

Stacking Heart Challenge

Making a tower of hearts isn't as easy as you think. This racing game creates shouts, cheers and laughter. You'll need to buy plenty of small conversation hearts, I recommend a few bags. The object of the game is to build the tallest tower in the allotted amount of time (30 seconds should do). When the time is up, the kids count the hearts to see who is the winner. Then the next to players have turn. This game is usually a big enough hit for each player to request another turn.

Catch My Heart Game

1. This game works best with a group of five to 12 players. Have the children sit or stand in a circle facing each other.
2. Hand one player a red ball or heart-shaped bean bag (you can make your own heart-shaped bean bags by modifying [these instructions for square ones](#)).
3. Tell the player holding the ball to call out another player's name and then gently toss the ball to them.
4. The player whose name was called catches the ball and then announces another player's name and throws it to them. Continue this until all the players get a chance throwing and catching the ball. Give the kids some time to feel comfortable with this and challenge them to see how long they can continue without dropping the ball.
5. Once everyone's feeling confident, throw a second ball into the mix. Now they must keep two balls going without dropping either one.
6. Again, once they get the hang of that, throw a third ball into the game. And a fourth, if they can handle it.
7. Have the players see how long they can keep the balls in the air. Start a new round once a ball drops.
8. The game ends when the kids show signs that they're tired of playing it.

Tips:

1. Tell the children to throw the balls or bean bags gently. Not only will they have a better chance of catching them and keeping the game going, but they'll avoid hurting someone.

What You Need

- Three or four red balls or heart-shaped bean bags

Heart-y Relay Races

Add a Valentine's Day twist to any [relay race](#). For egg-and-spoon, for example, swap the egg for a jiggly gelatin heart. For drop-the-penny, try conversation hearts instead of coins. For a balloon relay, just use red or pink balloons or even a heart-shaped pillow.

Hugs and Kisses

This one is a Valentine's Day version of Simon Says. A leader faces the players and calls out commands. "Hug!" means hold your arms up over your head to form a circle (like the "O" in "XOXO" for kisses and hugs). "Kiss!" means move into a jumping-jack position, with feet and arms out wide to form an X. Any other command means stay still or you are out. Play several short rounds so that several kids get a chance to be the leader and no one sits out for long.

Heart-Healthy Beanbag Toss

This game is adapted from Marie LeBaron at [Make and Takes](#). First, make a list of kid-friendly fitness activities: jumping jacks, frog hops, side kicks, arm circles, and so on. If you have space for gear like basketballs, jump ropes, or a mini-trampoline, include those too.

Next, create a poster displaying your activities. They could be in list form, tic-tac-toe style, or even in concentric rings like a target. Place the poster on the floor. Then have kids toss a beanbag (make a heart-shaped one if you like!) onto the poster. You can have a set number of times to do each exercise, either overall or marked with the actions on the poster. Or you can have players roll a die or pick a playing card to give them a target number of jumps, kicks, and so on.

Heart-Scotch Hop

Outdoors, use [sidewalk chalk](#) to draw a hopscotch course using heart shapes instead of squares. Inside, achieve the same effect with [painter's tape](#) or sturdy foam cut-outs.

Amp up the game by adding extra instructions: "Blow 3 kisses" or "Pretend to shoot an arrow like Cupid" if you land on a certain space or if your marker lands outside the course boundaries.

Heart Beat

Here's another relay race option. Cut out a batch of paper hearts and write instructions on each one: Skip, crab-walk, link arms back-to-back with a teammate, and so on. Put these in a bowl or bucket at one end of the room. Split players into teams. One at a time, a player from each team runs to the bowl and picks a heart. He then returns to his team, following the instructions on his heart. Continue until everyone from one team has taken a turn, or until all players have had a chance to run.

Valentine I Spy

Hide 1 to 5 Valentine object(s) in plain sight in the classroom.

Kids walk around looking for the Valentine object. The child who spys the Valentine object must first sit in his desk and then call, 'I Spy!' Play several rounds. No prizes are necessary, but give a small treat if you like.

Broken Hearts

Cut large hearts out of red construction paper. Cut hearts in half, using a zig-zag or other shapes, making each one unique. You should have enough half hearts so that each person at the party gets one. As your guest arrive hand them one of the half hearts and tell them to find their match by finding the other half.

All Paired Up

What You'll Need:

- Pink and Red Construction Paper
- Scissors

Preparation:

1. Cut out enough construction-paper hearts so that there is one heart for every two players.
2. Cut the hearts in half using a different zigzag pattern for each heart.

At the Party:

1. Have the players stand in a circle.
2. Give one half of a heart to each child.
3. When you say, "Go," each player must try to find the player holding the other half of their heart.
4. The first pair to successfully match their halves win.

Alternate Version:

This can be played as a team game.

1. Cut out enough hearts so that there is one heart per guest, and cut each heart in half using different zigzag patterns.
2. Break your guests into teams of three or four, and have the members of each team line up one behind the other.
3. Hand one heart half to each member of the first team, and place the other halves in a bag several feet away.
4. Do the same for the other teams.
5. When you say, "Go," the first member of each team must run to the bag and pull out a heart half.
6. If it matches, he/she runs back, and the next team member repeats the procedure.
7. If it does not match, the player must return the mismatched heart half to the box, run back to the end of the line, and try again once the line has cycled through once.
8. The first team to match all of their hearts wins the game.

Valentine Bingo Cards

Printable valentine bingo cards make a quick Valentine's Day game for your classroom, group, or home. You'll love how easy it is to put together and the kids will love how much fun it is. Go to www.bingocardcreator.com or google Valentine Bingo Cards

These valentine bingo cards look best when printed on cardstock but you can also print them on normal printer paper. Using colored paper can give them a whole new look!

You'll need markers to cover the squares in your game of valentine bingo and scraps of paper work in a pinch. You can also splurge and use conversation hearts, Hershey kisses, or M&Ms.

