

Capture the Flag

This is one of the most popular outdoor games for scouts.

Traditional Rules

From the 1947 Scoutmaster's Handbook, pp 447-8:

Space - Large

Type - Strenuous

Teams - Half Troop

Formation - Informal

Equipment - Two Signal Flags

Each team has its own territory in which its Scouts are free to move as they please, but on which opponents enter at their peril. The territories are separated by a boundary line such as a brook or a trail, etc. Any Scout crossing this line may be captured by the enemy.

The teams assemble close together at a starting point near the center of the line, each team in its own territory. On a signal the teams proceed to set their flags at any point within 200 steps of the starting point. The flags must be visible, although it is permissible to place them as inconspicuously as possible.

After three minutes another signal is given for start of game. The object now is to enter the enemy's territory, capture the flag, and carry it across the line into home territory without being caught. Scouts may be posted to guard the flag, but not get nearer than 50 feet to it, unless an enemy Scout goes within the 50-foot circle. They may then follow him.

Any Scout found in the enemy's territory may be captured by grasping him long enough for the captor to say "Caught!" three times. When a Scout is captured he must go with captor to the "guard house" - a tree or rock from the boundary line.

A prisoner may be released by a friend touching him, provided the prisoner at that time is touching the guard house with a hand or a foot, whereupon both return to their own territory. If the rescuer is caught by the guards before he touches the prisoner, he, too, must go to the guard house. A rescuer can rescue only one prisoner at a time.

If the flag is successfully captured, it must be carried across the line into home territory. If the raider is caught before he reaches home, the flag is set up again at the point where it was rescued and the game as before. If neither side captures the enemy's flag within the time agreed up on (say, 1/2 hour) the game is won by the team with the most prisoners.

New Ideas

Hidden Flag

Allow each team to hide their flag out of sight. Before starting the game allow a scout from each team to be shown where the flag is. He must describe accurately, to his team, where the flag is. This requires that the scout be very observant.

Get Out of Jail Free

All team members caught in the jail can be set free when a single teammate touches the jail. BUT, they do not have free passage back to their territory.

Jail Break

If the game begins to stall, allow the judges to yell "Jail Break." At this moment all players in both jails are free to escape.

Orienteering Skills 1

Leaders hide flags and give 2 starting points for each team along a base line. Teams are split in two and sent to the starting points. At the starting point each group is given a compass bearing to their OWN flag. Each group follows its bearing - if they do it correctly the flag will be near where the bearings cross. Once each team locates its flag they will also find a map with bearings to the "enemy flag" which was left there. The game then proceeds as usual. *(Contributed by Mike Mullen, Troop 6, Boston Minuteman Council).*

Orienteering Skills 2

Give both teams maps with starting points marked and bearings, and let them work it out on the map rather than having to actually walk the bearings. *(Contributed by Mike Mullen, Troop 6, Boston Minuteman Council).*

