



Gathering the Nuts

Ideas to keep your Scouts busy while you set up for the meeting.

1. Place a loose pile of pennies on a table (or floor) and have the Scouts see how many can be stacked before the column of pennies topple over.
2. Provide a bucket of Legos and let their imaginations take over.
3. Provide small and large marshmallows and broken pieces of spaghetti to be made into 3D creations.
4. Word finds, especially words having to do with the meeting's emphasis. Submitted by John Hooper.
5. Crossword puzzles, also created with words from the Law, Oath, and/or meeting emphasis. Thanks again to John Hooper.
6. **Matching game**. Prepare index cards or print on card stock. For older Scouts, words such as points of the Law, names or pictures of knots, names or pictures of camping gear. For Cub Scouts try pictures including animals, Cub Scout emblems, outdoor images.
7. Origami station with chart showing how to fold the paper. For some "easy" origami, check out <https://www.thesprucecrafts.com/easy-origami-boat-instructions-4057416>. Probably more suitable for older Scouts. Suggested by Sean Hooper.
8. Play dough station. See **homemade play dough recipe**, but make it up fresh prior to the meeting. If the water soaks into the flour overnight, it turns into goo!
9. Balloon tennis. You can **make tennis rackets** out of wire coat hangers and stretch old pantyhose over. Make sure to cover the hook with duct tape or electricians tape.
10. Balloon volley ball. Skip the tennis rackets and just provide several balloons to bop around.
11. Tabletop billiards: Crumple a piece of tissue wrapping paper into a ball. Provide straws to blow the "ball" across the tabletop. Alternate to tissue paper: ping pong ball, pom-pom.

12. **Paper football.** Take turns “kicking a field goal” by flicking the football with your finger. A partner makes a goal post with his/her hands.
<https://www.wikihow.com/Make-a-Paper-Football>
13. Bucket (or wastebasket) toss and variations:
 - a. Bean bags
 - b. Crumpled paper
 - c. Ping pong balls (try bouncing it before the bucket)
 - d. Whiffle ball
14. Spoon catapult. Hold a plastic spoon in one hand, load “ammunition” and shoot at a target on the wall. Ammunition can be pom-poms, cotton balls, small marshmallows. If your target is on a bedsheet taped to the wall, clean-up should be easy.
15. A quick and easy craft. Use chenille wires, pom-poms, popsicle sticks, or inexpensive kits from a hobby store or Oriental Trading.
16. Make two or three cardboard maze games and take turns playing.
[Youtube.com/watch?v=4nb_1sAZESk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4nb_1sAZESk)
17. Treasure hunt. Hide about 20 or so small items around the room. Make a list to make sure everything is picked up. Have the Scouts retrieve the items and return them to the table.
18. Puzzle treasure hunt. Hide puzzle pieces around the room and have the Scouts assemble the puzzle on the table as pieces are found. Shoot for a puzzle with not too many pieces.
19. Balloon burst. Write challenges on pieces of paper and insert into balloon before blowing up. The Scouts take turns bopping a balloon around until they hear a signal (i.e., you can say “Now!” while you’re setting up, or set a wind-up timer, or timer on your phone.) Whoever catches the balloon can pop it. Decide if they all do the challenge (“Do 5 sit-ups,” hop on 1 foot, etc.) or the one who caught the balloon does the challenge (“Name the 12 points of the Law,” “Name 4 deciduous trees,” etc.)
20. Weightless cookies. String a rope between two trees at least a foot or two above the height of your tallest Scout. From the rope, tie one string for each participant. At the bottom of the string, tie a cookie that is shaped with a hole in the middle. Participants try to eat the cookie without using their hands.
21. Chopstick Smarties. Provide several sets of chopsticks. Place a bowl of Smarties candies at one station and an empty bowl at another station several feet away. Participants carry the Smarties only with the chopsticks.

22. Treasure hunt with clues. Place clues around the room to find. Your clues may have the location of the next clue, tell a story about an artifact in the room, or ask the finder to do something.
23. Recycled bottle bowling. Put a little water or sand in the bottles to keep them from falling over prematurely. Roll a softball, soccer ball or plastic play ball. Don't worry about keeping score.
24. Wax paper ice skating. If your meeting room has a smooth floor, try wrapping waxed paper around shoes and see if you can glide.
25. Make paper bag puppets.
26. Ping pong ball toss into a group of Solo cups. Weigh the Solo cups down with a ½ inch of water to keep them from tipping over. Place the cups on an absorbent towel... just in case.
27. Air hockey on a table top. Lids from push top water bottles for the paddles, plastic lid from a peanut butter or mayonnaise jar for a puck. You can make the puck even slipperier by gluing wax paper on the flat surface. Thank you Sean, Eli and Ethan!



Guidelines:

1. Keep it simple so the Scouts can engage without much intervention from the Leaders.
2. Keep it safe.
3. Avoid messy.
4. Inexpensive, if possible! 😊
5. Avoid activities that feel like school work. KISMIF!
6. Keeps them busy for up to 15 minutes (for early arrivers).
7. Can be abandoned easily when it is time for the meeting to start.

Equipment: How to Make Balloon Racquets

Here's how to make inexpensive balloon racquets using coat hangers, old panty hose, and some masking or athletic tape. It takes only a few minutes to produce each racquet.

Construction Instructions



Step Two

- Pull the bottom of the coat hanger until it forms a diamond shape.
- Using your hand or some pliers, straighten the hook.
- Pull one leg of the panty hose over the racquet until the tip of the toes are tight against the tip of the racquet. This will form a nice bouncy surface.
- Wrap the rest of the panty hose (i.e. the other leg) around the handle of the hanger.
- Wrap the handle with tape and voila - you have a racquet your students can use to bounce balloons either to themselves or to partners.



Finished Racquet

References

1. Guy Bailey, *The Ultimate Homeschool Physical Education Game Book*, Educators Press, 2013.
2. Marianne Torbert, "Growing as One Plays With a Balloon," *Teaching Elementary Physical Education*, November 2006.

<https://www.physicaleducationupdate.com/public/252.cfm>

Accessed 11/22/2019

Flour and Salt Play Dough Recipe

This recipe has a very good texture, but make it up within a few hours prior to use. If it sits too long, it gets goopy.

Mix together in a saucepan:

- 1 cup flour
- ½ cup salt
- 2 teaspoons cream of tartar

In a separate bowl or measuring cup, mix:

- 1 cup water
- 1 Tablespoon cooking oil
- Several drops of food coloring (optional)

Slowly add the liquid mixture to the dry mixture. Stir mixture until smooth and soupy. Cook over low heat, stirring constantly. When the mixture forms a doughy ball, remove from heat, let cool, and knead. Store in an airtight container.

Hint: if it does turn goopy, simply reheat it, let cool and knead.