

## Games & Teamwork

Water Games may easily be suitable for all age groups. With that said, there are a few things to consider to help everyone gain the most out of their aquatic fitness programs.



### **THE YOUNG AND THE YOUNG AT HEART:**

No matter what age group you have in your class there are times when it is fun to incorporate games into the program. Games may help people socialize and feel part of a group. Games can keep everyone moving as well as create a little friendly competition and add lots of enjoyment and laughter to the class. Use games for a small segment of a regular program or for special occasions such as Birthdays, "Olympics", Bring a Friend, or Partner or Fun Day, Valentines (bring your significant other), etc. Be Creative and keep the class moving!

### **GET THE "TALKERS" MOVING:**

One of the most common topics of discussion at workshops is "How can I get people to stop talking". Many people NEED to socialize and interact with other people; especially those people who live alone. This is their time out to meet and make friends in a non-threatening environment. Games can add a social atmosphere to a class especially where you may have people who love to talk. Playing games – especially the "team" type are perfect for this group. They have to move to keep up with the "team" but at the same time they can shout instructions, laugh, cheer, offer words of encouragement AND talk to their friends.

**Here are some other ideas to help the talkers not disrupt your class.**

- Ask them to lead their favourite exercise ( this will help them learn that teaching is anything but easy!)
- Ask them for 10 minutes of time to let you do the talking. You may say something like, "could you show me some quiet in the class for just 10 minutes ....then you can do what you like"... it may seem like an eternity to them but you will have the class for at least 10 minutes

- Ask them to walk and talk . One person moves forward walking while the other moves backwards. That way the person walking forward may look out for the side of the pool or other people in the program.
- Challenge them to walk or move for 10 widths without stopping
- Get them singing ( You simply can't sing and talk!)
- Ask them to share their conversation with everyone as it seems really "interesting"

### **DECIDE IF THE GAMES ARE SUITABLE OR NOT - WHAT AGE GROUP?**

Most of the games used in this workshop are good for any age group but some are more suitable for children – and some are only suitable for people with advanced skills or strength - use your best judgment. You basically have to look at the skill level of your participants. Start slow and easy and work on it. Sometimes everything goes smoothly sometimes not. If you see a game is not working or becomes unsuitable – be honest and just say so. Then carry on with something else. At least you have tried to offer variety in the program and most people will appreciate the effort.



### **WHICH PART OF THE POOL IS MOST SUITABLE FOR GAMES?**

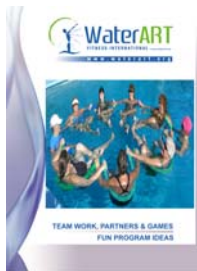
Should games be done in shallow or deep water classes? A lot depends on the skill and fitness level of the participants. Any game involving taking the arms out of the water – such as the ball overhead provides overload in deep water. For this the participants need to be confident in the deep and have fairly strong legs to keep the body up successfully when the arms are out of the water.

### **DO YOU NEED EQUIPMENT?**

Equipment is not always necessary for games but it does add to the fun element as well as providing extra resistance, support, need for co-ordination, agility and balance.

Games without equipment can focus on the properties of water such as resistance, inertia and buoyancy. They can also be used to enhance skills such as speed, posture, coordination and balance.

Games with equipment such as balls; noodles, paddles and flutter boards require more hand-eye coordination, strength, balance, reaction time and team or partner cooperation.



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Want to add variety to your group classes? Stop that talking? Get people moving off "their" spot?. Then throw in some games and group and partner team work. Find that kid in everyone; use the properties of water for functional daily activities while having fun. Introduce one or all - You can use these ideas as a "fun" segment or as a complete class (55 minutes).

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