



sense

connecting sight, sound and life

# Making Sense of Mini Games



# How this resource will help you

Sense Active gives people to chance to express themselves, enjoy physical activities and socialise We believe that everyone has the right to enjoy sports and activities, and that these are vital for living full, rich and engaged lives.

## The purpose

This resource is designed to give you suitable games and activities that can be enjoyed with little or no equipment or in any sized space, helping people to be more active.

## Who is it for?

It has been compiled for people of all ages with complex disabilities and for people supporting them.

## The benefits

Regular exercise is important to help maintain a healthy lifestyle. For people living with complex disabilities it can provide a number of benefits including:

- Making new friends
- Weight loss
- Keeping fit
- Improving communication
- Learning new skills



# Top tips



Participants are more likely to engage in games if their support workers are taking part and engaged as well.



Make things more sensory e.g. by adding noise, texture or smell.



Including time at the start of each session for individuals to feel the equipment and understand the area can help.



Supporting a participant to actively take part in a way which is appropriate for them.



As with all sport and physical activity sessions, make sure you have completed a risk assessment of the equipment and space to make sure it is safe to use.

Get creative with the equipment you use, some ideas for this are on page 22.



# Contents

The “Outcomes” column outlines some of the skills participants will develop by taking part in these activities. This is not an exhaustive list - participants will be working on many different skills.

Page	Game	Social skills	Flexibility	Coordination	Grip / release	Core strength
6	Balloon Keep Up	✓	✓	✓		✓
7	Bowling	✓		✓	✓	
8	Bubble POP!		✓	✓		✓
9	Cricket	✓		✓		
10	Disco Time	✓	✓	✓		
11	Drumming		✓	✓	✓	✓
12	Golf	✓		✓	✓	
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16	Shot Ball	✓		✓		
17	Sitting Volleyball	✓	✓	✓		✓
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19	Splat	✓		✓		
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# Balloon keep up

## Equipment needed

- Inflated balloons

## Set up

- Find a clear space for the activity

## Make it sensory

- Use different colour or shape balloons – bright colours are great
- Add a very small amount of rice to each balloon before blowing up to help make a sound

ee Encourage participants to stretch up and reach the balloon

## Making it harder/easier

- Use multiple balloons or add some rice to them to make them fall quicker

## How to play

- Each participant must try to keep their balloon off the floor for as long as possible by tapping it up in the air
- For those finding it easy try working as a group or using multiple balloons
- If you are supporting the participant, you can join in with a team game or maybe just offer support to those who need it

# Bowling

## Equipment needed

- Ball
- Skittles

## Set up

- Set out the skittles as below with participants facing the skittles when it is their turn

## Make it sensory

- Try using different coloured skittles and balls. Consider the colour of the background you are aiming at- does it contrast with the skittles?
- Use different sounds when skittles are knocked over

## How to play

- Participants take it in turns to roll the ball at the skittles
- The number of skittles knocked down is the number of points they get
- Participants get two tries each before the end of their turn and the skittles are reset
- Encourage the participant to grip the ball where possible

ee Why not encourage the participants to keep score?

## Making it harder/easier

- Use a ramp to help roll the ball off

# Bubble POP!

## Equipment needed

- Pots of bubbles

## Set up

- Find a clear space for the activity

## Make it sensory

- Add some music in the background or a sound

## How to play

- Blow the bubbles near the participant and encourage them to reach out and pop as many as possible
- How many can they pop in a certain time?
- Make sure to blow the bubbles near the participant and not directly at them

ee If you have a bubble machine how about using that instead?

## Making it harder/easier

- Blow the bubbles further away or closer
- Can you encourage participants to blow bubbles to each other?

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# Cricket

## Equipment needed

- Two Wickets e.g. cones or chairs
- Ball

## Set up

- Two wickets set about 5-6m apart
- Participants acting as fielders positioned round the outside of the area
- The participant acting as the batter stands in front of one wicket with all fielders facing the same wicket

## Make it sensory

- Use bright colours for the wicket and the ball
- Have a sound for each time a run is scored

## How to play

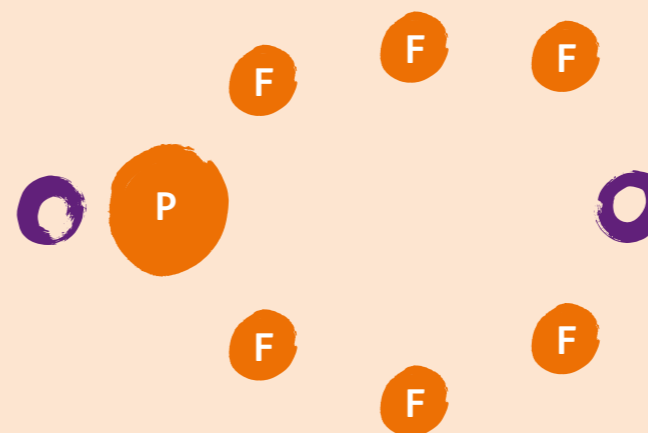
- The batter bats by pushing or throwing the ball
- As soon as the ball is released, the batter moves around wicket one then wicket two as many times as possible to collect "runs"
- The fielders must try to hit the first wicket to get the participant out

ee Make sure there is enough space between the fielders and the participant to move around

## Making it harder/easier

- Use bigger or smaller balls.

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# Disco Time

## Equipment needed

- Music
- Dimmed lights
- Speaker (if needed)

## Set up

- Prepare an upbeat music playlist you can dance to

ee This is great for participants and those supporting them to get involved with

## Making it harder/easier

- Participants could just use a single dance movement throughout the activity. To make it more challenging, encourage them to come up with a routine with others

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## How to play

- Put on some upbeat music and get dancing
- You could encourage participants to create their own dance moves or teach each other a dance move
- For inspiration you could use animal movements, letters of the alphabet or using different parts of the body

## Make it sensory

- Use different lights, glow sticks and bright colours to make the activity more sensory



# Drumming

## Equipment needed

- Drums and drum sticks
- Get creative - e.g. use empty round boxes of chocolates, chairs, sports balls or upturned saucepans/bins

## Set up

- Have drums and drumsticks at the ready

## Making it harder/easier

- You may want to support a participant by holding the drum in a certain position for them. Others may prefer to hold their drum independently

## How to play

- Copycat drumming – the leader plays a certain rhythm on their drum, and the participants then copy this on theirs
- Individual drumming – participants come up with their own drumming rhythm, or you can put on some music for them to drum along to

ee Encourage the participants to really stretch when hitting their drum

## Make it sensory

- Using different equipment as drums will give a different sensation and sound when hitting it. Try experimenting with different objects

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# Golf

## Equipment needed

- Ball
- Club/bat if wanted
- Targets e.g. markers or buckets

## Set up

- Set up a number of targets around the area

ee If you have a big enough space, players can continue their turn on target 2 whilst others are still finishing target 1

## How to play

- Participants take it in turns to aim for target 1 (rolling, throwing or hitting the ball) Once they hit the target, they then start just in front of target 1 and aim for target 2
- Participants try to get to the end of the course in the fewest turns
- Encourage the participant to do this independently and really stretch to push/throw/hit the ball away

## Make it sensory

- Make a noise for when the ball hits the target
- Make the target clear using lights or bright colours

## Making it harder/easier

- Put the targets closer or further away
- Use a ramp to push the ball down or throw the ball

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# Parachute Ball Roll

## Equipment needed

- Small balls
- Parachute

## Set up

- Everyone stands around the parachute and pulls it out tightly at waist level

## Make it sensory

- Try a ball with bells in it to make noise

## How to play

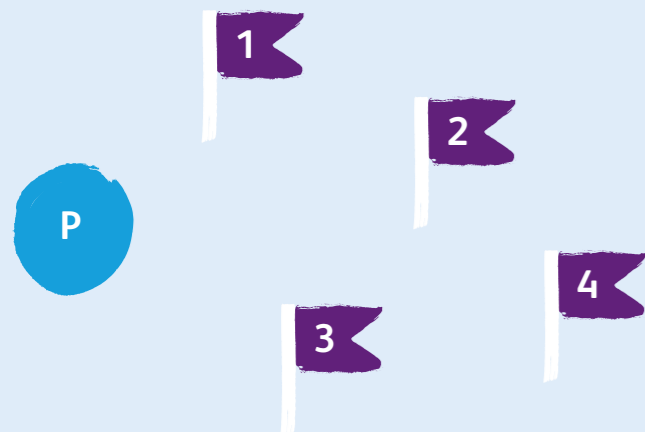
- Participants take it in turns to roll a ball towards the middle of the parachute to try to get it through the hole in the middle
- Other participants can help by lifting their part of the parachute to encourage the ball into the hole
- Celebrate together when you get the ball in the middle of the parachute
- If you don't have a parachute you could try to keep the ball balanced for as long as possible

ee If you don't have a parachute use a bed sheet or blanket

## Making it harder/easier

- Add in more balls

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# Parachute Run



## Equipment needed

- Parachute



## Set up

- Everyone stands around the parachute and pulls it out tightly at waist level



ee Rather than names try giving other commands - e.g. everyone with white shoes



## How to play

- Participants lift the parachute above their heads and back down again
- As they lift the parachute up the leader calls out a name and those participants go under the parachute to the other side before it comes down



## Make it sensory

- Play a sound once the participant has got out the other side without being caught by the parachute

## Making it harder/easier

- Hold the parachute up for longer or bring it down more quickly depending on how fast the participants are moving
- Call multiple names out at once

# Parachute Wave



## Equipment needed

- Parachute
- Ball (if required)



## Set up

- Everyone stands around the parachute and pulls it out tightly at waist level



## Make it sensory

- Try using balls with bells in and explore their texture and sound before placing them on the parachute

## How to play

- One participant puts their hands up, still holding onto the parachute and the participant next to them does the same to create a Mexican wave
- Send this wave around the circle
- Try to add in some balls – how many can you keep on the parachute before balls start to fall off?



ee Could you try moving multiple balls moving around on the parachute?



## Making it harder/easier

- Do not use any balls or try different sized balls





# Shot Ball

## Equipment needed

- Ball
- Markers (2 colours) and a starting marker
- Benches as bumpers (if needed)

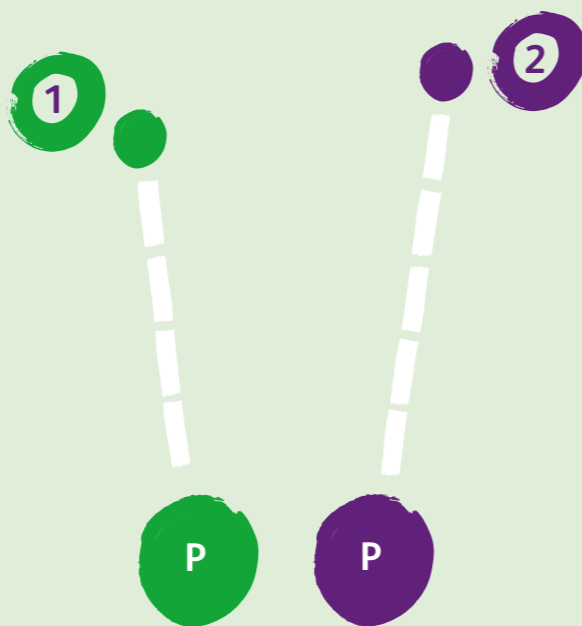
## Set up

- Set up one marker where you want to start the game from
- Place benches down the sides of the area if you want bumpers (like a bowling alley)
- Put participants into 2 teams

ee Why not use fun items such as rubber ducks as markers for each team? ee

## Make it sensory

- Try using a ball with bells in it or balls with different textures



## How to play

- From the same starting position, participants take it in turns to push or throw the ball as far as they can
- Where the ball eventually stops, put a marker at that point (make sure it matches the team colour)
- Once everyone has had a go, add the scores up for each team, the nearest marker scores 1 point, the next scores 2 etc

## Making it harder/easier

- Use bigger or smaller balls
- After each ball stops, put an item on top of the marker – if it gets knocked off by the next participant that marker is taken out of the game

# Sitting Volleyball

## Equipment needed

- Balls (beach balls are great)
- Net (or alternative)

## Set up

- Set up a low net
- One team on each side

## Make it sensory

- Use different colour balls, bright colours are great
- Use balls with different textures or try balloons

ee If you have lots of people involved consider using multiple balls to keep everyone engaged ee

## How to play

- One team starts with the ball. The participants must try to hit the ball back and forth over the net using any part of the body. You could add some competition - if a team drops a ball, the other team gets a point
- Encourage participants to stretch up for the ball and shuffle across the space

## Making it harder/easier

- Use lighter or heavier balls
- Move the teams closer or further away from the net
- Change the height of the net



# Skittles

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## Equipment needed

- Ball
- Skittles with numbers on them or use alternative objects and number them

## Set up

- Scatter the skittles around in a small area
- Participants must face this area with the ball, divided into 2 teams

## How to play

- Participants from each team take it in turns to push the ball off their laps towards the skittles
- As the skittles are knocked down, they are replaced where they fall
- The number on the skittle that is knocked down is the number of points for that turn
- The team with the highest score is the winner

## Making it harder/easier

- Use bigger or smaller balls
- Have the skittles starting closer together or further apart
- Use benches as bumpers

ee Try using different types of balls to roll at the skittles

## Make it sensory

- Use a ball with bells in it or of a different texture
- Make the skittles stand out with lights or bright colours

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# Splat

## Equipment needed

- Large ball
- Targets (get creative with your targets – they must be able to fall over)
- Benches (for bumpers)

## Set up

- Set up the targets as shown in the diagram below with benches to act as bumpers
- Targets could be anything that can easily be pushed over

## Make it sensory

- Use a ball with bells in it or of a different texture
- Make the targets stand out with bright colours
- Make a noise when the targets are hit

## How to play

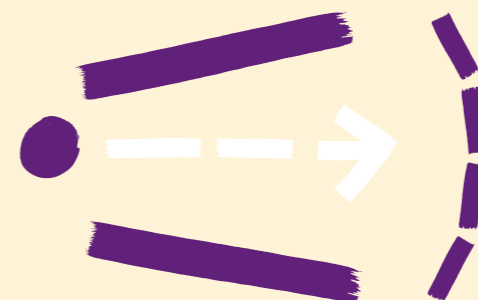
- Participants from each team take it in turns to push the ball off their laps or roll a ball towards the target
- The number on the target is the number of points gained when hit
- If the target falls flat then shout “splat” and an extra point is given
- The team scores add up until the team reaches 25 points exactly
- Encourage participants to push the ball off or roll the ball independently

ee Encourage the participant to push the ball independently to help with their strength and flexibility

## Making it harder/easier

- Use bigger or smaller balls
- Participant moves closer to the targets or further away

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# Target Ball



## Equipment needed

- 4 small balls each
- Target mat – you can make your own like a bullseye
- Ramp (if needed)

## Set up

- Set out the target mat and have all participants line up facing the target

## Make it sensory

- Put a large object (e.g. a cone) in the middle so it is clear where the target is – you could wrap it in flashing lights and make it brightly coloured
- Somebody could clap above the middle of the target for those who are visually impaired

## How to play

- Participants take it in turns to roll their team's colour ball at the target with the aim of trying to get it to stop in the middle of the target zone
- The ball that is closest to the middle of the target wins
- If you are supporting the participant, you could hold the ramp towards the target

**ee** Consider the background so that the target can be seen clearly **ee**

## Making it harder/easier

- Use a ramp to help roll the ball off



# Equipment

To make things easier, here is a list of the equipment needed for all the games, where you can buy it and everyday objects that you can use too!

Equipment	Where can you buy it?	Alternatives
Balloons	Most supermarkets, toy stores or party stores	
Cricket wickets	Sports stores	Chairs, marker cones
Drums	Music stores	Saucepans, old chocolate tins, upturned bins, sports balls, chairs
Drumsticks	Music stores	Sticks, pens
Golf club/bat	Sports stores	Some people may need a lighter plastic club or they could use a plastic cricket/softball bat
Large ball	Jingling balls are great for this	Large gym ball, basketball, football
Markers	Sports stores	Get creative - you could use pieces of paper or rubber ducks as markers
Net	Sports stores	A piece of string or a blanket/bedsheet tied between 2 chairs or a short barrier works well
Parachute	Online sports stores	Try a bed sheet or blanket instead
Pot of bubbles	Most supermarkets, toy stores or party stores	
Skittles	Most supermarkets, toy stores and sports stores	Bottles filled with water, sand or rice work just as well
Splat Targets	Easels work really well for this. You can get them from most craft stores	Instead of easels why not try making your own out of old cardboard boxes
Target mat	Online sports stores	Try creating your own target mat using a bed sheet or some paper

## Acknowledgements

This resource was designed by the Sense Active team. However it would not have been possible without the help of our Sense Children and Young People Specialist Services, and Aurora Orchard House.



## Stay Connected

We'd love to hear what you think of our games. Have you adapted them in any way to meet the needs of your participants, or have you come up with any new versions? Maybe some of the participants you work with have seen improvements in their health, skills or confidence levels too? We'd love to hear your stories, please let us know by emailing [sense.active@sense.org.uk](mailto:sense.active@sense.org.uk), and we'll be in touch to find out more. You can also stay connected through Twitter by tagging @Sensecharity and including #SenseActive

## About Sense

For everyone living with complex disabilities. For everyone who is deafblind. Sense is here to offer personalised support to help people communicate and experience the world. We believe that no one, no matter how complex their disabilities, should be isolated, left out, or unable to fulfil their potential. Our experts offer support that's tailored to the individual needs of each person, whether that's at our centres, through our holidays and short breaks, or in people's own homes. In addition to practical support, we also provide information to families, and campaign for the rights of people with complex disabilities to take part in life.

## What Next?

If you have enjoyed these games you can find more sport and physical activity sessions delivered by Sense Active at [www.sense.org.uk/sport](http://www.sense.org.uk/sport)

If you, or someone you know, require this information in a different format, please contact Sense Information and Advice - contact details below.

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