

swim 4 life

family games

Taking the kids swimming is a great way of making sure they're moving around and having fun. And to help you get them into the pool, we've come up with loads of great swimming games to help them stay active and healthy.

There are so many things you can do - like humming songs underwater and playing Starfish Tag - that kids will never get bored. You can get into the water and join in the fun too!



Created in partnership with>



how do we play the games?

These games are all lots of fun. You can play them with your family or in a bigger group. You can also play them with just kids or a mixture of adults and kids.

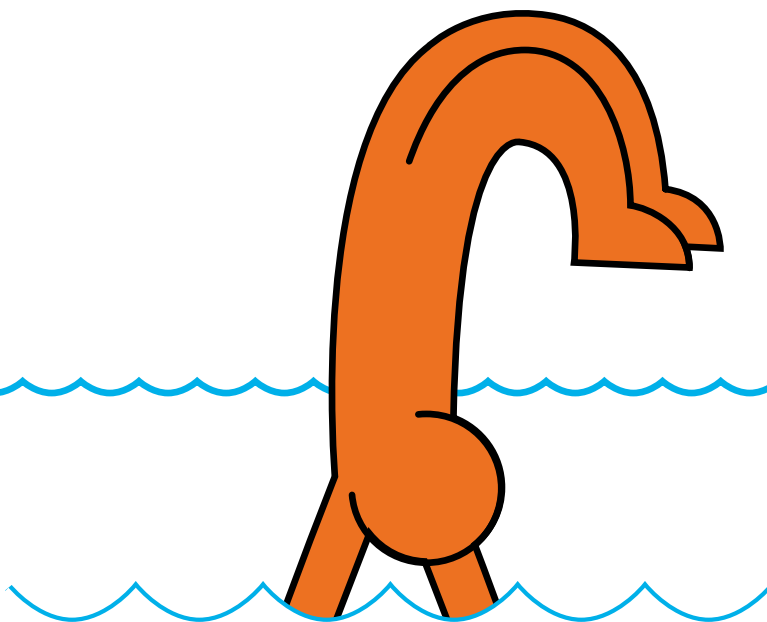
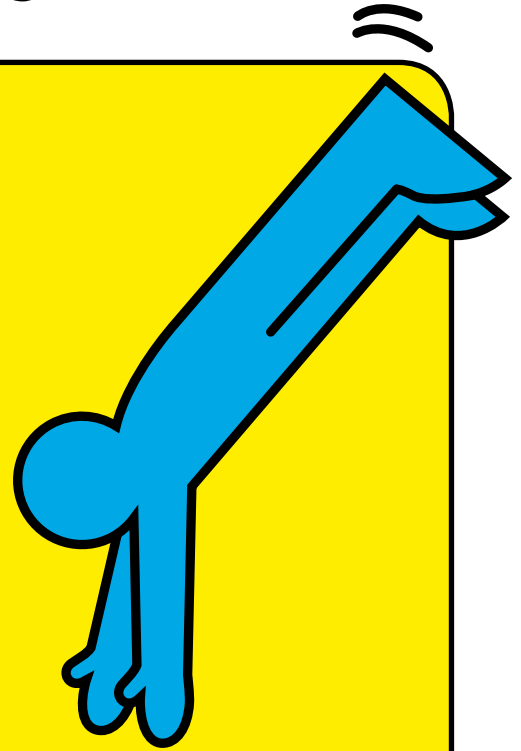
The games are easy to play too. Some of them need a few items, which you can probably find around the house or at the pool. You can also play most of the games in the shallow end, or do them in the deep end for better swimmers.

A few things to remember

These games have been created by experts. They are a great way for everyone to have fun and be active. But don't forget that lots of people want to enjoy their swim. So stick to the pool rules and remember there are other swimmers.

And finally always ask permission before you bring or use equipment in the pool.

So get in the water and have some fun!



let's play...the mirror game

The mirror game is great fun in the water and can be played by everyone.

First, get into twos and stand opposite each other. One of you does an action and your partner has to try and copy it. Just like you are looking in a mirror!

You can try pulling faces, swimming side to side, dipping underwater and lots more! Can your partner keep up? Swap over after a couple of minutes – now it's your turn to copy the actions.



let's play... underwater humming

This fun guessing game is great for X Factor wannabes!

Get into twos or small groups and stand close to each other. Now all duck under the water and you start humming one of your favourite tunes. The others have to guess what you are humming – how many turns will it take them to name that tune?

If they haven't guessed it after three turns, tell them what it is and then swap. Now you have to guess the song. You can play this game for as long as you like, or until you've run out of songs!



let's play... starfish tag

This classic playground game is loads of fun in the pool.

One of you is the tagger and has to try and tag all the others in the water! Once you've tagged someone, they have to stand still until they are set free. But they can only be set free if someone else taps them on the shoulder or swims under their arms or legs (only for better swimmers). How many people can you turn into starfish?

You can play this game for a few minutes and then choose someone to be the next tagger!



let's play... what's the time mr wolf?

This game will test everyone's braveness as well as their speed!

Everyone lines up against the side. You can be Mr Wolf and you stand on the other side of the pool with your back to them. Then they all shout out together, "What's the time Mr Wolf?" and you have to shout back the time.

If you shout "2 o'clock!" they all have to take 2 steps towards you. If you shout "5 o'clock!" they have to take 5 steps, and so on. After they've asked you a few times, you can shout "Dinner time!" and try and catch someone to eat them!

Make sure you don't do it too early, or they'll all make it back to the other side. When you do catch someone, it's their turn to be Mr Wolf and try to eat someone!



let's play... over and under

Equipment needed – small object such as goggles or a small ball

In this game everyone has to work as a team!

If you're part of a big group, you can split into groups of 6 or 8 and make this game a race!

Everyone stands behind each other in a long line. Then you start by passing the ball (or whatever you have) from the front of the line all the way to the back, going over and under all the players.

You pass it over your shoulder, the person behind you passes it through their legs, the third person passes it over their shoulder, and you carry on like that. Careful not to drop it!

Once it's got to the back, that person has to swim (or walk) to the front of the line where they start it all over again. The game finishes when you get all the way to the front of the line again!



let's play... . . . swimming through legs

This game shows how much fun swimming under water can be!

For this game, stand in a star shape with someone else facing you. Then they have to try and swim under water through your legs – make sure you open your legs wide enough! Then you can have a turn swimming.

If that was a bit easy, try getting two people standing with their legs open and see if you can swim through both!



let's play...roly-poly

This is a game that you can do on your own.

First, bring up your legs and tuck yourself into a ball. Then see if you can do 1, 2 or even 3 rolls without touching the bottom of the pool. It can be a bit tricky at first!

A handy tip is to stick your arms out and move them round in circles to help you spin round. After you've got the hang of it, why not try the log roll by laying straight on your back and twisting over to do a full turn?



let's play...deep dive

This game shows that we can have lots of fun under the water as well as on the surface!

See if you can touch the bottom of the pool with one hand. How about two hands? If that was easy, how about sitting on the bottom and watching your bubbles float to the surface? Wear some goggles to make it easier.



let's play... shark attack!

Playing 'It' is even more fun in the pool!

Everyone lines up against the side. You can be the shark and everyone else is a fish. Then, when you shout 'Shark!', all the fish swim off to get away from you!

After everyone's escaped, shout 'Fish!' and go and try to catch the fish. As soon as you catch one, they are the shark and have to go and catch a fish. Who can escape your toothy grin?



let's play... stepping stones

In this game you have to watch where you step!

How many steps can you walk across the pool in? 20? 15? Or maybe only 10? See how many it takes you, then see if you did it in the lowest number.

If there are different coloured tiles on the pool floor, you could try and get across by only stepping on, say, the green tiles. If they're far apart, you'll have to swim to the next one. And why not make it a race - the first person to get to the other side is the winner!



let's play...simon says

This game will keep everyone on their toes!

Everyone knows this game, but this time Simon says things you can do in the water! You can be Simon to start off, and you have to shout out things like “Simon says do a headstand”, “Simon says touch the bottom” and “Simon says do a roly-poly”.

But if you don't say “Simon says” before it and someone does it, they're out! The last one left is the winner, who can be Simon in the next game.



let's play... ring a ring o' roses

Everyone will need their singing voices for this fun game!

Everyone stands in a big circle and holds hands. Then you all start skipping round in the same direction and start singing the rhyme Ring a Ring o' Roses, which goes like this:

*Ring a ring o' roses,
A pocketful of posies,
a-tissue, a-tissue,
We all fall down!*

When you get to the end of the rhyme, everyone falls down by ducking under the water. You could even change the last line to *We all jump up!* and get everyone to jump out of the water instead!



let's play...fishy in the middle

Equipment needed – one medium-sized soft ball for every three players

This game will get everyone jumping around!

Get into threes, with one person standing in the middle. Just like the playground game, you have to try and catch the ball as the others throw it over your head. How high can you jump out of the water?

When you catch the ball, the person who let you get it then becomes the fishy in the middle!



let's play...kicking duel

Equipment needed – a woggle between two (one of those long polystyrene things)

This game tests your leg power to the max!

Get into twos, then lie on the water on your tummies facing each other. Then both grab on to the woggle that's between you.

When someone shouts "Go!", both start kicking as hard as you can to try and get the other person to go backwards. Can you make them put their feet down?

If you like, you can make it a best-of-three or even a best-of-five game!



let's play...bike riders

Equipment needed – a woggle for each player

This is a great game of follow-the-leader that everyone will love.

You can play this game in twos or even as a whole group if you have lots of space! Grab a woggle and then tie it in a knot. Then start swimming around the pool with the woggle out in front of you like bike handlebars and see if the others can follow you. Zigzag, go round in circles, go really fast – it's up to you!

Can they keep up? If everyone's following you, you'll look like a long snake winding through the water!



let's play...the balancing game

Equipment needed – a float (big enough to sit on) or a woggle for each player

This simple game is lots of fun and tests your balancing skills!

Standing well away from the side of the pool, everyone has a float and has to see how long they can stay on it without falling off!

Will you be the one who stays out of the water the longest?

If it's difficult to start everyone balancing on their floats at the same time, you could time everyone in turn and see who wins that way. Hold on tight!



let's play...silly hats

Equipment needed - a float for each player

A balancing game where everyone has to keep their head!

Line up against the side of the pool and a bit apart from each other. Then lie on your back and balance your float on your forehead. Can you swim to the other side of the pool without your float falling off?!

Whoever gets the furthest with their float is the winner. If more than one of you makes it, the one who was quickest wins the game. To make it even harder, you could try swimming sideways or walking across the pool and balancing the float on top of your head! It's a tricky one this...>



let's play...treasure hunt

Equipment needed - a toy that will sink to the bottom for every player (make sure the pool are happy with what you've brought - they might even have some toys of their own)

This game is lots of fun if you like going under the water and can touch the bottom of the pool!

First, let the toys sink to the bottom so they are nice and spread out. Then, line up along the side and call out an item of 'treasure'. The first person has to go and get it, and when they bring it back you can call out the next piece of treasure for someone else.

To make the game a bit more tricky, you could number each of the toys so they're harder to find under the water. Will they find all the treasure?



let's play... splash a duck

Equipment needed – small floating toy duck (or similar toy) for each player (make sure the pool are happy with what you've brought)

This game will be a real race to the finish!

Everyone starts on one side of the pool and each player has a toy duck. Then when you shout "Splash a duck!" you all have to try and get your ducks across to the other side just by splashing the water behind them.

Remember, you mustn't touch your duck, and to make it even more fun, you can turn it into a duck race! Whose duck will cross the finish line first?



let's play... mermaid bingo

Equipment needed – floats with numbers or pool toys that float (make sure the pool are happy with what you've brought)

This game's lots of fun, especially if there are lots of you in the pool!

First, spread out all the numbered floats or toys in the water. Then, when you're all lined up along the side, start calling out the numbers with a short gap between each one.

The first player goes and gets the toy with the first number, the second player gets the one with the second number, and it goes on like that. But can everyone bring back the right number?

If you like, you can use different colours or animals instead of numbers!



You can find loads of other fun ways to get involved with **Change4Life** on our website! Just search 'Change4Life' or call **0300 123 4567**.*

*Calls to 03 numbers should cost no more than geographic 01 or 02 calls, and may be part of inclusive minutes subject to your provider and your call package. We're open from 9am to 8pm, 7 days a week.