

# Three Classic Games your Kids Have Probably Never Heard Of!

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In the era of video games, smart phones, tablets, and elementary school kids with cell phones, many kids aren't doing much outside these days. When I was a kid in the summertime, my mom pushed us out the door in the morning after breakfast, called us in for lunch, and pushed us back out the door until dinner. We live in a much different world now, where playing with a friend often includes standing in front of a TV waving the Wii remotes like crazy people. (Note: We also live in a much different world where I wouldn't ever advocate pushing your kids out the door and not having a clue what they were doing all day).

At the risk of sounding like a cliché, I'd like to share with you a few games I played in my day. When we had no money and were unplugged – not to challenge ourselves, but because we didn't have anything to plug in!

## **Red Rover**

A bunch of kids with nothing to do? How about run into each other at full speed? In this game, two groups of kids form walls by holding hands and they stand in parallel lines, usually 15+ feet apart. One group calls out to a person in the other group to come over and try to break through the way by singing "Red Rover, Red Rover, send (person's name) right over!" The person chosen picks a spot and runs, trying to cause the people holding hands to let go and allow them through. If the person doesn't break through – they have to join this team. If they break through, they choose one of the people from the team and take them over to their side.

Personal warning: do not play inside. This game played in the small basement of my childhood home caused my sister to run into a toy box and bite THROUGH her lip!



## Four Square

Another great playground game, this one is for four players and a bouncy ball of some sort (soccer, volleyball, etc). Draw a giant square with sidewalk chalk, put a cross through it to make 4 smaller squares and number them 1-4. Each player occupies a space. The game begins with the player in square 4 “serving” the ball, or bouncing it once on the ground and then hitting it with their hand toward another player. The players bounce the ball between players in squares until someone makes an error and is eliminated. That player leaves the court and all players advance number to fill the empty spaces.

The ball can only be hit with a player’s hand, not by any other part of their body and not caught. The player serving must hit the ball into another square – if it lands outside of the square, the player serving is OUT! The player receiving the ball can hit it before or after it bounces ONCE. If it bounces twice, they are OUT!



## Capture the Flag

This is a great game for kids in a big neighborhood – you need lots of space and lots of kids. The kids need to divide this space into two large areas (including a bunch of yards), one for each team. They also need to designate a “jail” on each side. Each team needs to hide a flag on their side of the territory (give each 5 minutes). To win, a team must find the other team’s flag and bring it into their own team’s territory. The catch – if you get caught on the other side by an enemy, they can take you to jail! The only way to get sprung is by a member of your own team.



There are tons of variations of these games to get your heart pumping games and are always good for a laugh. Your children may think you’re crazy at first for suggesting games that don’t include a controller or lazer gun. But, try them. You’ll have a blast!

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