're group is "back" only when all members of your group make it to the finish.
4. First team with all their groups back, wins.

SUGGESTION- Provide a map and photo. Don't offer a "Prize".



# Rope Relays

The object is to get all your team from the start line and deposit them across another line one at a time. Members can only traverse toward the deposit line from the start line with a partner, while both runners are holding 1 meter long rope.

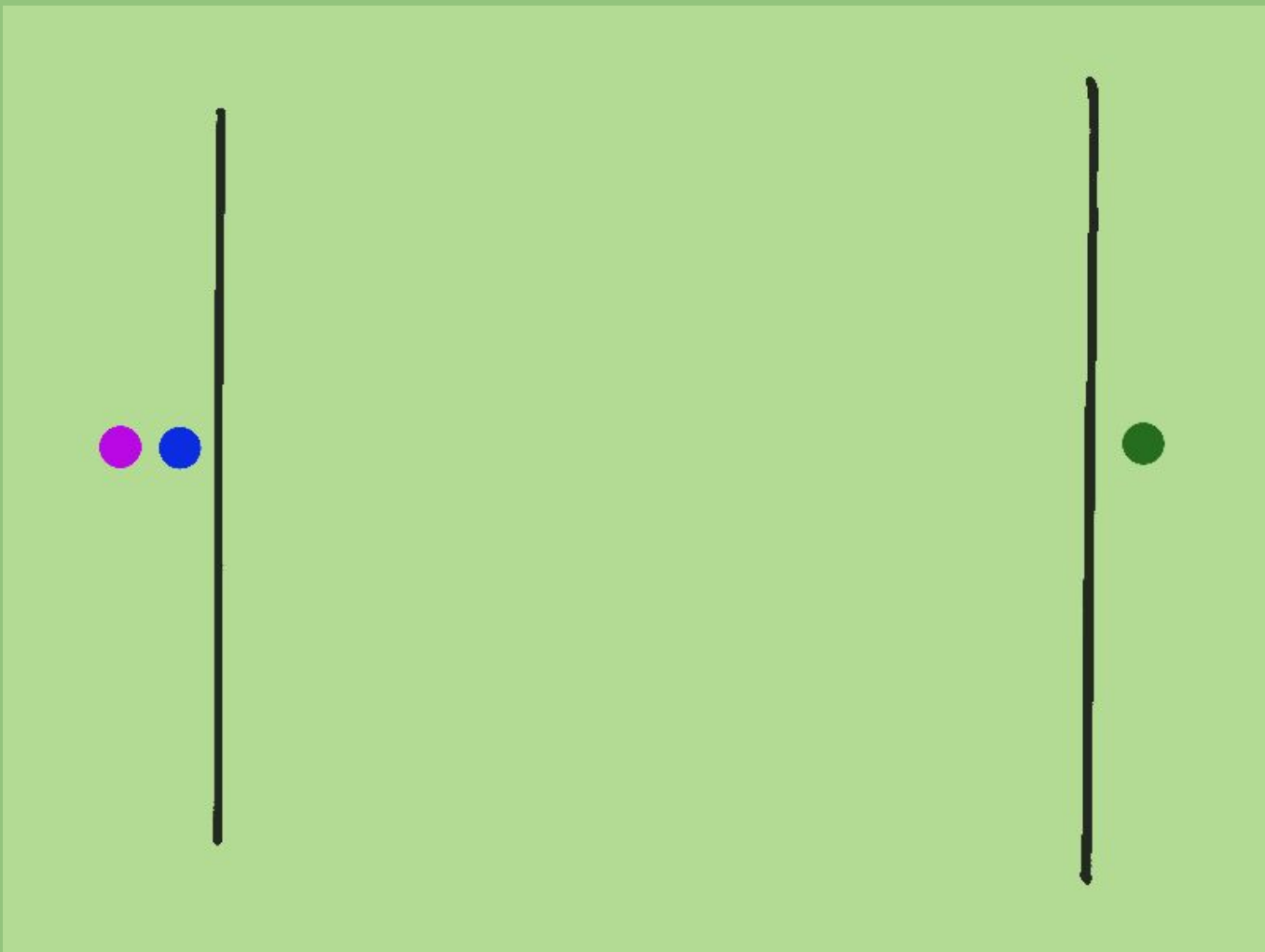
**Workout-** 150-400m sprints (T, CC)

**Skill-** Pack running (CC)

**Suggestions-** Make sure you have even teams, or you'll have to run!







# Reaction Time/Starts

# SNATCH THE BACON

Runners are lined up in straight lines facing the center of a field parallel to the opposite team with a flag equal distance from each line of runners. Each individual is given a number. When their number is called, only the athletes whose names were called, race out into the center of the field to grab a flag. They then need to get the flag (and themselves) back to their lines without getting tagged by the opponent.

**Workout-** 50-150m sprints. (T, CC)

**Skill-** Reaction time of the starting line. (T, CC)

**Suggestion-** Put kids of equal skill level opposite each other.



- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10
- 11

COACH



FLAG

50-70m

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10
- 11





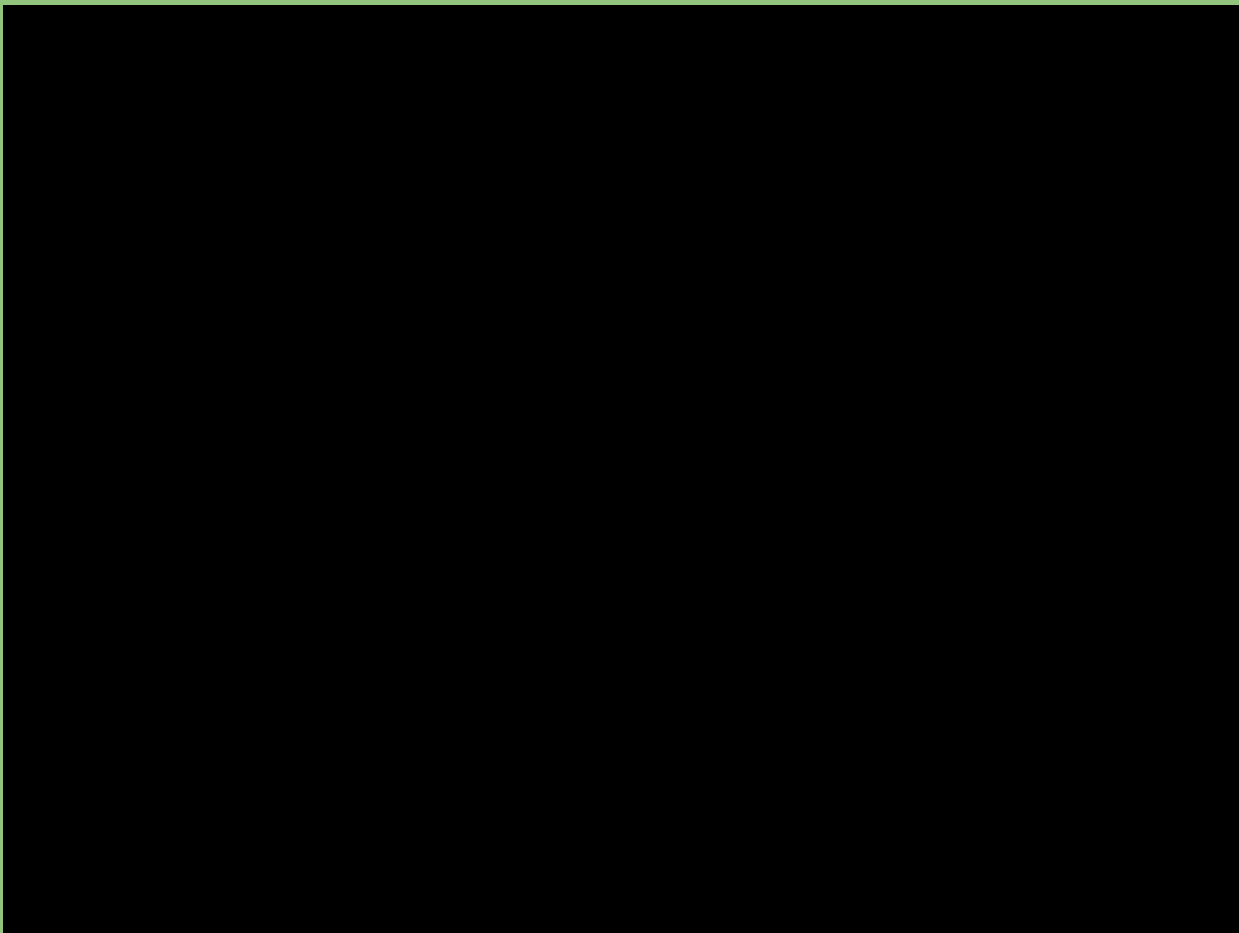
# WINNER STAYS

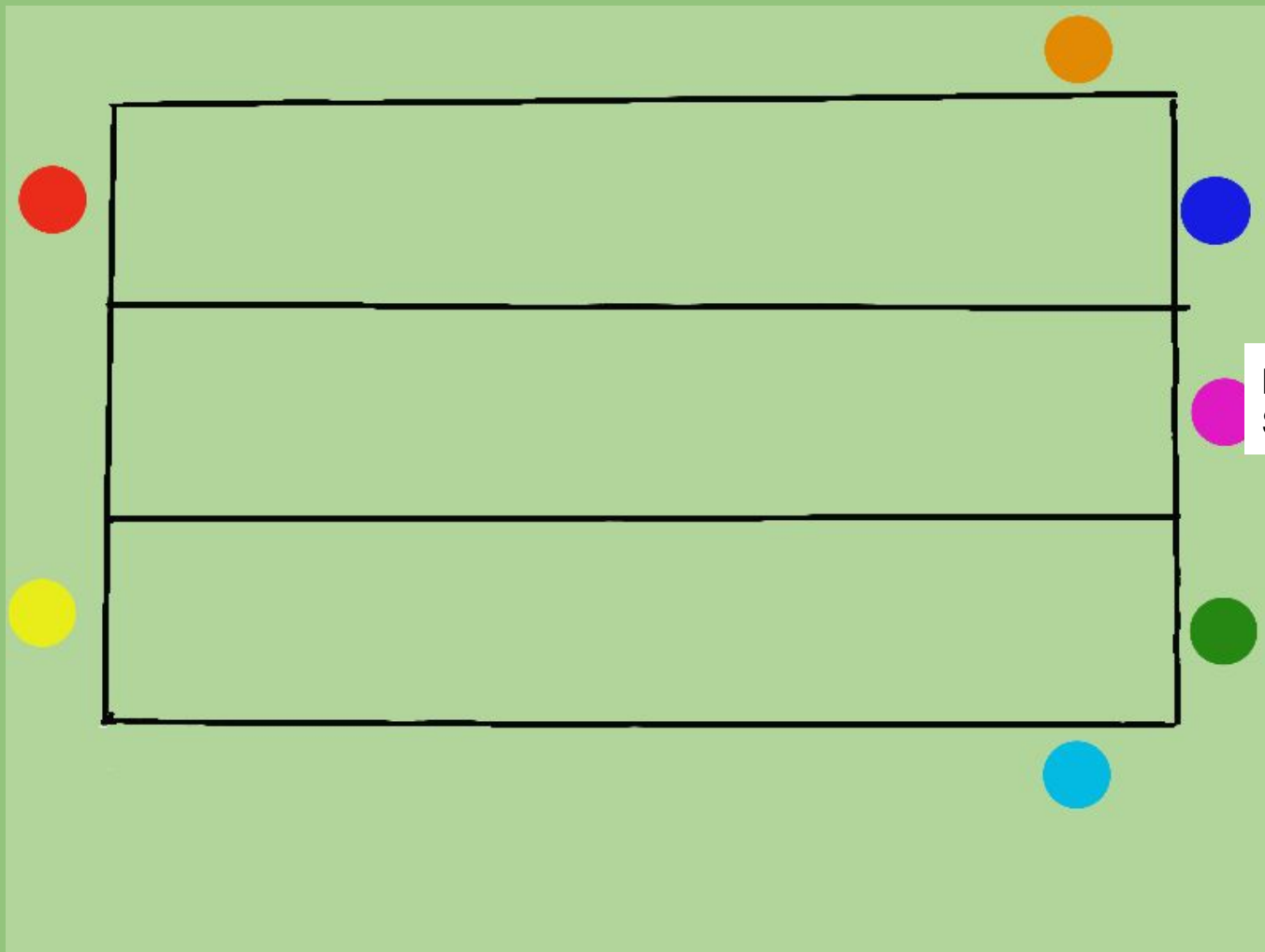
Start with a set of cones anywhere between 60-80m apart. Put groups of kids at each set of cones. The runner in the center is in the “Winner’s Circle” and within 20 seconds yells out “Go” and starts running. The runners to the left and to the right of this person need to try and beat them while being at a disadvantage of having started a fraction of a second later. The person who wins is now (or still) in the center and two new challengers come to the side. This process repeats, keeping track of who has the most “wins”.

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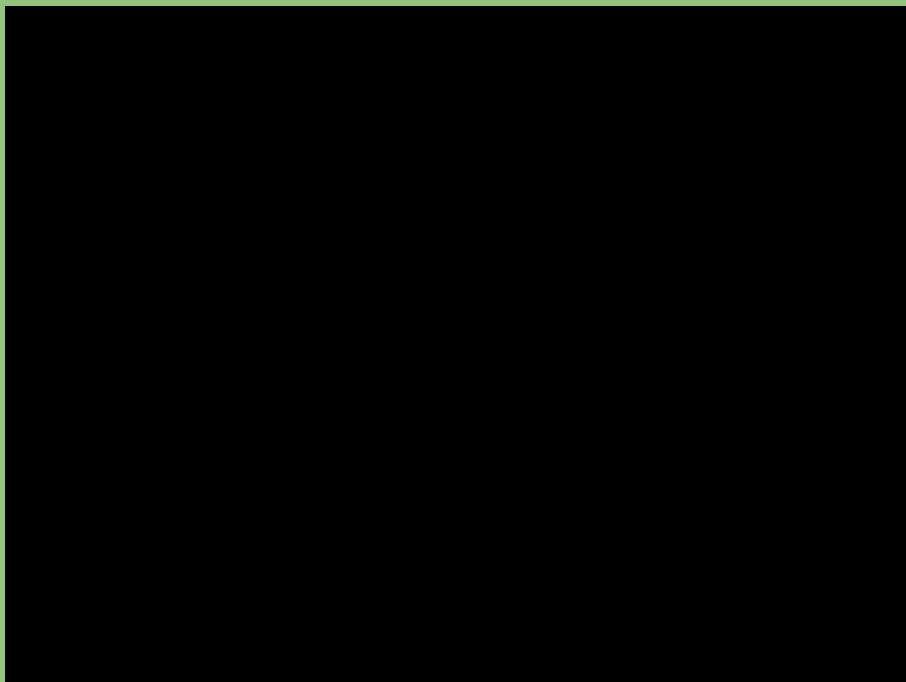
**Workout-** 60-80m repeats. (TR, CC)

**Skill-** reaction time. (TR)





MIDDLE LANE  
SAY'S "GO".



# ZOMBIE TAG or WAR



**By far and away the kids favorite game.**

**You start with 3-5 individuals who are “it”. The rest of the team is given a 2 minute head start.**

**The “it” individuals try to tag the others, if tagged you then become “it” until there is one person left.**

- Establish clearly defined borders and a time limit.
- No climbing buildings, trees or other objects.
- No going inside cars or buildings
- Give a piece of cloth to everyone to put on their forehead once tagged.



# DIDN'T MAKE THE CUT



- **SHARKS & MINNOWS-** My easiest and go-to game, but I didn't want to spend time going over a game that most people know how to play or could easily find out.
- **CAPTURE the FLAG-** Not a good way to translate it to a workout. A lot of kids standing around. A lot of injuries (For no real reason).
- **BATTLESHIP-** Looks like it may be a keeper, but haven't worked all the kinks out of it so I didn't want to present it.

# RESOURCES

Good!

Other Coaches.

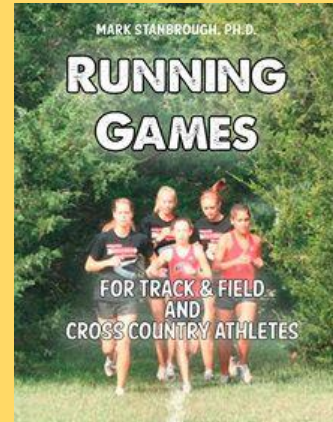
Other Sports.

PE Teachers.

Bad!

Internet.

Books.



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