

# Games of low organisation

## Part 1: Improving general fitness and strength in children

by Wendy Plitz, Senior Lecturer, School of Health Sciences, University of South Australia

Games of low organisation can be used to attain a variety of outcomes with all ages of participants in numerous sports. These games can be used at the commencement of a practice to quickly engage the players in enjoyable activity that generates interest and creates a positive start to the coaching session. They can also be designed to attain a variety of specific learning outcomes that contribute to the development of effective sports players.

### Characteristics of games of low organisation

Games of low organisation are quick and easy to organise, have few rules, require minimal equipment and involve mass participation. Participation is immediately maximised in these games and the intensity of activity must be monitored by using short time periods and minor variations within the game to maintain purposeful play. Games of low organisation are excellent introductory activities for a coaching session to facilitate the development of general fitness, strength and perceptual-motor capacity. By the simple addition of equipment, coaches can also use these games to facilitate the concurrent development of specific sport techniques.

### Games of low organisation for general fitness and strength

The following games can be used to attain a variety of learning outcomes, however, for the purpose of this article the key outcomes will be the development of general fitness and strength. All of the games outlined below have been successfully implemented with groups of players of different ages, from eight-year-old children through to adults. The games of low organisation described in this article are of two types: **partner/small group** games that involve the class working in small groups, and **tag games** that can be undertaken as a large

group. Each of these types of games has similar features and organisation requirements so coaches can quickly begin to modify and create their own versions.

When coaches are implementing these games, it is important that they keep the following points in mind:

- Be ready to make suitable modifications to the game when needed in order to create an enjoyable game for all. This may mean adjusting the key variables such as the dimensions of the playing space, the number of taggers and the time, to maintain a challenge for the specific group of players that you are working with.
- Where possible, and when necessary, match players according to size and weight in partner and small group activities to create a fair and inclusive environment.
- Provide variation in the games by rotating partners, changing taggers or adding slight rule differences in order to enhance player interest and motivation.
- Adapt the game story/scenario for the age group of the players that you are working with.
- Discuss with the players the importance of playing fairly and safely so that everyone enjoys the game.

In Part 2 of this article, the teaching and learning principles of games of low organisation will be explained so that coaches can create their own games to suit the needs for their athletes/teams.

### Games of low organisation — tag games

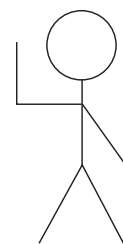
#### Dunny flusher

##### Purpose:

- Increase general fitness
- Have fun
- Improve agility and ability to read the play

**Organisation:** nominate five to six taggers who wear bibs.

- On a signal, the taggers move around the area tagging the free players.
- Players who are tagged must stand with arm extended to the side and bent at right angles at the elbow (see stick figure).





- Other players may free the tagged players by ‘flushing the dunny’, that is, by pulling down on the hand that is on the extended arm and making a ‘shush...sh’ sound.
- Rotate the taggers frequently to maintain intensity and motivation.

The playing space can be basketball-court size, or larger or smaller depending on the numbers and the nature of the participants.

**Key focus cues:**

These are related to the purpose of the game.

- Reading the play: keep your head up
- Agility: change pace, change direction — push off hard with your foot

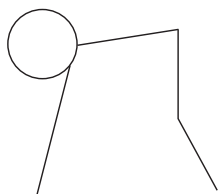
**Bridge tag**

**Purpose:**

- Improve body strength
- Increase general fitness
- Have fun
- Improve agility and ability to read the play

**Organisation:** same area and structure as dunny flusher

- Players who are tagged must hold a bridge formation for ten seconds before raising their arm to indicate that they are ready to be released.



- Other players may free the players by contacting the raised hand.

**Variation:** To develop strength in specific muscle groups, different body positions can be prescribed, such as a push-up hold or a half sit-up hold.

**Games of low organisation — partner games**

**Partner wrist wrestle**

**Purpose:**

- Improve upper body strength
- Have fun

**Organisation:** in pairs

- Both players face each other and raise their hands up in front. Both players grasp the right wrist of the other player with their left hand. Both players must attempt to tag the other person’s shoulder with their hand being held by the partner, and at the same time prevent the opponent from tagging their shoulder.
- Use a short time burst and then rotate partners.

**Partner tug of war**

**Purpose:**

- Improve body strength and balance
- Have fun

**Organisation:** in pairs

- Both players face each other and grasp the right wrist of their partner with their right hand. On a signal, players must try and pull their partner back over a designated mark.
- Use a short time burst and then change partners.

**Variations:** use left hand or use both hands.

**Games of low organisation — small group games**

**Protect your buddy**

**Purpose:**

- Improve agility
- Have fun
- Learn cooperation

**Organisation:** in groups of four

- Three players form a circle by joining hands. One player is free to move outside of the circle.
- The free player moves to tag a designated buddy, one of the players in the circle. Players in the circle move around to protect their buddy, keeping their hands joined.
- Keep the time intervals short and change the free player and the buddy roles.

**Avoid the slime**

**Purpose:**

- Improve body strength
- Have fun

**Organisation:** in small groups of three to six players

- A hoop is placed on the ground containing imaginary ‘slime’. Players form a circle around the hoop and link hands.
- All players must keep their hands linked and try to force other players to step into the slime (hoop) and at the same time avoid stepping into it. Players can move around the hoop as they attempt to ‘slime’ others by pushing or pulling others into the hoop. Attention to safe participation is essential.
- Keep the time intervals short and rotate participants.

**Variations:** Once numbers increase to more than three, work in teams of two or three.