

# EPIC GAMES

## GREAT GAME LINKS

[www.downloadyouthministry.com](http://www.downloadyouthministry.com)

<https://youthgroupgames.com.au>

<https://thesource4ym.com/games/>

<https://youthministry360.com/collections/games>



# WHY ICEBREAKERS

Icebreakers are a youth group staple. Even when they're cheesy and lame (and let's be honest — that's often), they can still play an integral role in helping young people connect with one another in a group environment. Often, icebreakers can also enhance your teaching by helping to stimulate cooperation and participation or by supporting an overall theme. They can provide positive momentum for small group study and discussion by encouraging cooperation, listening, and teamwork. Icebreakers also create a good atmosphere for learning and participation by helping newly formed groups get to know one another and new members, helping young people feel comfortable together, and facilitating better connections with adult leaders.

## **What makes an icebreaker game successful?**

- Be enthusiastic! Always. No matter what happens.
- Choose student volunteers carefully to avoid embarrassment. If a student looks like they really don't want to participate, don't make them.
- If something is not working, move on quickly. Don't force it.
- Length is important. Use only a few icebreakers as a 10-12 minute introduction. As soon as students start to become disengaged, wrap it up. You want to end a game while people are still enjoying it.
- Choose icebreakers appropriate for your group of students. Your understanding of what will and won't work with your group is your biggest asset in planning a successful set of icebreakers every time.

With a few tweaks, many of the games below can be played as either on-stage icebreakers with a few students serving as entertainment for the rest, or as fully inclusive games for large groups.

**GAMES BEST PLAYED  
BY A FEW STUDENTS**



## THAT TUNAMENE!

Divide students into teams and have one student face off against another student from the other team. Play five seconds of a popular song from iTunes and have them guess. If both students don't know, let anyone call it out.

## WHAT'S MINE IS YOURS

Have five students each donate one of their possessions to a communal "jackpot." As the leader, you may spice it up by adding an iTunes or other gift card, as your possession. While this is happening, write the five students' names on slips of paper and add them to a basket. Pull out a slip of paper to eliminate students until only one is left. This person wins everything in the jackpot.

## TELL US WHAT YOU KNOW

Three students compete. Each is given a topic and 10 seconds to give as many words as possible relating to that topic. After time is up, they are given a score by the game leader.

## WINDS OF WAR

Two student volunteers blow into a straw to try to push a ping pong ball off their opponent's end of the table. You may play several rounds with different student challengers, resulting in a face-off between the two best players.

## PUMPKIN BOWLING

During the fall season, pit students against each other in a game of pumpkin bowling, where student volunteers bowl two frames apiece using pumpkins of various sizes instead of bowling balls.



## QUACK-QUACK

Have 1 player leave the room; once that player has left, the other players need to change the room in some way. When the player returns, they need to walk over to what they think has changed. The rest of the group quacks louder as the player gets closer to finding out what has changed.

## MIX AND MEET

This is a really fun and simple (and yummy) small group get to know you game. Get each person to grab a small handful of M&M's but be sure to tell them not to eat them yet. Each person will need to take a turn to share a fact about themselves for every chocolate they have grabbed. The fact they share must be associated with the color of the M&M they picked. For example, if they have three blue and one green, they would have to say three facts for the "blue topic" and one fact for the "green topic".

Here are some examples of topics you can do for the colors. Feel free to mix and match to use the topics you like.

### VERSION #1

Blue = Something about your family  
Green = Something about your school  
Yellow = Something about your friends  
Red = People you admire  
Brown = Music & movies you like

### VERSION #2

Blue = Something about your childhood  
Green = Favorite hobbies  
Yellow = Most memorable or embarrassing moment  
Red = Favorite foods  
Brown = Favorite places to travel

This food-based small group icebreaker game can be played with other colorful chocolates too.

- M&Ms
- Smarties
- Jelly beans
- Clinkers

## TWO TRUTHS AND A TALE

For this great get to know you game, each person must make three statements about themselves, one of which isn't true. For example: I have two brothers, I was born in Australia, I have a motorcycle.

This works best when you give the group some time to think of their statements, and write them down if they need. Once one person makes their statements, the rest of the group must guess, or vote on, which statement is the tale. You could play as a team, or individually. It could work well to get each group member to write down their own answers and see who gets the most correct.

## NAME BINGO

This is probably one of the oldest and most well known icebreakers. It's also known as "People Bingo" and "Get To Know You Bingo". It works for groups of all ages, and can be a really interesting game if played properly. You'll need to create a name bingo sheet, so basically a 4 x 4 or 5 x 5 grid of personal statements. IE. "has long hair" or "has more than 5 siblings" or "has travelled overseas" etc

Hand these people bingo sheets out to each person and give them a pen, and then send them off to mingle and find people that fit in the gaps. Each player can only use another person once on their sheet. So the game can either finish when someone collects a name for the entire grid. Alternatively, the game can continue and bingo can be played after everyone has completed their grids. So a leader would start reading out the names of the youth group kids and then they would need to cross off a name when it has been called - if they get 4 in a row - they win!

**GAMES BEST PLAYED  
BY AN ENTIRE GROUP**



## SCATTERBALL

Dodgeball with a twist. To start, everyone must have a hand on a Nerf ball. Throw the ball up in the air and everyone scatters. Somebody grabs the ball in the air or off the ground. Whoever has the ball can only take two steps. After two steps, the player must throw the ball—dodgeball style—at another player. If the ball hits a player, that player sits down right where they are. BUT, they can still play, they just can't move from their seated spot. If a player is hit by the ball and catches it, then the throwing player sits down. At any time sitting players can snag the ball if it rolls by, and they can throw it at standing players trying to get them out. The game ends when only one player is standing. Note: it's a good game for larger groups but it's lacking in action if you have less than 10 people.

## TUG OF WAR

This is another classic, but is always a hit with youth groups. Make it extra fun by doing it once a year and utilizing interesting competitions: students vs. leaders, boys vs. girls, senior high vs. junior high. The key to a good match-up is to put a small number of the strongest against a large number of the weakest. For example, take a handful of senior high boys and place them against 30 middle schoolers.

## RED-HOT POKER

Everybody stands in a circle and holds hands. You have something in the middle of the circle (anything works, try a big 50 gallon trash can) and it is the red-hot poker. You then try to drag, push and pull one another into the red-hot poker. If you touch it or break your hands then you are out. Play until only one person remains.

## PENNY CHINNY

Give everyone a penny. On 'go' they must balance the penny on their chin while trying to knock everyone else's penny off. This means the penny will lay flat on the chin and the students will be looking up into the air. Last one standing with the penny balanced wins.

## ULTIMATE DUCK-DUCK-GOOSE OR DUCK-DUCK-GOOSE-INCEPTION

When there are more than 50 students, this game is a lot of fun. Play duck-duck-goose as you normally would, however when a few people get tagged and they go to the middle, then they begin another game of duck-duck-goose. I've played this game with 100 students before and they began a game within a game within a game within a game. Two other twists you can initiate are using a sponge while the person is going around and ducking to hold over people's heads or having more than one person go around at a time.

## SEATED BASKETBALL

This one is a favorite because it requires strategy and teamwork. The game is divided up between two teams. The goal is to get a ball into a basket. This can be a basketball hoop, but I have found it just as fun playing it with laundry baskets placed on a table. Each player has their own chair and is played in rounds. At the beginning of a round, the players have a short amount of time to place their chairs in a position. Once placed, they are not allowed to move from their spot. They then must pass the ball to each other, without it getting intercepted by the opposing team. After each round the players become more strategic and shift from focusing on offense and defense. Whereas one round may consist of one team placing all their chairs around the opposing goal, they'll quickly realize that they are unable to shoot from their location. Likewise, a team that has no one in the middle of the field is unable to make an adequate pass to their teammates. An interesting side effect of this game is the loner and unpopular student will often become the most passed to player. They are the ones that are open, because the opposing team neglects to place a chair next to them to guard.

## HUMAN KNOT

Everyone stands in a close circle - puts both hands out - and randomly grabs hold of someone else's hand, creating a massive knot. Without letting go of hands, the group should try to untangle itself.

## CLUSTERS

Have the group mill around and call out a number. Students have to arrange themselves in groups of that number. Students in groups of too many or too few are eliminated.

## COMMUNICATION CHALLENGE

Start by giving everyone a number. Their objective is to arrange themselves in numerical order, but there's a catch: no speaking or holding up fingers. Students will typically end up making up their own sub-language or sign-language and it often is pretty amusing. For a potential second round, have people arrange themselves in order of birth or in calendar months.

## ROCK, PAPER, SCISSORS

This is a classic game, but with a fun twist. Play as usual, but when a student loses to another student, they become the winning student's cheer section while the winning student competes with another winning student. The winning student of that matchup keeps their original cheer section, as well as acquires the cheering of the student they beat and his/her cheer section, until the group is cheering for one student and the other half is cheering for the other. This is a fun way to infuse energy and encouragement early.

## TOILET ROLL GAME

Split into groups of 5-12 people. Give a roll of toilet paper to a student and ask them to tear off as many sheets as they normally use, then pass (or throw) the roll to another member of the group to do the same. Don't explain the purpose at this point. Continue until everyone in the group has torn off some paper. You'll find some people will take only a couple of sheets, others will reel off heaps! (You may need multiple toilet rolls) Once the roll has been around to everyone, you explain the next part. For each piece of paper individuals tear off, they have to reveal one fact about themselves.

## TWO TRUTHS AND A LIE

Everyone in the group has to think of three things to share about themselves - two must be true, but one must be a lie. When a person has shared their three things, the rest of the group must decide which of the three is a lie. After the group guesses, the person reveals which one was, in fact, the "lie."

It's amazing some of the things you learn about people when playing this game. People will be keen to trick the group, so it encourages people to share some of the more outrageous things they've done in their lives.

## ANYONE WHO?

This activity is a good icebreaker — perfect to get people mingling and talking. You need to print out a piece of paper for each person with something like this (you can obviously change the questions to suit your group):

- Someone who has been to the Grand Canyon
- Someone who prefers yogurt over ice cream
- Someone who roots for the Tennessee Titans
- Someone who has been on an airplane in the past 12 months
- Someone who reads comics
- Someone who knows the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet
- Someone who has been skiing
- Someone who is wearing red
- Someone who still owns a teddy bear

People then have to find someone in the room who fits the criteria, and have them sign or initial their name in the box - for example, if someone has been to the Grand Canyon, they can sign their name in the box. When all boxes are complete, you are done! It can either be a competition to see who finishes first, or simply an exercise everyone completes.

## HOT POTATO

This quick-play game requires very little prep - just grab a soft throw ball and ensure you've got someone to operate the music/timer. It can be played with a small to medium sized group. Ensure the players spread themselves out around the playing area either in a circle or randomly. The aim of the game is to not get caught holding the ball when the music/timer stops. To start, give the ball to a player and begin the music/timer. The player with the ball then quickly throws it to another player. This continues until the music/timer stops. Players will often move quickly however some players may like to hold onto the ball a bit longer to try to draw down the clock!

## BLOW WIND BLOW

For this icebreaker game you'll need to set up your chairs in a circle facing inwards. Make sure there is one less chair than there are players. Select one player to start off in the middle. They must begin by calling out "Blow wind blow". The rest of the group must respond "blow what?" Then the middle player can say some kind of conditional statement like "everyone with red hair" or "everyone not wearing shoes". All the players that fit into that category must get up and switch chairs with another player. This allows a chance for the middle player to steal a chair also. Once everyone has finished switching as quickly as possible, there will be one player left stuck in the middle. Then the process repeats! If playing with a larger group it can become difficult for everyone to hear what the person in the middle is saying, so it might be wise to have a cordless microphone or a megaphone to use. Alternatively you could have someone else with a microphone outside of the circle calling the shots out.

## SECRET IDENTITY

Have everyone secretly write down the name of a person on a small piece of paper or a "post-it" note. It has to be a person that everyone in the room would know about - a famous historical figure, an actor or sports celebrity, a politician, etc. Then have them tape the name on the back of the person on their left.

## THE CAT CHASES THE MOUSE

This is a simple game of passing one item to the next student. There is a surprise element. There are two objects moving at the same time. The person to get caught with both items loses. All you need is a stuffed cat and mouse and someone to play the music. The Great Detective Game The best part of this game is that there is no prep time. All you will need is a table and some items from the students. Your detective will investigate the missing item and guess who the thief is. Ask for everyone to put some personal items on a table. It could be things like sunglasses, a watch, keys, a hairbrush or comb, a pen, chewing gum, etc. Ask for a volunteer to be the detective. Allow them a few minutes to look at the objects on the table, and then they will leave the room. Another volunteer will choose an item from the table and conceal it in their pocket, purse, or somewhere in the room. Now the detective returns and must first determine what is missing from the table and then who took it.



## KICKBALL

If you have a group of athletic, competitive students this one is for you. You will need a kickball and 4 bases. Divide your group into two teams and have fun.

## SPAGHETTI AND MARSHMALLOW TOWER

The Spaghetti And Marshmallow Tower is a classic game that you may well have played yourself. To make it happen, split your group into as many teams as you have supplies (keeping around 3-4 members in a group). Provide each group with one pack of spaghetti and one pack of large marshmallows. Teams are charged to use their supplies to build the tallest freestanding tower they can (meaning that holding the tower up for measuring is against the rules). Give the groups a certain time limit during which they can construct their tower – anywhere from 5-15 minutes generally works well – and give them a one-minute warning before their time up. The winning team is the one with the tallest freestanding tower, as measured by the game leader. Break any ties by having the teams move their tower across the room and measuring again, not allowing them to fix any breakages.

## ALPHABET POCKETS

Divide into teams of four or five. Everyone on the team searches through his or her own pockets, wallets, purses, etc. – basically anything they have in their current possession – in order to collectively come up with one possession which begins with each letter of the alphabet. The winning team is the one to have objects representing the most letters.

## ANKLE BALLOON POP

Give everyone a balloon and a piece of string/yarn and have them blow up the balloon and tie it to their ankle. Make sure the string isn't too long or too short – somewhere around 6-8 inches from the ankle after tied on is ideal. The goal of the game is for each student to try to stomp out other people's balloons while keeping their own safe. The last person with an inflated balloon wins.

## COMMUNICATION CHALLENGE

Start by giving everyone a number. Their objective is to arrange themselves in numerical order, but there's a catch: no speaking or holding up fingers. Students will typically end up making up their own sub-language or sign-language and it often is pretty amusing. For a potential second round, have people arrange themselves in order of birth or in calendar months.

## CHAIR FOOSBALL

Chair Foosball is a great last minute game or it is a good game for those rainy summer days at camp when you need to keep the students busy. This game has little set up and students have a blast playing it!

Set the 26 chairs up so they resemble the players on a foosball field. If you don't have 26 players still set up 26 chairs and let them be obstacles.

To start the game, roll the ball through the middle of the field. Students hit the ball with their hands. When the ball passes any of the goalkeepers it's a goal. No standing! If the students can't reach the ball then it's a reset (Roll the ball down the middle of the field). After each goal students can change chairs. Play until a team reaches the score limit. Try starting with a score of 5. You can adjust the time limit to fit your group's needs.

## GORILLA, MAN, GUN

Gorilla (Hands up like a scared chimp) ...beats Man

Man (Hand resting on chin like the "Thinker" statue. Or get creative) ...beats Gun

Gun (Obvious motion here) ...beats Gorilla

Winners play each other until one wins above all.

## TRUE FALSE RUN

The group stands in the middle of a room (or if outside, between two markers eg cones). One wall/marker is nominated 'true' and the other 'false'.

## FOOTBALL TEAM QUIZ (NFL)

This game is great for a group of any size. For a big group, break up into teams of four, requiring at least one person on each team to be a football fan. Pass out one copy of the following list of clues of pro-teams to each team.

For small group, provide one sheet per person. (Answers in parentheses; of course you'll copy this list off without the answers.) The first team – or individual – to bring their completed, correct list to you wins. Give prizes to each team member (a candy bar, mug, etc.).

What are these pro football teams??? Based on the clues, figure out the names of the NFL teams.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. A dollar for corn (Buccaneers)          | 14. Red birds (Cardinals)                      |
| 2. Native American epidermis (Redskins)    | 15. Rodeo animals (Broncos)                    |
| 3. Sun-tanned bodies (Browns)              | 16. Native American Leaders (Chiefs)           |
| 4. What you pay (Bills)                    | 17. Called bald (Eagles)                       |
| 5. They don't dodge or male goats (Rams)   | 18. Ocean going birds (Seahawks)               |
| 6. 747, B1B, Concorde, F15... (Jets)       | 19. Hostile invaders (Raiders)                 |
| 7. 7 Squared (49ers)                       | 20. Credit card users (Chargers)               |
| 8. David could stone them (Giants)         | 21. Boxers (Packers)                           |
| 9. Iron workers (Steelers)                 | 22. King of beasts (Lions)                     |
| 10. Black birds of prey (Falcons)          | 23. Look like fish, but are mammals (Dolphins) |
| 11. Norse warriors (Vikings)               | 24. One-time British enemies (Patriots)        |
| 12. Kodiak, black, polar, koala... (Bears) | 25. American gauchos (Cowboys)                 |
| 13. Not sinners but... (Saints)            |  |

The leader reads a statement, eg 'bats aren't actually blind'. On 'Run!' the kids must run for whichever side they think is correct - true or false - and whoever reaches the correct wall/marker first wins. STAYING IN THE CENTRE IS NOT AN OPTION. Disqualify stragglers if necessary. Tally the winners on a board and award the overall champion a prize. Alternatively, the kids who choose the wrong answer are eliminated, and only the correct side continue to the next round.

## THREE BALL SOCCER

This is soccer. Soccer with not just one ball, not just two balls, but three balls! You'll need three balls, preferably all of a different colour. This game can be really useful to keep as many people involved as possible, especially making sure both genders get into it. Set up a normal soccer playing field (of the right size for your group) with a goal at either end.

Simply divide everyone into even teams, with even guys/girls if possible. One ball represents the guys only, another ball the girls, and the third ball is co-ed. Make sure the players are clear on which ball is for which group. If a player touches the wrong ball on purpose, you might want to pull them out of the game for a minute.

Of course this "three ball" game doesn't have to be restricted to soccer and could be done with netball, ultimate frisbee or AFL as well. Give it a try!

## PENNY FOR YOUR THOUGHTS

Each kid gets a coin. When asked, they share something significant that happened to them the year the coin was made in.

This is basically just a novel way to get conversation flowing and is probably best played with older kids who have been alive longer :P (make sure you check that the dates on the coins are not before the kids were born!)

It could also be a good way to split groups up (ie. one group can be the 1970s, another the 1980s etc).

## NEVER HAVE I EVER

Hold out 5 fingers (well, 4 and your thumb) Go around the circle and one at a time, each person announces something that they have never done, beginning the sentence with the phrase "Never have I ever..." For example, a person could say, "Never have I ever been to Europe." For each statement that is said, all the other players drop a finger if they have done that statement. So, if three other people have been to Europe before, those three people must put down a finger, leaving them with 4 fingers. The goal is to stay in the game the longest (to be the last person with fingers remaining).

To win, it's a good strategy to say statements that most people have done, but you haven't. Be creative and silly (but not rude, of course).

## WHO WILL BE LEFT HOLDING THE BAG?

This is a game that is very simple to adapt to the size of your group. You will have objects that the youth will need to do something with before passing it on to the next person. When the music stops, the person left holding the object loses. All you need is an object to pass and someone to play the music.

## HUMAN KNOT

Everyone stands in a close circle - puts both hands out - and randomly grabs hold of someone else's hand, creating a massive knot. Without letting go of hands, the group should try to untangle itself.

## ONE ARM, TWO ARMS, NO ARMS

This is a game for everyone! Start by picking a leader who will display either one arm, two arms, or no arms. The game is simple!

Everyone in the room picks a stance! One arm, two arms or no arms! They pick the stance by actually doing it. Putting one arm in the air • Two arms in the air or no arms in the air. The selected leader is at the front of the room with his back to the students so he cannot see who has chosen what. On the count of three, the leader turns around selecting one of the three poses and does it! Those students that match the leader up front must sit down! Repeat this until you have one winner.

## KNOCK EM' OVER

Have all students stand up and find a partner. They stand back to back and on "1,2,3, Go!" they stand on one foot and turn around (usually by jumping/hoping). Whoever loses balance and puts their other foot on the ground (or falls over) first loses. Partners can bump into each other, push, etc. The winners find new partners and advance to the next round.

To keep all students interested, have the "losers" follow and cheer on whoever beat them.

## FLIP CUP TIC-TAC-TOE

Materials needed: 2 plastic cups, white board, 2 dry-erase markers.

The goal of the game is to be the first team to successfully get three X's or three O's in a row on the tic-tac-toe board that is on the classroom white board. The students will be broken up into two teams that are an equal distance apart from the whiteboard. Both teams will form lines behind a desk that has a single plastic cup. The first player on each time will then try to flip the cup until it lands on the table facing downward. As soon as they get the cup to land downward on the table, they run to the whiteboard and proceed to write an X or an O wherever they would like on the tic-tac-toe game board. They then run back to their line and tag the next person to attempt to flip the cup. The process continues until one team has gotten 3 in a row, like a standard game of tic- tac-toe.

## FACE THE COOKIE

Materials needed: Cookies, a few faces, Music.

When the music starts, contestants take one cookie and place it on their forehead. The goal is to move the cookie to the mouth without touching it (this results in a ton of hilarious facial expressions and squirming). If the player drops the cookie, they take another one and keep trying until one player wins.

If your students are surprisingly skilled at this, play best 2 out of 3!

## COTTON-HEADED NINNY MUGGINS!

Materials needed: 4-6 bowls, Petroleum jelly, a bag of cotton balls, 2-3 teams of 3 people each, music.

Give an empty bowl to Player 1 and a bowl full of cotton balls to Player 2.

Player 3 puts a big glob of petroleum jelly on their nose.

Place player 1 and 2 on opposite sides of the room.

When the music starts, player 3 must transport as many cotton balls from one side of the room/stage to the other by sticking their face in the cotton balls, running to the other side of the room, and shaking them into the empty bowl. Hands may not be used. The team with the most cotton balls transported when the music stops, wins!

## FINGER JOUSTING

Tell everyone to pair up with the person next to them. SPREAD OUT. It's about to get rowdy. Everyone locks hands and when the music starts, players begin the joust. The goal is to touch the other person with your pointer finger first. (Players can only use their jousting hand) Winners play each other.

Stop the music when there are only a few people left and bring them to the front. Cheer for the last few battles!

## MOVIN' ON UP

Place the different color cup on the bottom of each stack. Bring 2-4 contestants up the front and give them a stack of cups. When the music starts, contestants must transfer the cup on top to the bottom of the stack to get the colored cup to the top. If cups drop or more than one cup is transferred, the player must start over.

The first player to get their colored cup to the top wins!

Alternative Option: If you do not have a cup that is a different color, you can mark one cup.

## SHAKE, RATTLE, AND ROLL

Loop the string through both sides of the tissue boxes, leaving enough string on the ends to make a "belt".

Tie the string around contestant's waist, with the ping pong ball filled tissue box behind them. When the music starts, contestants turn around and shake it to make the ping pong balls fall out of the box. The first one to empty their tissue box wins!

## WAVE HIDE AND SEEK

There is one person who is the seeker, the rest of the people are hiders. The seeker puts the hose into the shape of a circle. After the seeker counts to a predesignated number (i.e. 2 minutes) the seeker will try to find those hiding and after the seeker finds a person and says their name they go to the circle and in order to go hide again they must see a person hiding wave to them and then they may leave the circle and hide once again. The game is complete when all players are in the circle or everyone has gotten bored.

## BATTLE OF THE INSTANT DANCE CREWS

Prior to the start of the program (while students are mingling) assemble two dance crews and have them each choreograph a dance routine in the several minutes before icebreaker time. If your group is small enough, the entire group can be split into two teams and choreograph the dance as part of the actual activity, rather than in advance. Winners are determined based on audience applause for the former or by leaders for the latter.

## MINUTE TO WIN IT

This is a game show on NBC and its full of mini-challenges that must be completed within one minute. On the NBC website, you'll find a list of all the games including a video tutorial, official rules, and a list of supplies needed for each game. There are more than 50 games you can choose from! Pick a handful of the ones you want to use then make sure you have all the necessary supplies on hand. Watch an episode of the show on the website to play it like the pros do or create your own twist on the game.

## DRAW IT

There are two teams, each with a white board. Give them a word and the team has to guess the word they drew. This would be a good icebreaker activity before a lesson if you tie in themes from the lesson into the drawings.

## TAP IT OUT TELEPHONE

This one's great because you don't need any supplies. It's like telephone but instead of whispering something, you use your finger and draw the word on the person's back. Everyone is in a straight line, with multiple teams doing this. Show the last member of each row a hand-drawn picture (a house, a cat, a Christmas tree, etc. are good examples). When you give the go ahead, the last person in the row draws the picture on the back of the person in front of them, who then draws the picture on the back of the person in front of them. The first team to get to the front person and correctly guess the picture wins.



## BACK TO BACK

In this game, you start out with two people sitting back to back and asking them to stand straight up without using their hands. Add one person every time they stand up successfully. Our record is ten! The students will be amazed at how it works.

## DESERT ISLAND

Announce, 'You've been exiled to a deserted island for a year. In addition to the essentials, you may take one piece of music, one book (which is not the Bible) and one luxury item you can carry with you i.e. not a boat to leave the island! What would you take and why?'

Allow a few minutes for the young people to think of their three items before sharing their choices with the rest of the group. As with most icebreakers and relationship building activities, it's good for the group leaders to join in too!

## SIT DOWN IF

Get everyone to stand up, then read through the following list. The last person standing is the winner!

- Sit down if you have eaten chocolate today
- Sit down if you are wearing purple
- Sit down if you were born in September
- Sit down if you have blue eyes
- Sit down if you are the youngest child
- You have ever broken a bone
- You have ever gone for two weeks without a shower
- You can speak more than two languages
- You play a sport
- You attend a youth group
- You have \$10 cash on you
- You have blonde hair
- You have all A's
- Sit down if you are still standing

## IF

Ask the group to sit in a circle. Write 20 'IF' questions on cards and place them (question down) in the middle of the circle. The first person takes a card, reads it out and gives their answer, comment or explanation. The card is returned to the bottom of the pile before the next person takes their card.

This is a simple icebreaker to get young people talking and listening to others in the group. Keep it moving and don't play for too long. Write your own additional 'IF' questions to add to the list.

- If you could go anywhere in the world, where would you go?
- If I gave you \$10,000, what would you spend it on?
- If you could watch your favorite movie now, what would it be?
- If you could talk to anyone in the world, who would it be?
- If you could wish one thing to come true this year, what would it be?
- If you could live in any period of history, when would it be?
- If you could change anything about yourself, what would you change?
- If you could be someone else, who would you be?
- If you could have any question answered, what would it be?
- If you could watch your favorite TV show now, what would it be?
- If you could do your dream job 10 years from now, what would it be?
- If you had to be allergic to something, what would it be?
- If you sat down next to Jesus on a bus, what would you talk about?
- If money and time were no object, what would you be doing right now?
- If you had one day to live over again, what day would you pick?
- If you could eat your favorite food now, what would it be?
- If you could learn any skill, what would it be?
- If you were sent to live on a space station for three months and only allowed to bring three personal items with you, what would they be?
- If you could buy a car right now, what would you buy?

**GAMES THAT CAN BE  
ADAPTED FOR AN  
ENTIRE GROUP OR  
FOR A FEW STUDENTS**



## PASS THE PRESENT

For “Pass the Present,” pre-wrap a prize (like a box of chocolates or iTunes gift card), then add multiple layers of wrapping (up to 20 times), hiding a smaller prize within each layer, along with a challenge card. Challenges should be fairly simple, such as singing a song to the group, telling your most embarrassing moment, doing 20 pushups, etc. The group sits in a circle and “passes the present” around the group with some music playing in the background. When the music stops, whoever is holding the present unwraps one layer and performs the challenge in order to keep the small prize hidden within that layer.

## TOILET PAPER BATTLE ROYAL

Rip multiple sheets of toilet paper to the same length (5 squares is typically good). Have everyone in the room partner up in groups of 2. Each team member should hold opposite ends of the toilet paper only. To Win, a team must be the last team with a whole piece of toilet paper. If the paper is ripped in half, dropped, or let go, the team is out. When you get down to the last few teams, you may have to pause the game and reset the boundaries to a smaller area.

## HEAD, SHOULDERS, KNEES AND CUPS

There should be one person as the game host. Make sure it is a person with a louder voice. Have everyone in the room gather in groups of 2, facing each other with a cup on the ground at an equal distance between them. Then, the game host calls out the place you must touch on our own body in any random order (ie Head, Shoulders, Knees). When the game host says “Cup,” both players grab for the cup. The first to grab it wins and the other person takes a seat. Start the next round by pairing up all the people that won and play again. Continue until there is a winner. The winner will win a prize!

Play one practice round just for people to get the hang of it. Make sure to tell the losers to sit down, and the winner to find a new opponent. Continue until there is one winner.

## LAND AND WATER

Find or make a clear line on the floor that is long enough for everyone to stand next to and spread out about arm's length. Designate one side of the line "Land" and the other side "Water". One person must be designated as the DIRECTOR. The Director calls out "Land" or "Water" and everybody playing needs to hop with both feet to the area directed. If a person crosses into the "Land" or "Water" by mistake or has one foot in the "Land" and one foot in the "Water," they are out of the game. The game continues until only one person remains. The director should change the tempo, call out the same side more than once in row, use other words, etc. to get people to cross the line.

(For larger groups, stop the game with the last 2-4 people and have them share their name to the crowd and get people to cheer for the favorite to win)

## SHADOW BOXING

Every student gets a partner. Students take turns pointing either up, down, left, or right. The other student cannot look the way the student has pointed. If a student looks the direction their partner has pointed, they lose and are out. Have winning players play against each other until you have one winner.

## ZIP OR BANG

Form a circle, standing closely together. Pick a player to begin. The first player says "Zip" or "Bang." If they say "Zip, the turn passes to the player at their left. If they say "Bang" it passes to the player to their right. The next player must respond quickly, within a second, by saying "Zip" or "Bang" to pass the turn. If you don't respond within a second when it's your turn, you're out. Also, if you speak out of turn or laugh, you're out. Only the player whose turn it is may speak, and they can only say "Zip" or "Bang."

## WHO WROTE IT?

"Who Wrote It?" is a game that has students asking the question... "Who wrote it?" Before your club starts, have your students write what they are thankful for, along with their names, on an index card. When you're ready to play, just read each quote out loud and see if your students can guess who wrote it!

## **"BRING ME A..."**

This is a classic youth ministry game. Have your students sit down and prepare to run up with whatever appears on the screen! You can do everything from a 1975 Quarter to a white shoelace. Since you get to enter the items into the game's dashboard, you get to come up with whatever you want!

## **NAME 3**

You have 5 seconds to name 3 things in the category. Alternate turns between teams. You get one point for a turn when you name 3 things in that category within 5 seconds. Time does not start until the category is given. First team to 3 points wins.

Categories:

- Name three fast food restaurants • Name three fruits that are red
- Name three types of cars
- Name three board games
- Name three college mascots
- Name three Disney princesses
- Name three types of candy bars • Name three Starbucks drinks
- Name three types of fish

## **LINE UP**

Number the students 1-9 on a team. Call out random numbers. The team to correctly line up in order gets a point.

Examples:

- 2431
- 785
- 4276538
- 1345678

## EVERYONE'S IT!

Get everyone to put their non-preferred hand on their head. Then, everyone has to run around in the specified area and get other people out by touching their elbows.

Last one in wins!

## CAPTAIN'S ORDERS

This game is excellent for a competitive group. It tires everyone out really quickly and can provide a good opportunity to award a prize to the winner.

You have one person to be the leader or Captain. He has to call out different actions but is limited to some (or all) of the following actions to call out. Pick and choose the best actions for your group. Or make up your own and share them in the comments.

**Man Overboard** - Players have to drop to the floor into planking position.

**Captain's Coming** - Players must stand at attention and salute the 'captain'.

**Starboard / Port** - Players must run to the designated side of the room.

**Scrub The Deck** - Players must squat on the ground and scrub the deck.

**Climb The Rigging** - Players must stand up and pretend to climb the rigging.

**Man The Lifeboats** - Three players have to pair up. They must sit in a row with the two on the end holding their hands out to make a boat shape and the person in the middle rows the boat.

## MUSICAL STATUES

I usually call this game dance and stop, because then the rules are even easier to explain.

Play music, stop the music. When the music stops, everyone has to freeze. If you see someone moving - they're out.

I also like to make sure people get into the dancing, so if they don't dance enough I eliminate them anyway!

Last one in wins!

## FRUIT BASKET TURNOVER

Everyone sits in chairs that are facing in a circle except one player - that one is in the middle. Go around the circle and give everyone 1 of 3 fruit names (or 4 or 5 - depending on how many is playing and don't forget to give a name to the one in the middle). The youth leader (or the one in middle, if youth leader wants to play) will call out one or two fruits. Those who have that fruit as their "name" must get up and go to another chair, . . . FAST! We have a rule that you can't go to the chair next to you to make people run everywhere. The one in the middle tries to find an empty chair so someone else will be "it" and not him. Or, call "Fruit Basket Turnover" and EVERYONE must find a new chair.

You could keep playing on and on or someone can be "out" when they have been in the middle more than once - just be sure to put one chair out and place someone else in middle to keep playing.

You do not have to use fruit you can use anything, like biblical names, or numbers, or books of the Bible, just don't choose too many. Keep it about 3 to 5 different



# **50 FUN ICEBREAKER QUESTION IDEAS**

1. If you could have an endless supply of any food, what would you get?
2. If you were an animal, what would you be and why?
3. What is one goal you'd like to accomplish during your lifetime?
4. When you were little, who was your favorite superhero and why?
5. What's your favorite thing to do in the summer?
6. If they made a movie of your life, what would it be about and which actor would you want to play you?
7. If you were an ice cream flavor, which one would you be and why?
8. What's your favorite cartoon character, and why?
9. If you could visit any place in the world, where would you choose to go and why?
10. What's the ideal dream job for you?
11. Do you have a quirky special skill or party trick?
12. What's the weirdest thing you've ever eaten?
13. If you had to describe yourself using three words, it would be...
14. If someone made a movie of your life would it be a drama, a comedy, action film, or science fiction?
15. Where is your favorite place to do work/homework?
16. What "old person" things do you do?
17. Who is your craziest/most interesting relative?
18. What band would you be embarrassed to admit you listen to?
19. What is your favorite smell and why?
20. What's the scariest ride you've ever been on?
21. What new skill would you like to learn?
22. What's the last thing you bought?
23. Do you prefer five-star accommodation or camping under the stars?
24. What's your favorite fashion trend?
25. If you could live in another historical period, would you? If so, which one?
26. What's your favorite karaoke song to sing?
27. If you could teleport anywhere in the world, where would you go right now?
28. What's the last thing you completed that you're proud of?
29. What's a TV show you recommend to everyone?
30. Where did you grow up and what was it like?
31. What season do you like the best?
32. Do you prefer the beach or the river?
33. What is one thing we would never guess about you?
34. What is one thing that made you smile today?
35. What would your superhero costume look like?
36. What is the strangest dream you can remember?
37. If you were a condiment, what would you be, and why?
38. Would you rather be a rockstar or an actor?
39. Who is your favorite teacher ever?
40. If you had to be half-human half-animal, what animal would you choose?
41. Are you an introvert or an extrovert?
42. If you were on a sitcom, what would your entrance music be?
43. Do you have a catch-phrase?
44. What was your favorite toy as a child?
45. What's your favorite thing to sit on?
46. Are you an early-bird or a night-owl?
47. Who is your hero?
48. Do you prefer to draw or write?
49. Do you prefer the doctor or the dentist?
50. What's one of your earliest memories?

