

## Back Pocket Games

Have you ever finished a troop meeting and needed something to do before caregivers arrived? Do Girl Scouts come to meetings needing to expend energy? Or, have you ever needed to redirect your troop when a planned activity just didn't work? That's when you need a game or two in your back pocket!

These back pocket games all require little or no props to play. Most games are appropriate or can be adapted for all Girl Scout program levels, but consider the skills and development levels of your Girl Scouts before choosing games.

### **Active Game: #1 Fan**

**In this variation of Rock-Paper-Scissors, Girl Scouts play rounds and are eliminated but remain engaged as they become their opponent's #1 Fan.**

Divide Girl Scouts into pairs and have each pair play a game of rock-paper scissors. The winner (2 out of 3 rounds) puts her hand in the air to search for a new opponent, while the runner-up stands behind the winner as her #1 Fan, "rooting her on." When a new opponent is found, the two winners play again (2 out of 3 rounds) and the victor gains the opponent and her fan as #1 Fans. Play continues like this until the final match-up between the last two players and their #1 Fans (the rest of the group) face off in the final round. Everyone becomes the winner's #1 Fan."

This game encourages good sportsmanship and boosts self-confidence. It is best played in a large open space with 8-30 people.

### **My Leader is Magic: "ESP"**

**This game can keep your troop guessing. It requires two facilitators.**

Tell your Girl Scouts that you have "ESP." Have them sit in a circle (with your coleader) and tell them that you will prove it to them by leaving them alone in the room with your coffee cup (or any personal item). They are to assign someone to touch your coffee cup, and when you come back, you will know who it was. Your co-leader will stay in the circle with the Girl Scouts and pay attention to who is picked. When you return, she will mimic the body language of the person who touched the coffee cup, and all you have to do is match her body language to a specific Girl Scout to determine who touched the cup. You can put on a show of picking up the cup and pretending to listen to it while you are looking around the circle for a match.

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### Active Game: Amoeba Tag

**In this variation of Tag, the game ends when everybody is IT.**

Select two players to be "IT." They link arms and chase the other participants. When they tag someone, that person links arms with them. Once they have tagged two people, the four of them "split" like an amoeba into two separate "ITs." The two sets of buddies that are "IT" continue chasing, catching, and splitting until everyone is "IT."

### My Leader is Magic: Silly Sally

**This is a word game that is easy to remember and fun to say.**

Tell the girls that you have a friend named Silly Sally and that she is silly because she likes certain things and doesn't like others and it doesn't make much sense. For example, Silly Sally likes puppies but she doesn't like dogs. Silly Sally likes summer but not the sun. Silly Sally likes mattresses but not beds. On paper, the trick is pretty easy to figure out, but out loud it is harder to grasp. Silly Sally likes things with double letters and does not like things without. Allow the Girl Scouts to take turns asking if Silly Sally likes a particular thing and answer appropriately, giving more examples of things she likes and dislikes frequently. When a girl thinks she's figured it out, have her whisper the answer in your ear.

### Indoor Games: "Group Counting"

**This game has Girl Scouts counting to 20. Sounds easy enough, right?**

Players can sit any way they choose. The rules of the game are that the group must count to 20, each number being said only once and by only one person. They must do this without organizing in any way, simply yelling out numbers. If two or more people say the same number once, the group starts back at one. This game works best if a facilitator (the troop leader) starts off with the number one each time, so that the whole group knows that they are starting over.

This game encourages teamwork in a non-verbal, non-traditional sense. It encourages Girl Scouts to work as a team, to laugh at themselves and to speak up in the group. It is best played by groups of 10 or more.

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### Indoor Games: “Poor Puppy”

Players arrange themselves in a circle. One player is chosen as the “puppy” and goes into the center of the circle. The “puppy” then acts like a puppy and approaches a player in the circle. The player who is approached must then pat the “puppy” on the head and say “poor, poor, puppy.” The “puppy” tries to do everything in her power to make the player laugh, including making faces and funny sounds. If the player keeps a straight face, the “puppy” moves on to another player. When a player laughs or smiles at the “puppy,” the player becomes the “puppy.” If “poor puppy” loses its hilarity over time, you can change this game up by playing Poor Kitty, Poor Dolphin, or any animal you choose.

### Animal Who Am I

Divide the Girl Scouts into groups of five to ten. Tell them they must form their group into types of animals or insects. Have the other Girl Scouts guess what animal the group is forming.

### Imaginary Ball Toss

Have Girl Scouts gather in a circle. The leader starts off by saying that she has an imaginary tennis ball in her hand. The leader then she chooses one person in the group, calls her name, and asks if she is ready to catch the “ball.” The Girl Scout who catches the “ball” does the same, calling the name of another Girl Scout, before throwing her the “ball.” It’s important that each player who does the throwing uses the name of the person they are throwing to. After a few rounds, the leader announces that the tennis ball has changed to a basketball. After a couple different items, the leader announces that the thrower gets to designate what she is throwing. It could be a watermelon, a live chicken, a shotput, or an egg...or whatever the girls can imagine!

### Grocery Store

Form two lines of players of equal number. One player from each side steps forward and the leader calls out a letter. The player who first calls the name of a grocery item beginning with that letter scores a point for her side. Prompting from the sidelines subtracts a point for each infraction.

### Statues I

One player is chosen to be the statue maker. She takes each player by the hand, spins her around, and lets her go. The player must freeze into a statue in whatever position she lands. When all players have been turned into statues, the statue maker tries to make them laugh or move. The first person to move becomes the next statue maker.

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### Coffeepot

One player is chosen to leave the room while the other players think of some kind of activity, like dancing, swimming, cooking, reading, eating, etc. The activity they choose is called "Coffeepot." When the absent player is called back into the room she tries to guess what coffeepotting is by asking questions like, "Do you coffeepot in the dark?" or "Can rabbits coffeepot?" until she guesses what coffeepot means. All questions must be answered truthfully with "yes" or "no." When the questioner thinks she has guessed what coffeepot is she may ask if her guess is right, and if it is, the player who answered her last question goes out of the room and a new activity is chosen as coffeepot. But if the questioner guesses wrong three times she is out of the game.

### Brussel Sprouts

Brussels Sprouts is a tag game that changes speeds. When a Girl Scout is tagged by the player who is "it," she links arms with the person who is already "it." As more people join "it," they should link arms at the end of the line. The game ends when everyone is "it." Play starts out in slow motion, with everyone moving in exaggerated slowness. At any point in the game, a player can call out "lima beans." At this call, the speed of the game changes slow to fast or fast to slow. Players may also call out "carrots," which means that all the players who are "it" must let go, jump in the air, spin around and re-link facing the opposite direction. Just for the fun of it, players can also call out "Brussel sprouts," which has no effect on game play whatsoever.

### Giggling Gertie

Girl Scouts form a circle. One is selected to be in the center. She tosses the bandana in the air. The players start laughing. All girls continue to laugh as long as the bandana is in the air. As soon as it touches the floor, players must stop laughing and make their faces "expressionless." Anyone caught smiling is out. Play until one girl is left.

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### Swap

Line up chairs in a circle. There should be one fewer chairs than players. Players sit in the chairs. One player volunteers to start by standing in the middle. The volunteer names a characteristic that some of the players have in common. For example: "everyone who likes chocolate, "everyone with blue eyes, or "everyone who has been to the fair." All the players who fit the named characteristic must change chairs. The volunteer tries to reach a vacated chair. The player left without a chair becomes the volunteer in the middle who calls out characteristics.

### Attention Getters

Ways to quiet or get the attention of an excited group:

**Hands:** The usual way of getting a group's attention is by the leader using the Girl Scout quiet sign (raising her hand) and having the Girl Scouts following her lead by quieting down and raising their hand up too. This method works well with reinforcement. Start by testing to see how fast the troop can do it. Time it, set a goal, then test them randomly and reward them for reaching their goals. In this way, Girl Scouts feel encouraged to raise their hand and quiet down when they see the leader using the quiet sign.

**Calls:** Set up a call and response with your Girl Scouts. Let them know that when you call out your part, they should follow by responding with their part and quieting. For example, you might call out "1,2,3, eyes on me," and have them respond with "1,2, eyes on you" to get their attention. Search the Internet for "call and response" ideas to see other examples.

**If you can hear me:** Say "If you can hear me clap once" in a loud voice. Then, "if you can hear me clap twice" in a slightly softer voice. Continue in this way until the group is quiet. You can mix in funny options like "If you can hear me, make a peace sign," or "If you can hear me, do a little dance," etc.