

# Back Yard Obstacle Course

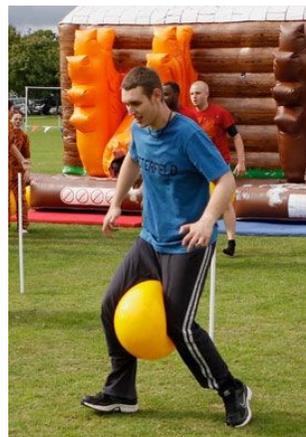
## MATERIAL IDEAS (USE WHAT YOU HAVE!)

- Pool Noodles
- Hula Hoops
- Sponges
- Kiddie pool or sprinkler
- Sidewalk chalk
- Tires
- Rope or string
- Buckets
- Balls



## INSTRUCTIONS

Use a variety of household items to design an obstacle course in your backyard. The possibilities are endless, but take a look at the photos to get some ideas. Time yourself, friends, and family members as they go through the course. Who can do it the fastest?



# Nighttime Scavenger Hunt

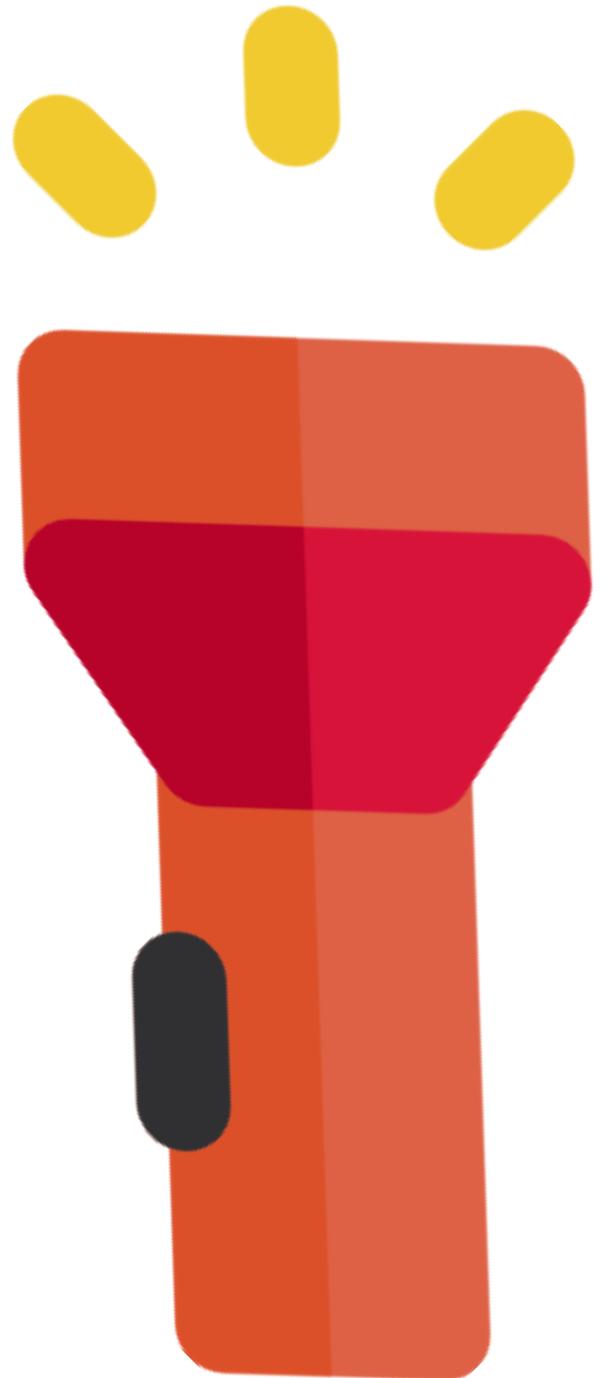
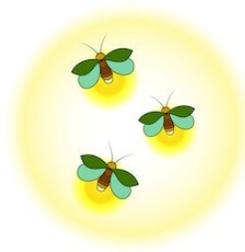
## MATERIALS NEEDED

- Flashlight
- List of items to find

## INSTRUCTIONS

After it grows dark outside, grab a flashlight and go outside. **Look** and **listen** for the following items (or, create your own list):

- Shooting star
- Brake lights on a car or truck
- Lightning bug
- Big dipper constellation
- Frog
- Spider web
- Crickets
- Pinecone
- Slug
- Mosquito
- Owl
- Howling
- Broken street light
- Shadow
- Dandelion
- Water
- Something that glows in the dark



# Build a Mini Pond

## MATERIALS NEEDED

- Plastic bucket or basin (preferably in a dark color to blend in with the ground)
- Garden shovel
- Rocks
- Soil
- Optional: water plants (see below)

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. With the help of an adult, look for an ideal spot for your mini pond. Shade is ideal because it will lessen the chance of algae growth over time and will keep the water cooler in the summer.
2. Dig a hole that will fit your bucket or basin so that the top is even with the ground.
3. Once the hole is big enough, wedge your bucket or basin into it.
4. Take your large rocks and stack them like a staircase on one side of your bucket or basin. Make sure it's as stable as possible. This is important, especially if you're using a deep bucket. The stone staircase will help any animals who may find your pond get in and out safely.
5. Throw a few handfuls of soil in the bottom of your bucket or basin. This will encourage tiny creatures to take up residence there, since it will contain microscopic life and bacteria - the first link in the food chain.
6. Spread dirt around the rim of your pond and add any other rocks or stones around it to create a little "beach" for your pond.
7. Fill your pond with rain water. Set out a bucket during a rainstorm to collect the water. It's best to use rain water because it's not chemically treated.
8. Keep an eye on your mini pond throughout the summer and see if you get any visitors, like insects, beetles, or frogs.



*If you'd like to invest more time and money into your pond, think about adding water plants, like Marsh Marigold or a Yellow Flag Iris.*

# Water Balloon Games

## **MATERIALS NEEDED**

- Water balloons
- Colander
- Shaving cream
- Kiddie pool
- Baseball bat or tennis racket

## **COLANDER HEAD**

### **INSTRUCTIONS**

1. Find a partner and decide who is going to be the “colander head” first. That person will hold the colander on top of their head and face their partner who should be standing a distance away.
2. Their partner will then begin tossing water balloons into the colander. You get one point for each water balloon that doesn't pop. Good luck!



## **WATER BALLOON LITTLE LEAGUE**

### **INSTRUCTIONS**

1. The set up is exactly the same as a baseball game, only instead of a ball, the pitcher will be tossing water balloons . . . and you probably won't need any outfielders.
2. Each “slugger” will get three swings at bat. If they hit the balloon they get to run the bases. Most likely the balloon will pop, so the runner is out if they get tagged by any of the infielders.

## **HIDE-N-SEEK**

### **INSTRUCTIONS**

1. Fill half your balloons with water and the other half with shaving cream.
2. Place all the balloons in a kiddie pool.
3. Each contestant will kneel next to the kiddie pool, blindfolded. They have 1 minute to pop as many balloons as they can.
4. Every shaving cream filled balloon is worth 1 point.

# Pounding Leaf Prints

## MATERIALS NEEDED

- Leaves and flowers
- White paper (watercolor paper works best)
- Hammer or mallet
- Paper towels

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Go on a walk around your neighborhood, your yard, or a local park. Gather leaves and flowers in a range of different colors and textures. Make sure not to pick flowers or leaves from plants that don't belong to you, but anything that's fallen on the ground is fair game!
2. Once home, arrange your piece of paper on the sidewalk, driveway, or any hard surface.
3. Take a look at your leaves and flowers and get rid of any chunky or unnecessary bits. This will better help them lay flat on your paper.
4. Arrange the leaves and flowers on your paper. If you have a lot of items and are worried they might move around, go ahead and tape them down. Just note that any spot where the tape meets the paper will not leave an imprint from your natural elements.
5. Place 2 - 3 layers of paper towels over your design.
6. Grab your hammer and begin pounding your design! Start off with smooth soft blows just to squish your plant in place. Then you can pound a bit harder. Be patient and make sure you're covering every bit of your plants with hard, even swings.
7. Once you feel like you've gotten every bit of your design, peel back part of the towels and check your progress. Continue pounding if you need to.
8. Remove the paper towels and slowly start to peel off your leaves and flowers. If they're sticking, give them some time to dry out and you can simply brush them away.
9. You'll notice that some flowers and leaves look better than others. It all depends on your hammering technique and the amount of pigmentation and liquid in your plant.
10. You may be finished, or you may decide to do another layer with fresh leaves and flowers to create more depth to your picture.

