

TAKE YOUR MARKS

Games guide

TAKE YOUR MARKS GAMES GUIDE

Take Your Marks focuses on learning through fun and social activities. That's why we've included the following games in our lesson plans. Some of these games will seem familiar, as many are based on popular playground games, which are a great way for kids to have fun with their friends while they are learning.

This guide includes the following games for use in your Take Your Marks sessions:

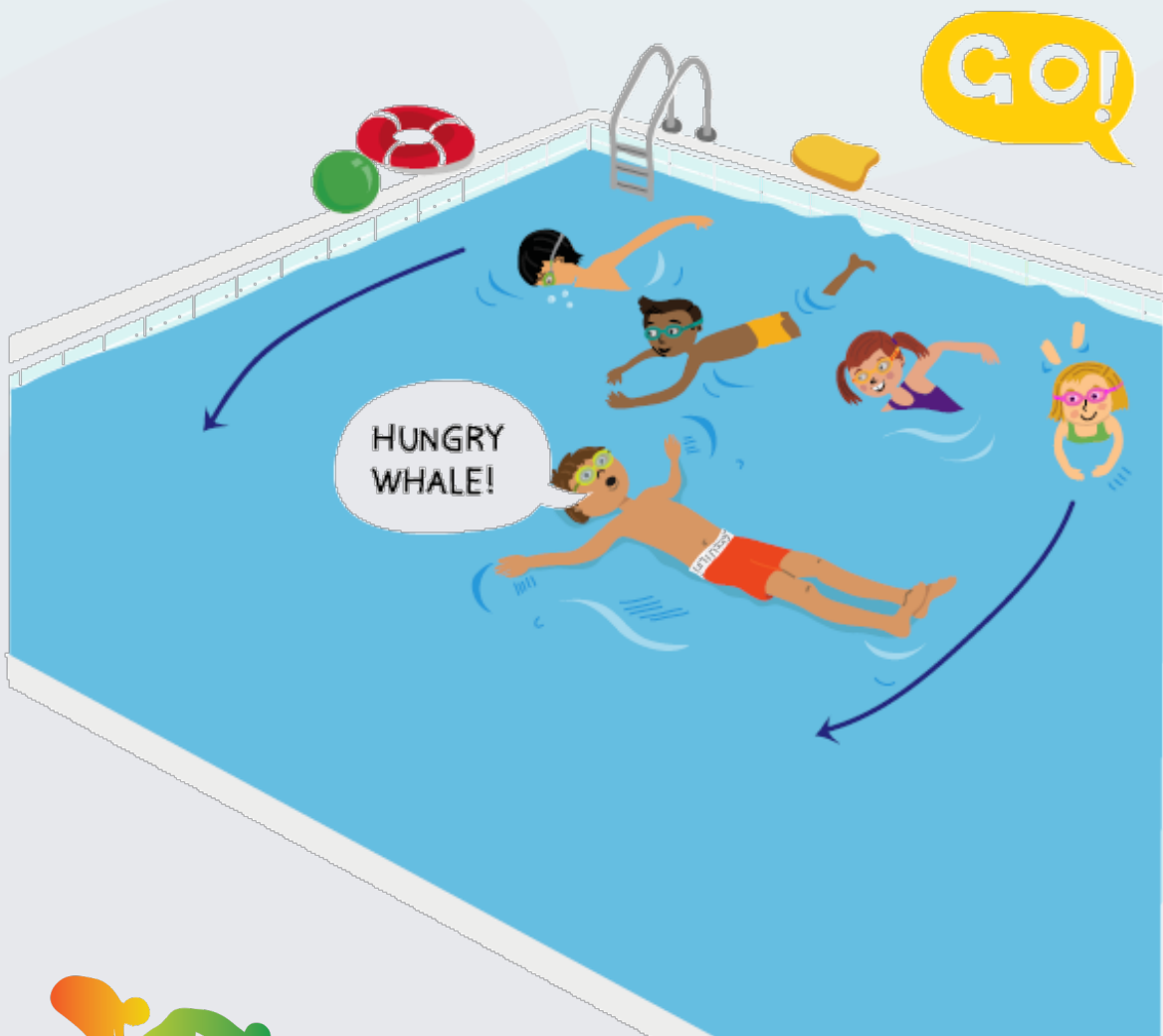
- Hungry Whale
- Fishy in the Middle
- Rats and Rabbits
- Under and Over
- Big Friendly Giant (or paired) Swimming
- Clothed Swimming Relay
- Princess and the Pea Relay
- Kick of War
- Octopus Chain Tag
- Equipment Relay
- Roll-over Ball
- Synchro Swimming Teams Competition
- Silly Strokes
- Somersault Tag
- Modified Water Polo
- Rafting

Modify the types of races kids participate in. There are lots of options to make these fun and kids may even suggest their own ideas. These can include:

- Kickboard races
- Boogie board races
- Pool noodle races
- Underwater treasure hunts
- Tyre/inflatable relays
- Water polo ball relays
- Inflatable dolphin races
- Silly stroke relays

HUNGRY WHALE

Equipment	None required
What to do	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Choose one swimmer to become the whale. They must float on their back in the pool while the rest of the group line up along the pool edge• When everyone is ready, shout GO! The other swimmers must try to swim past the whale and reach the other side of the pool• The whale must then shout 'Hungry Whale!' They can then chase and try to tag one of the other swimmers before they reach the side of the pool• The tagged swimmer becomes the next whale
Tips	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Let the swimmers know they can't tag people on the head and they must be gentle when tagging



FISHY IN THE MIDDLE

Equipment	A variety of balls (water polo balls, beach balls, etc.)
What to do	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Divide your swimmers into groups of three• Give each group a ball• Choose two swimmers to become the passers – they must pass the ball to each other• The third swimmer must stand between them and try to intercept the ball• When the third swimmer successfully gets the ball, they must swap places with one of the passers.
Tips	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• For younger kids, conduct this game in shallower water where they can stand on the bottom of the pool. Older kids may be able to play the game treading water.



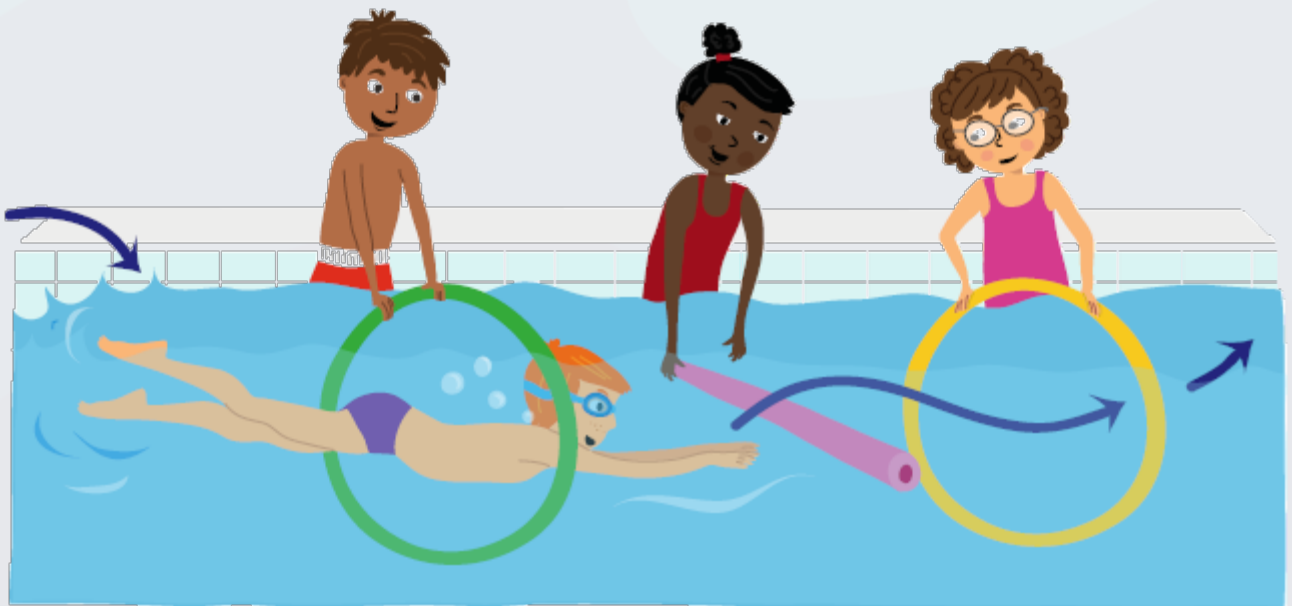
RATS AND RABBITS

Equipment	None required
What to do	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Divide your swimmers into two groups – one group becomes the rats and the other group becomes the rabbits• Ask the groups to stand in two lines, back-to-back in the middle of the playing area facing opposite walls (or lane ropes)• Call out rrrrats or rrrrabbits – the group called has to race to the side of the pool (or the lane ropes) while the other groups turn and chase• Any swimmers that are caught must join the other team
Tips	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Depending on ability levels, kids can also play this game treading water• Ask kids for ideas on how to make the game harder or easier – such as increasing the distance to swim, modifying the stroke, etc



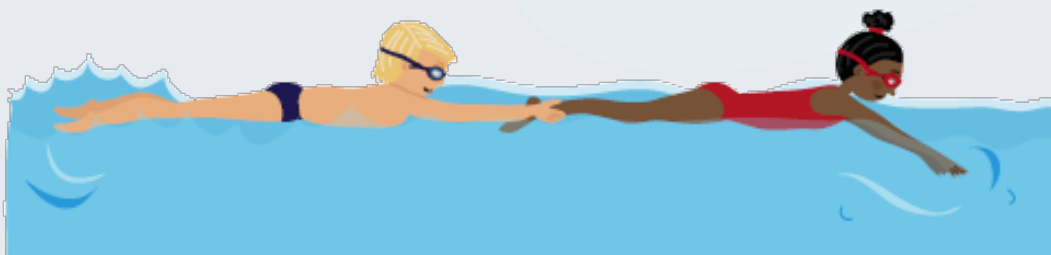
UNDER AND OVER

Equipment	Weighted hoops and pool noodles
What to do	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Divide swimmers into two groups and provide one group with the hoops and noodles• The other students can then swim through the obstacle course• To increase the challenge, get students to swim through the hoop and over the noodles
Tips	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask students to modify the game by coming up with their own rules. Suggestions include swimming through two hoops at a time or trying to swim on their back through the obstacle course.



BIG FRIENDLY GIANT (OR PAIRED) SWIMMING

Equipment	None required
What to do	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pair your swimmers up in similar sizes and ability levels• Ask the kids to determine who is swimmer A and swimmer B• Swimmer A will become the arms and swimmer B the legs• Ask swimmer B to hold onto swimmer A's ankles• Both swimmers must work together to swim a set distance• Swap swimmers and continue the activity
Tips	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure kids are comfortable in the water holding onto their partner• Ask kids for suggestions on how the game can be modified. Some suggestions include using different body parts to hold onto, swim a different distance, use a different stroke or have relay races.



CLOTHED SWIMMING RELAY

Equipment	Ask a few swimmers to bring old, lightweight clothes they can wear in the water. Track pants, jumpers and t-shirts are ideal.
What to do	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Divide your swimmers into teams of four and give each group a selection of clothing• Start with all kids on pool deck, standing opposite sides of the pool• On 'go' the first swimmer dresses in their team's set of clothes, safely enters the water and swims across the pool• At the other side of the pool, the swimmer must remove the clothes in the water and then pass them to their team's next swimmer• The first team to finish wins
Tips	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Modify the game by asking all kids to start and dress in the water• Change the type of strokes the swimmers use• Use as many or as little types of clothing as you like!




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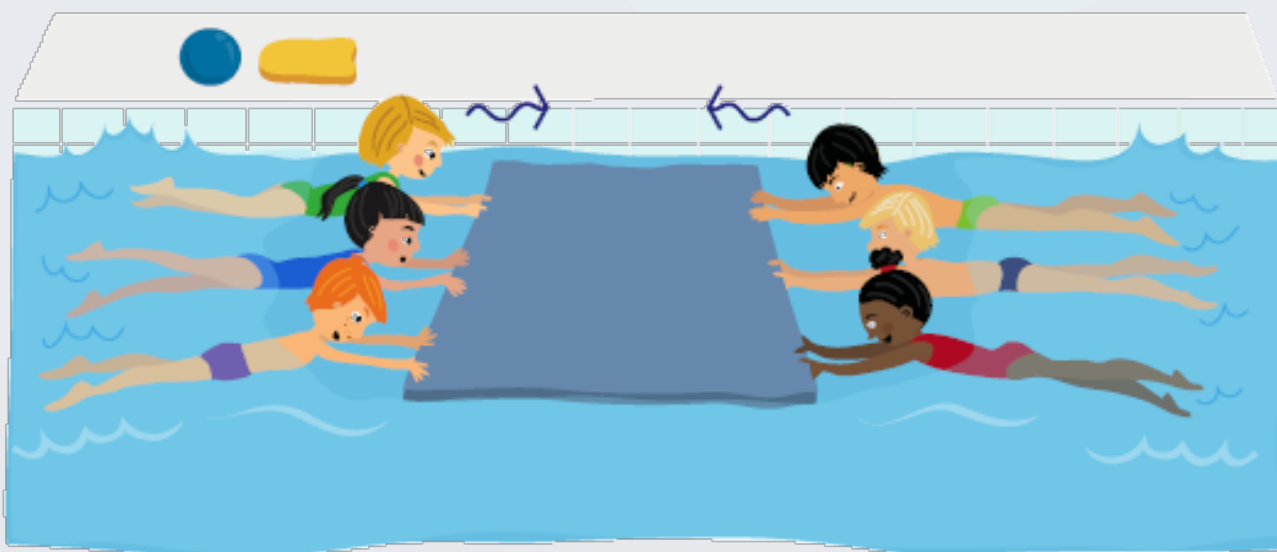
PRINCESS AND THE PEA RELAY

Equipment	A variety of balls (water polo balls, beach balls, etc.)
What to do	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Divide swimmers into teams of four and ask them to line up 10 – 15 m apart• Give each team a ball – this is the pea• Each swimmer must take a turn at streamline kicking while pushing the pea with their head
Tips	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask students for ways to modify the game – suggestions may include using a Breaststroke kick, different sized ball or to have a relay race



KICK OF WAR

Equipment	At least one large foam mat
What to do	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Divide your swimmers into two teams of three or four swimmers per team• Ask each team to place their hands on opposite sides of the mat, facing each other• On 'go', the two teams must kick as hard as they can to move the mat forward• The team that pushes the mat forward the most wins
Tips	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask swimmers for suggestions on how they can change the game – suggestions may include using a different type of kick or lying on their back



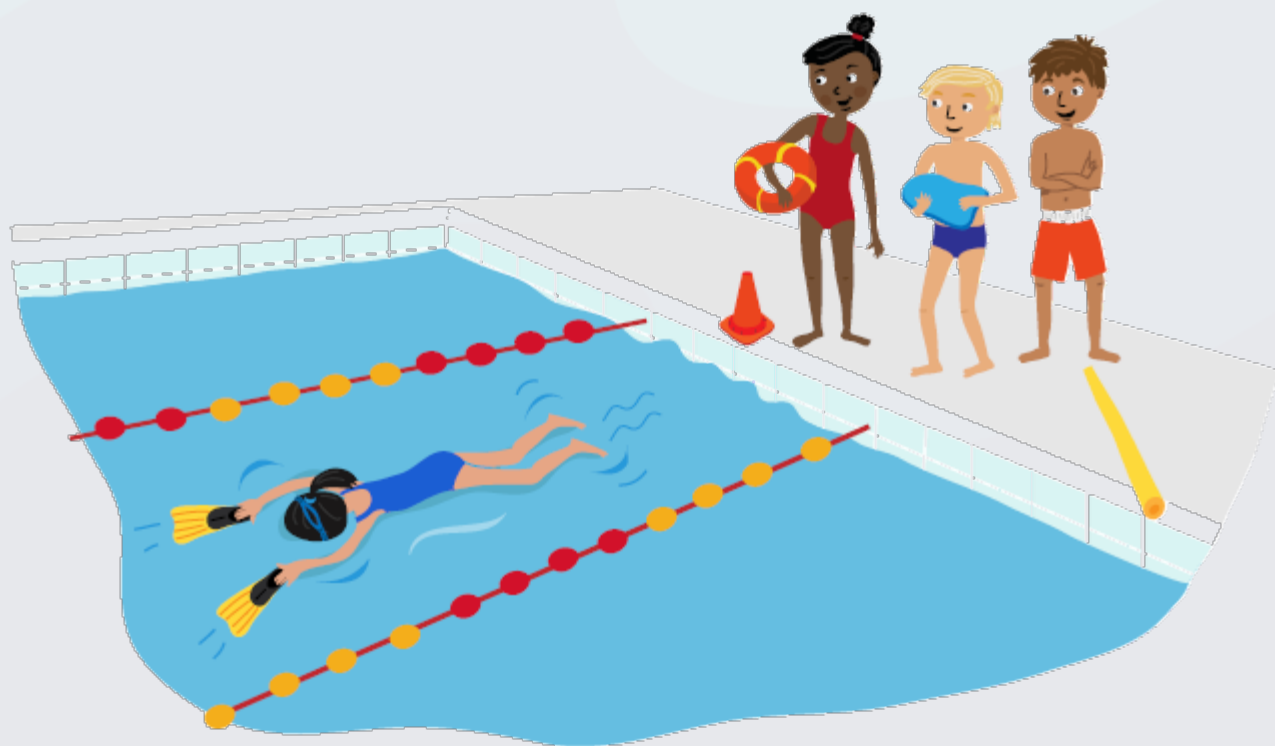
OCTOPUS CHAIN TAG

Equipment	Pool noodles
What to do	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Choose one swimmer to be the octopus and give them two pool noodles• Ask the rest of the group to spread out in the playing area• On 'go', the octopus must try to tag another swimmer with the noodles• Tagged swimmers must join hands with the octopus and take charge of the noodle. As more people are tagged, the octopus grows.
Tips	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure that the noodles always stay as the outer arms in the game• Reinforce safety with the kids and that they shouldn't tag each other on the head• Modify the game by asking kids to use different strokes



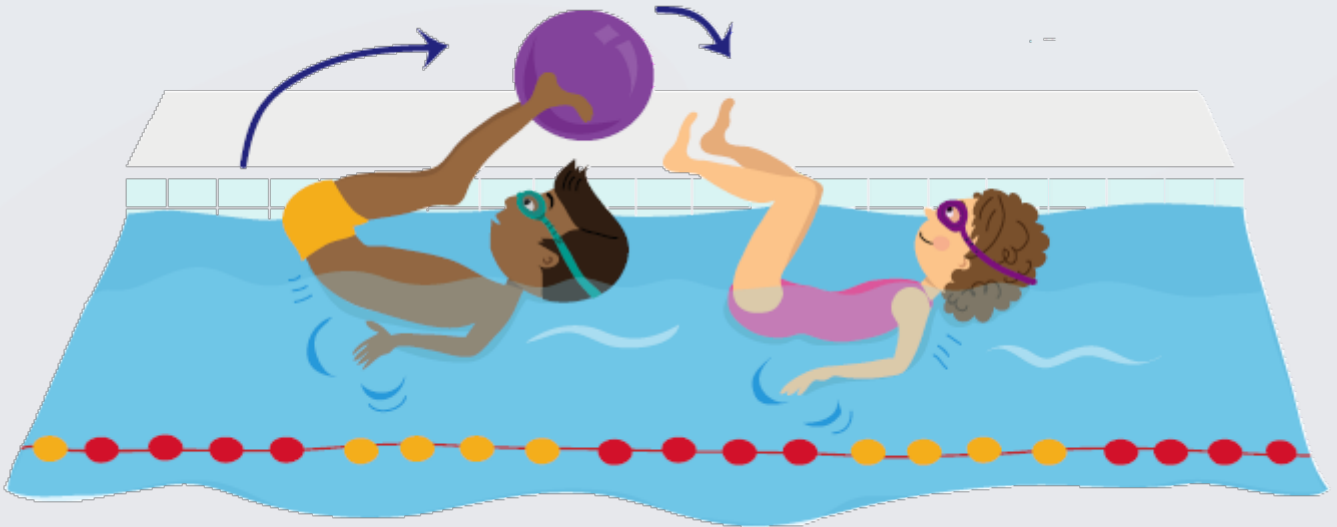
EQUIPMENT RELAY

Equipment	A range of equipment including fins, kickboards, pull-buoys and noodles
What to do	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Divide your swimmers into small teams of four to six• Give each team a small pile of swimming equipment• Ask swimmers to shuffle the equipment one piece at a time from one side of the pool to the other in a relay format• Swimmers can use any swimming style they like and choose to use the equipment in a non-traditional way• The first team to reach the other side of the pool wins
Tips	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Look for ways to reward and recognise creativity by asking the group with the most creative use of the equipment and stroke to demonstrate their style!



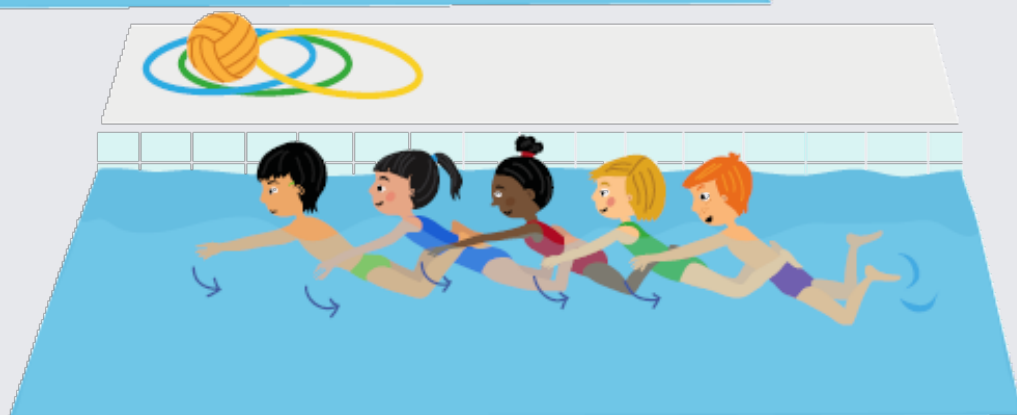
ROLL-OVER BALL

Equipment	A variety of balls (water polo balls, beach balls, etc.)
What to do	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Divide your swimmers into teams of four to five• Ask your swimmers to line up, standing about 1m apart• Give the first swimmer in the line a ball• On 'go', all swimmers must float on their back, while sculling• The first swimmer in each team must place the ball between their feet. Using their sculling and core strength, they must try to pass the ball over their head behind them to the next swimmer• Once the ball reaches the back of the line, the last swimmer must wade or swim with the ball to the front of the line• The game continues until the first swimmer is back at the front of the group.
Tips	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask swimmers for suggestions on how to modify the game. This may include using different equipment or passing the ball sideward.



SYNCHRO SWIMMING TEAMS COMPETITION

Equipment	A range of equipment including fins, kickboards, pull-buoys and noodles
What to do	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Divide swimmers into small groups• Ask swimmers to create a one minute synchronised swimming routine• You may like to set various criteria for the performance such as:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Include a safety step entry• Include two different types of sculling• Include a somersault• Include a star float
Tips	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Invite parents or carers to watch the teams and award points for creativity, synchronisation and team work• If you have time, you may like to get kids to perform their routine to music.



SILLY STROKES

Equipment	None required
What to do	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask your swimmers to create their own stroke by mixing and matching the arm and leg actions they know (for example freestyle arms and breaststroke legs)• Divide your swimmers into teams to swim mini races or mini relays
Tips	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask kids to demonstrate their own silly strokes to the group and invite others to copy



SOMERSAULT TAG

Equipment	None required
What to do	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nominate one swimmer to be the 'tagger'• Determine which stroke swimmers should use• Inform the group that when the 'tagger' tags them, they must do a somersault and then they are free to join back in the game
Tips	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure kids are aware of the area they should be swimming in and don't go outside the boundary• You can call out different strokes that the swimmers must do as a modification• Increase the challenge by nominating more than one 'tagger'



MODIFIED WATER POLO

Equipment	Water polo ball or other sized balls suitable for use in the water
What to do	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Divide your group into two teams• Place a goal at each side of the water space you have defined as the playing area. If you don't have access to goals, you can use foam mats or other floating surfaces as the goals• Play the game in shallow water to allow swimmers to stand on the bottom of the pool• Explain that the aim of the game is for each group to work as a team, passing the ball and to score a goal by getting the ball in the goal (or touching the goal, depending on what has been used as the goal)• Explain to swimmers that the game is non-contact• Start out the game with swimmers walking with the ball and two-handed passes and catches• As they develop their skills and confidence with the game, develop rules so players must swim with the ball and see if they can throw and catch with one hand.
Tips	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To ensure all players are included, develop rules such as 'all players must touch the ball before a goal can be scored'• Get kids to develop their own rules too so they start to get a better understanding of the game. Suggestions may include determining how many points are awarded for a goal or rules around how far the ball can be thrown from swimmer to swimmer• Modify the types of balls used in the games• Try running the game with four goal posts



RAFTING

Equipment	A range of materials that can be used to make a raft. Ideas include ropes, plastic containers, car tyre inner tubes, small wooden plants, inflatable rings and pool noodles.
What to do	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Divide your swimmers into teams and provide them with a range of materials• Encourage the groups to work together to build a raft and provide them with adequate building time on pool deck to do so• Once the rafts have been constructed, each team can put their rafts to the test and place them in the pool• Instruct swimmers that they must all be either on the raft or holding the raft• Give the group several attempts to race each other
Tips	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure safety guidelines for the activity are provided and provide instruction to the group as to what they need to do if the raft sinks or falls apart





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