



# Anytime, Anywhere Activities

Try these quick activities and games wherever you are: in the car, on the bus, in a waiting room, or at the dinner table.

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**Waiting around? Pass the time by taking an inventory of legs in the room.**

## 1 Estimate

### Talk About

How many legs are in the room:  
about 10? 100? 1,000?

**Levels:** Easy, Medium, Hard

**Group size:** 2 or more

**Materials:**  
none

**Easy.** Just count legs on people.

**Medium.** Count legs on people and other living things.

**Hard.** Count legs on people, other living things, toys, and furniture.

## 2 Count

Find the number of legs in the room.

### Talk About

How did you get your total?  
Did you count by 2s or 4s? add?  
multiply?



## 3 How many did you find?

Compare answers.

If answers differ, check by finding the total together. Make sure to account for anyone who might have left or arrived. The person who comes closest to the group answer wins.

If answers are the same, everyone wins.

## Variation

**Legs over time (Easy, Medium, Hard).** If you'll be there a while, keep count every 15 minutes. When did you find the largest number of legs? the smallest?

**Need to fill a few minutes? Play a game on the wall!**

**Levels:** Easy, Medium, Hard

**Group size:** 2 or more

**Materials:**  
none

## 1 Pick a wall and decide what to look for

**Easy.** Find as many circles (or squares) as you can on the wall.

**Medium.** Find as many triangles as you can on the wall.

**Hard.** Find as many rectangles as you can on the wall and the window.



## 2 How many did you find?

Compare answers.

**Talk About**

Does a square count as a rectangle? Why or why not?

If answers differ, check by finding shapes together. The person who comes closest to the group answer wins.

If answers are the same, everyone wins.

## Variations

**Without a wall (Easy, Medium, Hard).** Try this with a billboard, magazine page, or scenic view.

**Numbers on the wall (Easy, Medium, Hard).** Find the largest number on the wall. What does the number show (e.g., a date, price, sports score)? For more challenge, find the smallest number on the wall. Include fractions, decimals, and negative numbers.

# Rate It

How would you rate today on a scale of -2 to 2? Use ratings as a conversation starter.

## Before beginning

Pick something to rate, such as the weather, your day so far, or a book everyone has read.

**Levels:** Easy, Medium, Hard

**Group size:** 4 or more

**Materials:**

none

## 1 Decide on a rating scale

**Easy.** 1 to 5.

**Medium.** -2 to 2.

**Hard.** -5 to 5.

### Talk About

What would a rating of 0 mean?

My day was a 2. We won the game!



I rate my day 0, it was just okay.



My day was a -2. My game got rained out.



My day was a 1, I had pancakes.



## 2 Rate it

Take turns giving ratings and explaining them.

## 3 How did we rate?

### Talk About

What was the highest rating someone gave? the lowest? the most common?

## Variation

**Stories by the numbers (Medium, Hard).** Write or tell a story that involves rating daily events. A visit from a friend might be a "2," a lost dollar "-2," and a game of jump rope "0."

My day was a 2. I got a cat!



## Make cleaning up into a game.

**Levels:** Easy, Medium

**Group size:** 2 or more

**Materials:**

ordinary clutter

**Easy.** 50 or fewer items

**Medium.** 100 or more items

### 1 Estimate

**Talk  
About**

How many things do we need to clean up:  
about 50? 100? 1,000?

### 2 Take ten

Everyone puts away ten items (fewer if there aren't enough).



### 3 Are we done?

Continue taking ten (fewer if needed) until everything is picked up.

### 4 How many in all?

Count by 10s to find the total. The person with the closest estimate wins.

## Variations

**Take five (Easy).** Take just five at a time, with a total of no more than 20 items.

**How long does it take? (Medium).** Everyone estimates how long it will take to put everything away: 2 minutes? 5 minutes? 10 minutes? One person times while the others clean up. Closest estimate wins.

# Countdown

**3, 2, 1 ... it's time! Count down to a special event in days, minutes, or seconds.**

## 1 Locate the dates

Find today's date and the date of the special event on the calendar.

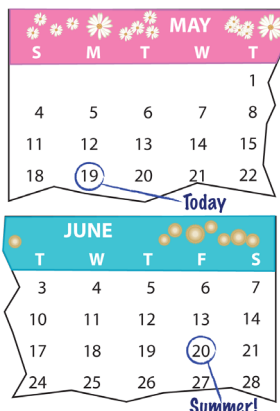
## 2 How much longer?

Find how much longer in one or more of these ways.

**Easy.** Use the calendar to count the number of days to the special event.

**Medium.** Find how much time remains in months weeks, and days.

If it's May 19 and the special day is the first day of summer, June 20, summer begins in



**Levels:** Easy, Medium, Hard

**Group size:** any

**Materials:**

calendar

calculator (Hard)



Does today count?

Talk  
About...

**Hard.** Find how many hours, minutes, or seconds remaining.

## 3 Continue the countdown

As the special day approaches, count down every day.

### Variation

**Count down to the full moon (Easy).** Each night, take a look outside to see the moon waxing.

**Make time fly when you're tracking how much you can do in a minute.**

**Levels:** Easy, Medium

**Group size:** 2 or more

**Materials:**

watch or clock that shows minutes and seconds

paper and pencil for each person

## Before beginning

Chose an activity you can repeat for a minute, such as jumping jacks or drawing stars.

**Easy.** Pick something you can do 10-20 of in a minute.

**Medium.** Pick something you can do 50 or more of in a minute.

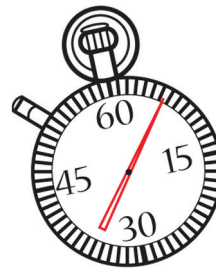
## 1 Predict

**Talk About**

How many stars do you think you can draw in a minute?

## 2 Keep track

One person times for a minute while everyone does the activity and keeps count.



## 3 How many?

Compare predictions with results.



**Talk About**

How did you count and keep track?

*(continued on next page)*

## 4 Repeat

### Talk About

Will you do more, fewer, or about the same number next time?

Try it and see!

### Variation

**Estimate a minute (Medium).** One person, the Timekeeper, times a minute while the others estimate. The Estimators raise their hands when they think a minute is up. The Timekeeper notes whose hands go up before a minute, whose at a minute, and whose after a minute. Once all the hands are up, the Timekeeper tells everyone the results.

Jaya  
Jumping jacks first try  
Estimate 30  
Actual 65  
  
Jumping jacks second try  
Estimate 70  
Actual 72

