Backpocket Games and Activities

To keep sailors occupied, having fun, and in one place, while also maintaining social distancing

Activities in bold are easy to use social distancing, activities with \*\*\* can be modified to include social distancing.

1. **Knots & knot relay**
   1. Figure 8, Reef, Bowline, Sheet Bend, Round Turn 2 1/2 hitches
   2. Challenging fun knots: Flying figure 8, monkey’s fist
2. **Where the wind blows - points of sail Simon says**
   1. After discussing points of sail, get everyone to stand in a line facing you, so you can see everyone. Have them put there hands together and point them towards you, you are the wind. You say “the wind blows to a run”, and they all have to turn 180 away from you. You say “The wind blows to beam reach” and they would be side on to you, etc. If you say “irons”, and somebody turns towards you, they are out.
   2. This helps kids understand the wind in relation to them
3. Minute to Win it **\*\*\***
   1. Divide kids into groups, and give each group a piece of paper and a pen
   2. Give kids a category, for instance “parts of a boat” and then set a timer for a minute. They have to write down as many parts of a boat as they can think of in a minute.
   3. Score for unique answers. So if two groups write “tiller” it doesn’t count. If only one group writes “tiller extension” they get one point.
   4. Continue with a variety of categories until kids get bored. Possible categories include: types of weather, bodies of water, types of boats, sunny weather gear, wet weather gear, knots, hazards on the water, animals you would find in or on the water, types of trees, animals in general, you could even do Disney princesses, or movies, or something totally random for fun
4. **Pictionary**
   1. You can either split into teams or just play individually. Have a list of things to draw ready, and then one sailor comes up to draw and the rest guess what it is. First one to guess correctly gets a point, and gets to draw next.
   2. List of possible things to draw: sailboat, tiller, regatta, catamaran, jib, pizza, bumble bee, ice cream, dolphin, olympics, starfish, seaweed, rainbow, castle, mermaid, train, watch, birthday, cookie, captain, pirate, alien
5. **Hangman**
   1. One sailor comes up to the whiteboard, either you can choose a word for them or let them choose a word. They write down dashes for the number of letters in the words
   2. Kids guess letters, and the first one to guess the correct word or phrase goes up the the whiteboard next
6. **Never-Can-Tells**
   1. Purple Elephants:
      1. You start out by saying where you see elephants, for example, “On top of the yacht club there are 2 blue elephants, sailing an opti there are 5 lime green polka dot elephants, and on top of my head is 1 orange elephant. How many elephants are there?”
      2. The answer is the number of words in the question. In this instance, the answer would be 5 elephants. Kids have to figure out the trick, and once they figure it out, get them to whisper to you so you can say if they’re right, so they don’t spoil it for everyone else. The more creative you can get, the more fun the game is. Change up the type of elephants, where they are, and what they’re doing every time, and keep going until kids start to get it. You can do this for 5-10 minutes to kill time at the start of each session until kids are starting to catch on, then switch to another one.
   2. The Magic Stick
      1. Pick up a stick (or any object) off the ground. This is the magic stick. Form a seated circle, and tell everyone what the stick is. For instance, “this is a sail”, then pass it to the person beside you. They must say what they think it is, they may say, “This is the yacht club”. You will respond yes or no to them.
      2. The answer is yes if the person has said “thank you” upon receiving the stick, and before they say what it is. If they have not said thank you, then they are wrong. AKA the stick of politeness. Once again, tell kids that once they figure out the trick they shouldn’t say anything to spoil it for others. Play until most have figured it out
   3. Going on a Picnic
      1. In this game, the trick changes. You decide the trick each time, and play until people catch on. The phrase goes, “I’m going on a picnic and I’m bringing \_\_\_\_\_”. The blank is where the trick is. If the word relates to the trick, you tell the person they can bring that to the picnic, if they are wrong you tell them they can’t bring that.
      2. Possible tricks include: Items that begin with a certain letter, words with double letters or double vowels, words that begin with the letters of the alphabet (start with a, next person b, next person c, etc), 4 letter words, things that are yellow, things that relate to sailing, etc.
7. Ninja
   1. Everyone stands in a close circle and strikes a ninja pose. You start with your turn, you are allowed one swift movement of your arm, attempting to touch the hand of someone beside you (either side). That person is allowed to move their hand, but only while you strike, and must freeze their hands in position after you strike. If you touch a hand, that hand is out of the game. Go around in the circle clockwise turn by turn. Last man standing.
8. **Rock Paper Scissors variations**
   1. Giant Rock Paper Scissors
      1. You start out in a big group, play rock paper scissors with people you come across, but in giant version. Winner keeps going, loser becomes a cheerperson for the winner. Last man standing gets big cheers and congrats. Great game for team building.
   2. Wubba Wubba
      1. Everyone starts out as wubba wubbas, walking around clicking your hands like claws and saying “wubba wubba”. When a wubba wubba comes across a wubba wubba, they play rock paper scissors. The winner becomes a chicken, loser stays a wubba wubba
      2. Chickens say “bawk bawk” and wag their elbows like chickens. When chickens meet chickens, they play rock paper scissors, and the winner becomes a monster while the loser goes back to a wubba wubba
      3. Monsters say “Rawr” and put their hands up by their shoulders in claws (like monsters do when they say Rawr). When monsters meet monsters, they play rock paper scissors, winner becomes a super creature, and loser becomes a chicken again.
      4. Super Creatures go around loudly saying “super creature!” And doing the wave with their arms. They are at the top, and no longer play the game, they are invincible and have bragging rights.
      5. Finish the game when you have too many super creatures or kids are getting bored
   3. Rock Paper Scissors baseball
      1. Divide into two teams, and create a baseball diamond with objects or cones. Each team lines up behind home plate. One team will run around the diamond clockwise, and the other anticlockwise.
      2. To start out, the first person from each team starts running around the bases. When they meet in the middle, they play rock paper scissors. Winner keeps running, loser goes to the back of their line and the next person on their team runs to intercept. When the next person meets the first person from the winning team, they play rock paper scissors. Winner keeps going and loser goes to the back of the line. You score a point for your team if you complete a lap successfully.
9. Molecule **\*\*\***
   1. Everyone starts out together in a group, and you call a number, for example 4. Everyone in the group has to get into a group of 4. Then they disband, and you call another number. You can eliminate people who are not in the right number of people.
   2. The other way to play is by giving people a choice, like apples or oranges, and they split into groups based on which they prefer. You could also say “types of shoe” and they create their own groups, possibly one for flip flops, one barefoot, one running shoes, one slippers, etc.
10. **Squirt Bang**
    1. Everyone stands in a circle, with you in the middle. You have a finger water gun (or could use a real water gun), and point to someone and say “squirt”, that person ducks, and the two people on either side point to each other and say “bang”. Whoever says bang last is out, unless the squirted one doesn’t duck, in which case they are out.
    2. When you get down to the final two, get them to stand back to back and give them a code word, for instance “pickles”. You then tell a story and they slowly walk away from each other. When they hear the code word, they turn around, point, and yell bang. First person to yell bang wins the game. For example, the story could go like this, “The other day I walked into the yacht club and there on the bar were some (pause) tomatoes. There was also bread and ham, so I made myself a sandwich. I thought I’d get crazy so I added some lettuce. But it wasn’t enough so I added pickles!” The more creative, the more fun. Be careful it’s not too long a story, or the players will walk too far apart to hear the code word!
11. **Simon Says - boat parts, tacking, rigging**
    1. Once kids are rigged, play a classic game of Simon says, but with a sailing twist. Things you could get them to do include: simon says touch the sprit pole, pinky finger on the boomvang, put in your centreboard, do a tack, do a gybe, man overboard, swim around the boat, touch the boom, go the the bow, go to the stern, left hand on port, right hand on starboard, point to a bowline, point to a figure 8, strike a pirate pose, pull in your sail, etc.
12. **Rigging races**
    1. Get all sailors to gather all their foils and spars beside their hull. Give them a countdown, and it’s a race to rig their boats first. Ideally, give the winner a prize.
13. **Captains coming**
    1. Use a large area of grass to make it easier to social distance. Set items down to create boundaries, and let sailors know where the bow, stern, port and starboard are. Then it is simon says using those directions and other commands
    2. Other commands include: captain’s coming! (sailors salute and say “aye, aye captain!”), climb the rigging (sailors mimic climbing rigging), scrub the deck (sailors get down and mimic scrubbing the deck), captain’s girlfriend (sailors twirl their hair and say “OooOOOoo”)
14. **Poison Dart Frog**
    1. Everyone starts seated in a circle except you (the coach). Get everyone to close their eyes and bow their heads, and begin to walk around the circle. Tap someone on the head, that person is the poison dart frog.
    2. Now get everyone to open their eyes again, and the game begins. The poison dart frog has to stick their tongue out at someone to kill them, but they have to do so without anyone else noticing. When someone gets killed, they collapse in a dramatic fashion, and then go around the circle and everyone votes for who they think the poison dart frog is. The person with the most votes is also out in that round. The ‘dead’ people leave the circle, and another round starts. The goal of the poison dart frog is to kill everyone undetected, and the goal of everyone else is to vote out the poison dart frog before they kill everyone. The game ends when the poison dart frog is voted out
15. **Statues** - (variations Darling do you love me, wax museum)
    1. One person is “it”. Everyone strikes a pose like a statue. The person who is it must try to make the statues laugh. If a statue laughs, they are out. The person who is it tries to get everyone out.
    2. Wax Museum - One person is “it” or the “night guard” at the wax museum. The rest strike a pose like a statue. The night guard wanders around the statues, trying to catch them moving. Statues can move behind the night guard’s back, but must try to not get caught. If the night guard sees someone move, they are out. The other way to play is that the person caught can now be it.
    3. Darling do you love me - Everyone sits in a circle, the person who is it goes up to one person and says “Darling, if you love me, won’t you please please smile?” The other person must keep a straight face while replying, “Darling you know I love you but I just can’t smile.” The object is to make people laugh, and if they do crack a smile, that person becomes it.
16. **The Big Wind Blows**
    1. Great icebreaker for all groups or holiday program. Get everyone to sit on chairs in a big circle with you in the centre. You say for example “The big wind blows for people wearing blue”, then everyone who is wearing blue runs into the circle and must find a new spot. You also take someone’s spot, so the last person in the middle does the next one. Things you could say are: people wearing flip flops, people who like ice cream, people who like sailing, people who have sailed an opti, people who have long hair, etc.
17. **Finding Nemo**
    1. One player will be Nemo. Choose your Nemo by tapping one person on the shoulder while everyone’s eyes are closed.
    2. Players will begin introducing themselves to each other by asking “Are you Nemo?”
    3. The first 5 times someone asks Nemo, they say “No”. On the 6th time Nemo is asked, they will say “I’M NEMO!”
    4. Once Nemo has been found, the goal is to form a line behind them as quickly as possible. Tell players to put their hands on the shoulders of the person in front of them to avoid arguments about who was in front or behind.
    5. You can also have one player be “Bruce the Shark”. When you choose players at the beginning, tap them on the shoulder once for Nemo and twice for Bruce.
       1. Once Nemo has been found and the line has formed, you will say “Fish are friends!” and Bruce will respond “NOT FOOD!”
       2. Everyone in line behind Bruce is “out” for that round.
       3. This variation is great for sending a small number of kids to an activity at a time so it doesn’t get overwhelming (like sending them to the snack table or to get supplies for their craft, etc.)
18. **Fire On The Mountain** 
    1. To begin Fire on The Mountain, have all players lay down flat on the ground
    2. When you say “Fire on the Mountain!”, the last person to stand up is out
    3. Drag out the “m” sound at the beginning of the word – if a player stands before you have said the whole word “mountain”, they are out
    4. Try calling out “fire on the marshmallow” or other words that start with M to see who you can fool
19. **The Floor is Lava**
    1. Similar to Fire on the Mountain, call out “The floor is lava!” The last person with their feet on the ground is out. Set rules as to what counts as “the floor”.
20. **Mafia**
    1. Requires hearing for everyone and sight for the killer, angel and devil.
    2. Begin each game with everyone’s head down while the leader selects:
       1. Killer = 1 tap on the head
       2. Angel = 2 taps on the head
       3. Detective = 3 taps on the head
    3. Silent portion of each round consists of:
       1. Killer awakens and chooses someone to kill
       2. Angel awakens and chooses someone to save
       3. Detective awakens points to someone they accuse of being the killer, leader confirms or denies accusation.
    4. Speaking portion of each round consists of:
       1. Everyone raise head/open eyes
       2. Leader creates story of how player was killed and if they were saved.
       3. Townspeople discus who they would like to vote on as the killer
       4. Vote taken of who should be killed
       5. Leader reveals if they killed the killer. If successful then game over, if unsuccessful begin new round.
21. Octopus (social distancing version with water gun) **\*\*\***
    1. One sailor is the octopus and stands in the centre of the field. All other sailors line up on the edge of the field. When the octopus yells “OCTOPUS”, sailors must run across the field to the other side. The octopus tries to tag people. When you get tagged, you are now seaweed and must stay put. You are now an obstacle for all other sailors running across, and you can tag people but not move. Last man standing wins.
22. Phobia **\*\*\***
    1. One person volunteers, and the coach takes them aside and gives them a fear (for example afraid of teeth), and then gives them 30 seconds to go hide somewhere. The rest of the group goes to find them, and then has to figure out what their fear is. So whenever they smile at the person, they would freak out and try to run away or cower in a ball or something. The more dramatic, the more fun. Then once the group figures it out, they have to get the person back to the starting point while managing their fear. So no one shows their teeth, and everyone reassures them that it’s okay.
    2. Possible fears include: grass (team carries them back), adults, ears, hair, the colour blue, benches, trees, feet, etc.
23. **Sailing Jeopardy**
    1. This is one that must be prepared beforehand, with a list of questions of various difficulties and in categories. Categories could include: knots, hazards & weather, parts of the boat, points of sail, miscellaneous
    2. Each category has 5 questions, labelled 100, 200, 300, 400, 500 (the sailors should not be able to see the questions). The 100 question is the easiest, and the 500 question is the hardest.
    3. Split the group into two teams, and the first team starts by picking a number and a category. The coach reads out the question, and the team can answer it. The other team may not answer it. If they answer correctly, they receive that many points and it is the next team’s turn. If they answer incorrectly, the other team has a chance to answer the question. If they get it right, they get the points and it is now their turn.
    4. At the end, the team with the most points wins. This is a great rainy day game, as it can also be a lengthy one.
24. Mario Balloon battle **\*\*\***
    1. This requires balloons, yarn, and something that creates boundaries. Blow up a bunch of balloons, and tie 2 balloons to each sailor’s right ankle. When the game starts, the object is to pop everyone else’s balloons while protecting your own. When both your balloons pop, you are out. As people leave the game, make the boundaries smaller to increase difficulty. For extra fun, play the mario theme song as you play.
25. 4 square
26. **Warm-up kinaesthetic stretches**
    1. Great for a race team who are training focused. Go through range of motion exercises to warm up before hitting the water. You can also add a challenge, like how long can you hold a plank for, or how long can you hike out on a hiking bench.
27. **Two truths and a lie**
    1. Start by saying 3 statements about yourself. Two of them have to be true, and one a lie. Then all sailors will have to guess which is the lie. Hold a vote, and then reveal the answer. Have each sailor take a turn. Great icebreaker, and a great way to learn about your group.
    2. Example: “I have a brother, I broke my arm playing soccer when I was 7, I didn’t learn to sail in an optimist”