

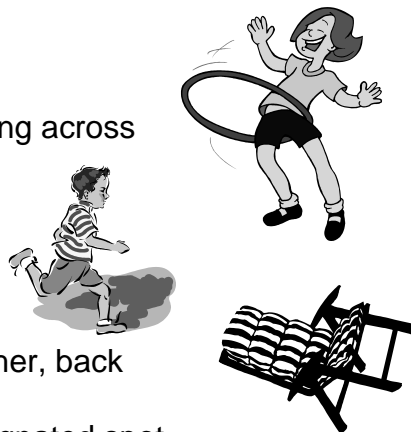
# Design an Obstacle Course

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Using any objects you have handy in your yard, garage or house, design an obstacle course in your backyard. Choose items that encourage different actions like rolling, climbing, jumping, hopping, slithering, squeezing through, or tip-toeing. Decide what order you would like to do the activities in, and then arrange the different items accordingly. Decide specifically what players will do at each station. For example, have the starting point in one corner of the yard. Begin with a basketball and bounce it five times, put the ball down on the ground and run to the next station. There is a lawn chair lying down and you must crawl through the legs, get up and go to next one and so on.

## Examples:

- swing set in yard – swing once and jump off
- section of the lawn – to roll across to the next station
- a long 2" x 4" (5 cm x 10 cm) piece of wood – for tiptoeing across
- large cardboard box – slithering through
- hula hoop – for circling around hips five times
- small step ladder – for climbing and then jumping off
- lawn chair tipped on its side – for crawling through
- basketball – to dribble on the spot ten times
- a long rope – lay it flat and then hop with two feet together, back and forth over top in a zig-zag fashion
- funny hat, big shirt, and long socks – to put on in a designated spot, run to touch the fence, run back to the original spot, remove the clothing and leave them for the next competitor



Once the obstacle course is completely set up, let everyone try it out a few times so they know the order of the activities. Use a watch with a second hand or one with a stopwatch function. Time each participant as they go through the obstacle course and then arrange competitions. The competition can either be between family members or by having each player try to beat their own 'personal best' time. Invite the kids from the neighbourhood over and let them take a turn. After you've used one obstacle course for awhile, create another one to provide another challenge for the competitors. Designing the course is a big part of the fun!

★ "One summer day the kids were getting a little bored. I was busy cleaning the garage. I found a long 2 x 4 in the shed, placed it on the grass and said, 'Okay, who can walk across this like we would on a balance beam?' They both tried and next we laid a lawn chair on its side in order to crawl through. At this point, we were right beside our swing set so I asked the kids what stunt they could do there. One of them replied, 'How about we swing one time and jump off, once we land we'll do a somersault.' The creativity had kicked in! The kids started gathering items from all over the yard and in the garage, ones they could use for some type of action. Our first obstacle course was under construction." ★