



Cup Games

Cup Hide and Seek

Objective- Remember which cup is hiding the object.

Instructions- Set three or four cups upside down in a line. Place a small object (penny, lego, etc.) under one of the cups. Let the other player see where it is. Quickly move the cups around several times. The other player will guess which cup the object is under. If they are correct, they will score 1 point. Players will switch roles. The first player to reach 5 points after an equal number of turns wins.

Tic-Tac-Toe

Objective- Be the first to get Tic-Tac-Toe by flipping cups. This game will use force, motion, speed, and strategy.

Instructions- Make a Tic-Tac-Toe grid on a table with masking tape. Each player gets six cups. If both players have the same color cup, make an x on the bottom of six cups with masking tape or a permanent marker. On "Go," each player will set up a cup upside down partially off the table and hit the edge hanging off the table with their fingers. If the cup lands upside down, they will place it on the grid and grab another cup to flip. If it lands on its side, the player will keep flipping until it lands upside down. This game is fun and fast-paced. Players will pay attention to their cups as they try to get three in a row while trying to block their opponent.

Team Cup Stack

Objective- Teams of four or five players will build a pyramid using six solo cups without touching the cups with their hands. This game requires hand-eye coordination, teamwork, engineering skills, and concentration. One team member usually ends up taking the leadership role and guiding the team.

Instructions- Tie four or five 18-inch pieces of string or yarn evenly around a medium-sized rubber band. Set out six paper/plastic cups. Each member of the team will hold a string close to the end. By moving the rubber band over the cup, each team member will pull their string so the rubber band will open big enough to fit around the cup. The strings are then given slack so the rubber band tightens around the cup and it can be moved into position. Then the rubber band is moved to pick up the next cup. Place three cups on the bottom, two cups on top of those, and one on the top.

Ball and Cups Race

Objective- Be the first to move your ball through all the cups and ring the bell (or grab the item) at the end. This game requires speed, technique, dexterity, and motion.

Instructions- Two players will face each other. Set up a row of 10 cups in front of each player. Each player will have a small ball in their first cup. On “Go,” each player will quickly dump the ball from the first cup into the second cup, then from the second to the third, and all the way down the line. Once the ball gets into the 10th cup, the player can ring the bell at the end (or grab an item). They are the winner. The winner stays, and a new challenger plays.

Cup Bowling

Objective- Score the most points by knocking down the most cups with a tennis ball or other small ball. This game uses force and motion.

Instructions- This game is best played with smaller groups. If you have several players, set up multiple games of about three or four players each. Set up 10 cups to represent bowling pins - one in front, two in the second row, three in the third row, and four in the fourth row. Each player will get four turns per game. Each player will get to go twice in a row during each turn. The second turn is to knock down any remaining cups from the first roll. Each cup that is knocked down is scored as 1 point to keep the scoring simple. The player with the highest score at the end of the four rounds is the winner of the game.

Team Tower Stacking

Objective- See what team can build the tallest tower that doesn't fall down.

Instructions- Allow students to get into teams. Time the teams to see who can build the tallest tower that does not fall. Set the timer for 5-10 minutes based on your discretion. Set out cups and 6-inch squares of construction paper. Stack a cup, then a paper, a cup, then a paper. See who can build the tallest tower that doesn't fall.

Ping-Pong Balls and Cups

Objective- See who can build the tallest tower.

Instructions- Tape four cups to the end of a long table. The tops of the cups should be even with the table. Tape the rim of the cups to the end of the table. Give each player or team an equal number of ping pong balls (possibly 12 for single players or 24 for teams). Players will roll the balls from one end of the table to the other as they try to get the balls to drop into the cups. The player or team with the most balls in their cups wins.

Stack it

Objective- Be the first to build the pyramid, then deconstruct it. This game requires speed and dexterity.

Instructions- Players will have 15 cups each. The base layer of the pyramid will have 5 cups. The players will race to see who can build and deconstruct their pyramid first.

Head Stack

Objective- Stack the most cups on your head without holding them.

Instructions- Place a cup upside down on your head. Keep adding cups to see how many you can hold. Then, try with the cups upright.

Bounce-Off

Objective: Get the most balls into the cups. This game requires force, technique, and effort.

Instructions: Set up a group of cups at one end of a table. Bounce ping-pong balls into them. If you have different colored ping-pong balls the players can take turns bouncing. If you have one color, then the first player will bounce all the balls and add their score. Then, the next player will bounce all the balls and add their score.

Alternative- Put some treats in some of the cups. If a ball lands in a cup with a treat, then that player gets the treat. Treat ideas: pretzels, M&M's, stickers, erasers, etc.

Ups and Downs

Objective- Be the team with the most cups facing your direction. This game requires teamwork, speed, and strategy.

Instructions- This game requires two teams and lots of cups. One team will be "Ups," and the other will be "Downs." Spread the cups around the room or play area, with half facing up and the other half facing down. On "Go," the teams will run and flip the cups up or down depending on their team name. On "Stop," whichever team has the most cups facing their direction wins.

Play Catch

Objective- Players will play catch with cups and ping-pong balls or pom-poms.

Instructions- Plastic cups can be used as throwers and catchers to toss a ping-pong ball or pom pom back and forth. Kids can play alone, in pairs, or in small groups.

Blowing in the Wind

Objective: Be the first to blow your cups off the table (or across a tape line) using air from a balloon.

Instructions: Set up a row of paper/plastic cups placed upside down about 6 inches from the edge of a table. The player will blow up a balloon and pinch it shut with their fingers. On “Go,” the player will let the air out of the balloon to blow the cups off the table (or across a tape line). This game can be played with a time limit or competing with another player.

Alternative: Use straws instead of balloons, and set the cups 12 inches from the edge of the table or tape line.

Four Corners

Objective: The teams will quickly collect as many cups as possible and bring them to their corner.

Instructions: In a large open area, spread out several (40-100) cups upside down. Divide the players into four teams. Assign each team a corner. On “Go,” one player from each team will run from their corner, grab a cup, and bring it back to their corner. Then, the next players will go and get a cup. The game will continue in this pattern until the STEM coach says “STOP.” The team with the most cups wins. For extra fun, if there are four different colored cups, then the teams can only collect their own color.