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# Traditional Portuguese Games

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# The rabbits and the holes

**Players:** There are two groups of children. One group represents the rabbits and the other group the holes. The rabbit group has one more child than the holes.

**The game:** the children who play the holes spread out across the room and stand with their legs apart without moving. When the music starts, the rabbits have to run around the holes and when it stops, they have to put themselves in one hole (between a child's legs). They can only enter from behind, to avoid bumping into each other.

One child will not find a hole. This child is not eliminated from the game. Everyone has the opportunity to play again. So maybe next time this child will find a hole and another child will be without.

Later, the children who played rabbits will play the holes and vice-versa.



# The dance of the chairs

**Material:** chairs, a radio player and a *CD* with lively music.

**Players:** at least eight children.

**The game:** form a circle with chairs, with the seats turned outwards. There should be one chair less than the number of players. Play the music and ask the children to dance around the chairs. When the music stops, the children have to sit down on one of the chairs with only one child per chair. The child who does not find a chair is out of the game. For the next round the teacher takes out one chair and the game restarts. The winner is the player who sits in the last chair.



# The handkerchief



**Material:** a handkerchief

**Players:** more than six children

**The game:** the children stand in a circle facing each other. The middle of the circle is the punishment area. They put their hands behind their backs. One of the children (child A), chosen previously, runs around the circle with a handkerchief. While running and before letting the handkerchief fall behind one of the children in the circle, he sings:

"The handkerchief is in the hands,  
It falls here or not,  
the one who looks behind  
will be slapped."

No one is allowed to look behind, but they can peep through their legs when the child with the handkerchief passes. Child A tries to discreetly leave the handkerchief behind one of the children. When this child (child B) realizes that the handkerchief is behind him, he picks it up and runs after child A, who now tries to occupy the empty space left by child B. If child B catches child A, child A has to go into "the punishment" area. He may only leave it when another child replaces him. If the child B is not able to catch child A, he continues the game and leaves the handkerchief behind another child.

# The blind goat



**Players:** this is a game for a large group of children. We need a piece of cloth to cover the eyes of one child, who will be the blind goat.

**The game:** Facing each other the children form a big circle by joining hands. The blind goat stays in the middle, with covered eyes. Then, the children start a dialogue with the goat:

- “Blind goat, where do you come from?”
- “I come from the windmill”
- “What do you have for eating?”
- “Bread and wine”
- “Will you give me a bit?”
- “No”

When the goat says “No” the rest of the children start running through the space, which must not be too big. The goat has to chase them and try to tag one child.

During the game, the children who are running try to approach the goat, making noises to disorientate it.

When the goat tags a child, she has to guess who it is, by touching the body of the child with her hands. If she is right, then that child will be the next blind goat.

# The bag race

**Material:** bags for potatoes or strong plastic bags. One for each player.

**Players:** variable number.

**The game:** the starting and finish lines are marked on the ground. All the players stay behind the starting line. When someone gives the starting shot, the players place their legs inside their bag and by holding the bag up with their hands they jump to the finish line. The one who gets there first is the winner.





# The ring

**Material:** a ring or a small object.

**Players:** at least five children.

**The game:** first, we need to choose the child who is going to hold the ring. This child puts his hands together as though he is praying and hides the ring between his hands.

The rest of the children form a circle and also put their hands together in the same way. The ring holder passes his hands between all the other children's hands. While doing this he gives the ring to one of the other children without anyone seeing it.

After passing all the children, the ring holder selects one of the children, who has not received the ring. He then asks him, "who has the ring? ". If this child guesses correctly, he becomes the next ring holder. If not, he suffers a punishment decided by the rest of the group. The ring holder then asks another child, until someone guesses correctly.



# The three leg race

**Material:** a rope or a handkerchief.

**Players:** several teams with two players each.

**The game:** the two players are side by side and hold each other around their shoulders. Their inside legs are tied together at the ankles.

It's necessary to have ample space, without obstacles, to allow a race of 25 to 30 metres.

The teams, side by side, start together at the starting line. Upon command they walk as fast as they can tied together. The first team to cross the finish line wins.



# Find the colour

**Players:** this game can be played by very small children, in order to develop their colour recognition.

**The game:** when the music starts, the children have to dance around the room. When it stops, they have to touch the colour that has been previously chosen by the kindergarten teacher. The children can choose to touch any object in the classroom or even the clothes they are wearing.

After everybody has touched the correct colour, the kindergarten teacher chooses another colour and starts the music.

