

# Farmers Shepherding Sheep

*Activity*

**Resource:** PlaySport

**Division(s):** Primary Junior

**TGfU Category:** Zone Games

**Locations:** gymnasium, outdoor space (e.g., field, tarmac)

## Game/Sport Connections

Zone games are activities that involve controlling an object, keeping it away from opponents, and moving it into position to score. Both offensive and defensive players share the same playing area as they work to prevent the other team from scoring. By playing these games, participants develop skills and tactics to play other zone games or games that require the application of similar skills, concepts, and strategies (e.g., soccer, handball, ultimate Frisbee, football, basketball, hockey, goalball, wheelchair basketball, lacrosse).

## Activity Overview

Participants learn about and practise moving around the playing area while tagging others and avoiding being tagged.

# Key Movement Skills, Concepts, and Strategies

Throughout the activity, consider highlighting the following skills, concepts, and strategies for avoiding being tagged or trying to tag others. Note that this list is not exhaustive and further learning opportunities may arise during the task.

## Movement Skills and Concepts

- Locomotion and relationship: travelling safely in the playing area (e.g., avoiding collisions with other participants) while trying to avoid getting tagged by an opponent and/or trying to tag an opponent.
- Spatial awareness: moving appropriately in different directions and pathways in order to be successful (e.g., moving into open space to avoid getting tagged, using speed to move toward other participants to tag one).
- Effort awareness: adjusting speed of movement based on proximity to a tagger (e.g., moving faster as a tagger approaches or slower if a tagger is farther away).

## Movement Strategies

Applying skills and strategies to avoid getting tagged or to tag other participants (e.g., working as a group to cover the space and free group members or tag individuals from the other group).

## Considerations

- Incorporate some or all of the variations listed in the “Variations” section while planning the activity. This will help to best meet the diverse backgrounds, identities, needs, and interests of participants and maximize the fun, inclusion, participation, and success of everyone.
- To elevate participant voice and choice, periodically pause the activity and share the variations with participants. Ask them to determine how they would like to change the activity to maximize the fun, inclusion, meaningful participation, and success for everyone. Encourage participants to add any variations of their own.

## Equipment

- 10 cones or pylons
- 10 – 15 objects to represent clover or grass patches (e.g., beanbags, rubber spots, rubber chickens)
- Pinnies for half of the participants
- Pool noodles for tagging (optional)
- Pylons to mark the boundaries of the playing area

## Safety

- Inspect the equipment and activity area to identify and remove hazards. Check that the activity surface provides sufficient traction.
- Establish the boundaries for the designated playing area at a safe distance from walls and obstacles. Share the boundaries with participants.
- Review the safety rules and activity instructions with participants prior to the activity.
- Instruct participants to be aware of their surroundings, including the locations of other participants during play.

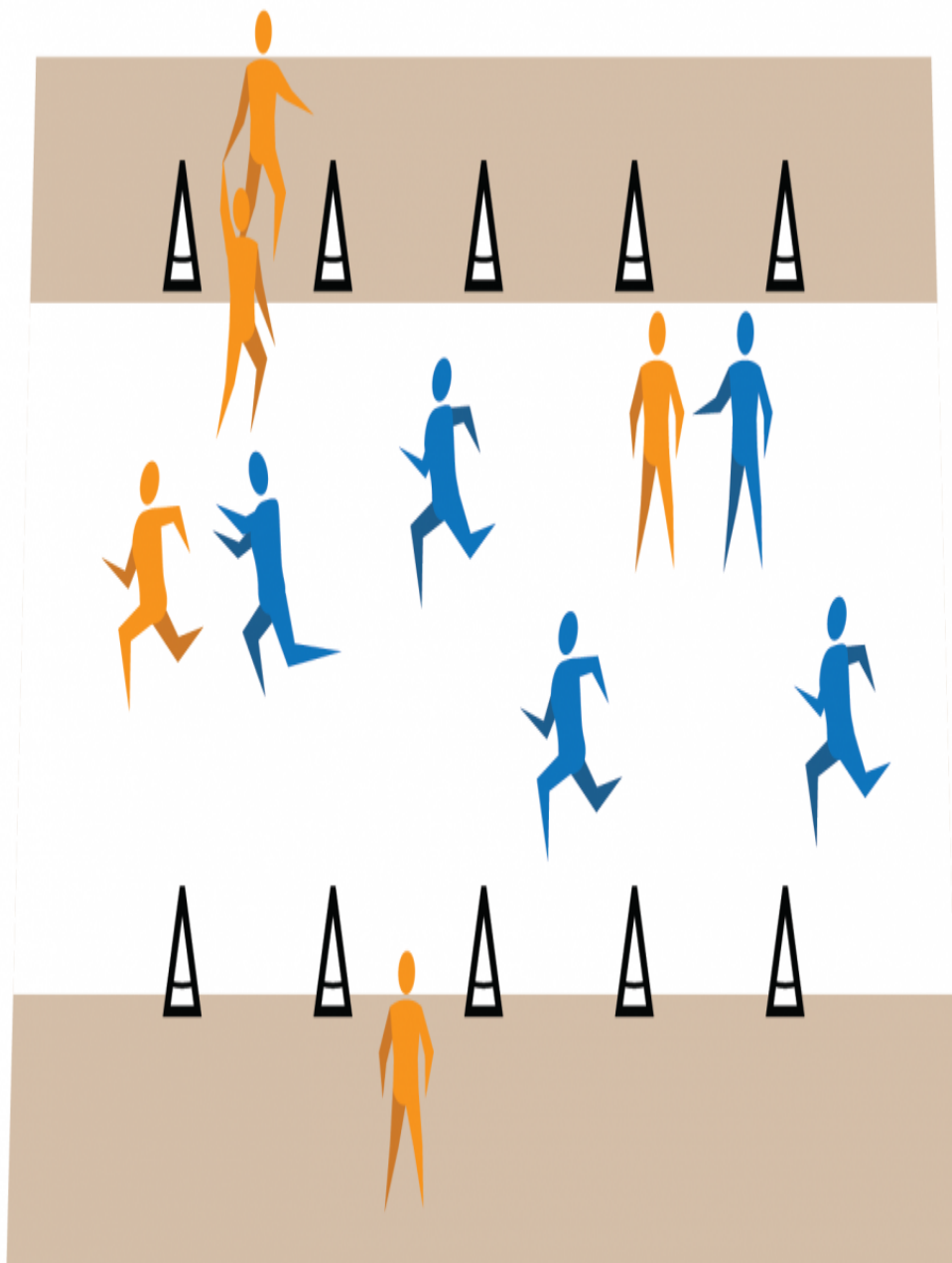
## How to Play

- Divide participants into 2 groups (sheep and farmers). One group wears pinnies.
- Designate the boundaries for the playing area (e.g., lines on the floor/field/pylons). Set up 2 lines of 5 cones or pylons approximately 5 m from each end of the playing area. One line is the farmers' barn and the other line is the sheep pasture. Increase or decrease the size of the playing area based on participants' needs and available space.
- Scatter 10 – 15 objects in the space to represent patches of clover and grass (e.g., beanbags, rubber spots, rubber chickens).
- Have all farmers start in the barn and all sheep start in the pasture.
- At the start of the game, participants leave the barn or pasture and move into the field. Farmers try to tag sheep while sheep try to gather patches of clover and grass to bring back to the barn for the other

sheep. Farmers can choose to use pool noodles to aid in tagging. Remind participants that a tag is a touch on the back, shoulders, or arms. It is not a push, punch, or grab.

- Sheep avoid being tagged by evading the farmers or moving from the field into the pasture. Once tagged, sheep are brought to the barn. Sheep can escape the barn by joining hands, linking arms, or touching feet to form a chain reaching across their field toward their pasture. The chain of sheep is freed when a free sheep touches the hand of the sheep at the end of the chain or any sheep in the line.
- Each participant determines how many times they must be tagged before being caught (e.g., once or twice) to maximize their fun, enjoyment, choice, and personal challenge.
- After a predetermined time, have farmers and sheep switch roles.
- After a period of play, provide participants with some or all of the variations. Ask them to decide how they might change the game to enhance their fun, challenge, and success. Encourage participants to add any variations of their own.
- Consider having groups share their variations and select another variation to try with their group.

## Image: Visual Depiction of the Activity Instructions



### Pause for Learning

Throughout the activity, ask open-ended questions to help participants refine their movement skills, strategies, and tactical solutions. Examples include:

- As a sheep, what strategy do you apply to avoid getting tagged by the farmers?

- As a farmer, what strategy do you apply to tag the greatest number of sheep?
- How does your group of sheep or farmers work together to be successful in the game?
- What is one challenge your group has as the sheep or the farmers during the game?
- How might you overcome this challenge the next time we play the game?
- How do you help your group be successful?
- Which games or sports have you played or know about that use similar rules and strategies to the ones used in this game?

## Variations

- Decrease the number of farmers/sheep.
- Set a time limit for the game, and work as a group to catch the greatest number of sheep or have the greatest number of sheep freed when the time runs out.
- Play with a single tag per participant.
- Occasionally call "Breakout!" so all the captured sheep can break free and join in once again.