

# CARNIVAL GAMES

1. Each team should have a carnival game at their camp site.
2. Teams can choose to use the games as a fund raiser or not.
3. Each team should try to pick a different carnival game.
4. Teams should choose games that are family friendly and kid safe.

## Balloon Pop / Balloon Piñata

## Bank a Shot / Flukie Ball

## Bean Bag Toss

## Baseball Toss

Make a target out of plywood or foamcore (available at art supply stores) for baseballs. Paint the board with a fun sports design and cut out holes large enough for the baseballs to go through. Each player gets to throw three balls at the target.

## Basketball

We have used both the standard size basketball goal and kid-sized goals. Players get three tries to make a basket. Always a long line for this!

## Beat the Dealer

This is basically blackjack for kids. It's more fun with giant playing cards, but regular cards work fine too. Just as with blackjack, the player tries to beat the dealer's hand without going over 21.

## Brain Teasers

We had a table where parents used the Brain Quest cards and asked grade-appropriate questions.

## Break-a-Plate

Set up specially made carnival break-a-plates in front of a background. Player throws three rubber baseballs to try and break a plate.

### *Variation:*

**Picnic Plates:** Set up the game with a picnic-patterned tablecloth as a background. Don't forget to add some plastic ants for atmosphere.

## Bumper Cars

Construct a short straight "track" that a small car or truck can run freely up and down. We've found the cars available at Chevron gas stations work very well for this game and they come in lots of great designs, including a school bus.

### *Variations:*

**Monster Truck Rally:** Use big-tired monster trucks as your vehicles.

**Beetle Bump:** Use Volkswagon Beetles as your vehicles.

## Bushel Basket Toss

Copied from <http://schoolcarnivals.com/Games/alphabetical.htm>

# CARNIVAL GAMES

Nail 1-3 large bushel baskets onto a board. Angle the board to tilt the baskets about 45 degrees. Players try to toss a softball into the basket so it does not bounce out. Harder than it sounds!

## Cake (or Cookie, Candy, Pie) Walk

Players walk in a circle of numbered squares while music plays. When the music stops, the operator chooses the winning numbers from a hat. Players standing on a winning number get a prize.

Home-made goods can be used, otherwise use prizes like Hostess Cupcakes, Twinkies, Fruit Pies, or packaged cookies. Often local grocery stores will donate goods, or check with local fast-food outlets for gift certificates for ice cream cones, cookies, etc.

## Can Knockdown

Stack cans in a pyramid. Each player gets to throw one to three balls at the cans. You can use tennis balls, rubber baseballs, or other types of balls for this game. You can decide if they must knock down all or just a few cans to win a prize.

## Duck-o-War

You have two players at either end of a small pool, long tub, or a wallpapering tray. Each player has a squirt gun and a floating duck is set in the center of the pool. The challengers try to get the duck to the opposite side of the pool to win.

## Duck Pond

The player selects a duck from the wading pool "pond," the number on the bottom of the duck determines the prize. The player can just pick the duck up or you can use a net to scoop it up.

### *Variations:*

**Fish Pond:** Instead of ducks, use plastic fish with a small metal washer attached. The player uses a fishing pole with a magnet on the end to "catch" their numbered fish. You could mix a few plastic sharks and/or octopuses in with the fish for fun.

**Snake Pit:** Instead of ducks, use small vinyl snakes. The player selects a snake that has a number on the bottom.

## Feed the Animal

Paint a board with a picture of an animal. Leave a hole for the "food" to be thrown into. Player gets three tries to throw the "food" into the hole. To make the game harder, have the player use a slingshot to toss the food.

### *Variations:*

**Hungry Elephant:** Paint an elephant on your backboard and have the players throw peanuts into the elephant's trunk. For more fun, make a trunk out of a curved tube like a section of dryer vent or PVC pipe and have that extend out from your backboard.

**Monkey Business:** Paint a monkey on your backboard and have the players throw plastic bananas into the monkey's mouth or hand.

**Shark Bait:** Paint a shark on your backboard and have the players throw plastic fish into the shark's mouth. If you can make or borrow one, it would be fun to have the player stand on a surfboard.

## Football Toss

Copied from <http://schoolcarnivals.com/Games/alphabetical.htm>

# CARNIVAL GAMES

Make a target out of plywood or foamcore (available at art supply stores) for small footballs. Paint the board with a fun sports design and cut out holes large enough for the footballs to go through. Each player gets to throw three footballs at the target.

## FRISBEE Throw

Make a target out of plywood or foamcore (available at art supply stores) for Frisbees. Paint the board with a fun design and cut out holes large enough for the Frisbees to go through. Each player gets to throw three Frisbees at the target. It's helpful to have at least two sets of Frisbees on hand so one helper can chase Frisbees while the other helper works with the next person in line.

### *Variations:*

**UFO Throw:** Paint a solar system scene on plywood as the target. Make UFO shape cutouts big enough to let the Frisbee pass through. To slow down the Frisbee, you can put a sheet behind the cutouts.

**Earth Invasion:** Cover a hula hoop with blue paper and then cut out and glue on (or paint on) green "continent" shapes. Player tries to land their Frisbee on the "earth." You can decorate the Frisbees to look like UFOs: Glue an inverted disposable clear plastic cup to the top, with or without an alien inside.

## Funny Photos

Paint foam core or plywood with funny bodies (circus performers, aliens, farmers, etc.) cut out holes for faces. Take Polaroid or digital pictures.

## Goldfish Toss

Set up a row of empty goldfish bowls and let the player try to toss a ping pong ball into a bowl. The prize can be a living goldfish (in a plastic bag), available for very little cost from your local pet store. You might try to earn a little extra by selling inexpensive goldfish bowls to the winners.

## Guess How Many

Fill a large clear jar with jelly beans, buttons, or other small colorful objects. Players write their guess as to how many objects are in the jar on a slip of paper. At the end of the carnival or at a set time, announce the winner and award a large prize.

## Hair Salon

The colored hair spray booth is always very busy at our carnival. The kids love to get streaks of purple, green, etc. Just be careful on very blond or colored hair, it may not wash out very well!

## High Striker

This is "official" carnival name for the game where you try to ring the bell by striking a platform with a mallet. They are widely available as rentals. Ask the rental company if they have versions available for children.

### *Variations:*

**World's Strongest Human:** Use a circus-strongman theme.

**Rocket Launch:** Use a space rocket theme.

# CARNIVAL GAMES

## Hockey

Use a kids hockey set. Mark out numbers with tape (or use chalk outside) that correspond to prizes. The player hits the puck with the stick and gets a prize corresponding to the number the puck lands on.

### *Variation:*

**Goal:** Have the players aim for a hole cut in a piece of foamcore or plywood. They get three chances to get the puck through the hole. Paint the target to look like a goalie guarding the net.

## Hoopla

Player throws a hoop to try and ring a prize and the Hoopla stand. A Hoopla stand is basically a box with a dowel sticking out of the top on which a prize is attached. The hoop must be completely around the prize and the stand to win. To make the game harder, use a smaller hoop. To make it easier, use a large hoop such as a hula hoop.

### *Variations:*

**Ring Around Saturn:** Use a ball as the prize. Space-theme balls are available, or use a basketball or beach ball.

**Teddy Bear Toss:** Use a stuffed teddy bear as the prize.

## Lollipop Tree

You set up a wood or cardboard "tree" with lots of lollipops on it. This doesn't have to be fancy, just a board with holes in it will work. The lollipops are marked on the stick end with a color that corresponds to a prize or number of tickets the player will win. The player chooses a lollipop and wins that prize, plus gets to keep the lollipop.

## Lucky Lei

The player chooses a lei that might glow as a "winner" when held next to a black light. The winning leis have been sprayed with an invisible paint that is only visible under black light. The player takes their lei to an area where you have set up a black light to see if it is a winner. You can find glow in the dark spray paint at craft stores or online.

## Lucky Key

Player selects a key from a large pile of keys and tries to unlock the "treasure" chest. Only a few keys will open the lock and get a prize.

## Milk Bottle Knockdown

Stack six wood or aluminum milk bottles in a pyramid. Each player gets to throw one to three rubber baseballs at the bottles. You can decide if they must knock down all or just a few bottles to win a prize.

## Milk Can Toss

Player tries to throw a baseball into a large metal milk can. Harder than it sounds!

## Mini-Golf

# CARNIVAL GAMES

Whether it's a single hole or a 9-hole course, miniature golf is always fun. Someone in your organization may have (or have access to through their company) a mini-golf set up. They are also available for rent from party suppliers (check the Yellow Pages)

## Paratrooper Landing

Player throws a figure with attached parachute at prizes scattered on the floor. Player gets the prize they land nearest to. This is a very simple game to set up.

## Penny Pitch

Player throws a penny at targets on a floor or table. You can award tickets or prizes for landing on a target or on a specific spot on a target. One year we used funny photos of the teachers as targets.

## Pick My Pocket

Volunteers wear colorful aprons with lots of pockets and circulate throughout the carnival. Each pocket holds a different prize. Player gets to choose the pocket.

## Pie Throwing

Try to find some good sports among your teachers or principals who will act as targets for shaving cream pies.

### *Variation:*

**Blue Ribbon Pies:** Add a country fair atmosphere to the booth with real (or construction paper) prize ribbons as decorations.

## Ping Pong Ball Toss

Use goldfish bowls as the targets. Each player gets to throw three ping pong balls. You can color-code the bowls to prizes or use 1-3 balls in to determine the prize. It's helpful to have at least two sets of balls on hand so one helper can chase balls while the other helper works with the next person in line.

### *Variations:*

**Floating Bowls:** Use bowls on floating rings as the targets. These are available from carnival suppliers. A little petroleum jelly in the bowl makes the ball stay in easier.

**Cupcake Pans:** Use cupcake pans as the targets. Color the bottom of each pan to determine the prize.

## Pirate's Chest

We decorated the booth to look like a pirate's cave with a large treasure chest. In the chest were little boxes in the shape of treasure chests. We wrote a number inside each little box (or you can write a number on a slip of paper). The player selected a box and received the prize corresponding to the number. Prizes ranged from eye patches and cardboard pirate hats to plush parrots and inflatable pirates. It was important to collect the used boxes and set them aside as we had a set amount of prizes corresponding to each number.

## Plinko

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The player lays each a chip flat against the top of the board and releases it. As the chip falls, it bounces throughout a matrix of pegs until it lands at the bottom of the board. The player wins the prize that corresponds with the slot in which the chip lands.

## Put Up the Pickles

Player tries to toss plastic pickles into glass jars. You could color-code the jars to determine the prize, or just give different prizes for getting one, two, or three pickles in.

## Quarter Drop

Set up an aquarium with a small container on the bottom (a treasure chest would be fun). Fill the aquarium with water and add decorations if desired. The player drops a quarter or other small object (marbles would also work) and tries to land it in the container.

## Ring Toss

Player tries to toss wood, plastic, or rope rings over a target.

### *Variations:*

**On the Farm Ring Toss:** Use farm animals as the targets. The bendy animals on a ring toss frame would work great here.

**Floating Ring Toss:** Use a floating target to add a bit of splash to the game.

**Flamingo Ring Toss:** Use plastic lawn ornament flamingos as the targets. Player tries to toss the ring around the flamingo's neck.

**Pop Bottle Ring Toss:** This is always a very popular game at our carnival. We use 2-liter bottles of pop (donated) as the targets. Rings made from rope work much better than wood or plastic rings for this game as they don't bounce off as much. I have also seen this game done with cans of pop (set up on shoe boxes) and wooden rings.

## Soccer Kick

Make a target out of plywood for soccer balls (or use a portable goal). Paint the board with a fun sports design and cut out holes large enough for the soccer ball to go through. Each player gets to kick three balls at the target.

## Sponge Toss

A volunteer stands behind a backboard with only their face showing through a hole. The player gets three tries to hit them in the face with a wet sponge. Put a plastic tarp in front of the backboard to keep the sponges clean. Provide goggles and maybe a poncho to your brave volunteer. You can even have two lines, one to throw sponges and one to be the target!

With the popularity of SpongeBob Square pants, this could be a big hit.

## Surprise Bag / Grab Bag

Put a small prizes in bags, player gets to choose one bag. This could easily be done in a treasure chest theme.

## Surprise Wall

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One of our parents built a plywood wall (about 5' tall and 4' wide) with six small doors. The player opens a door and gets the prize that has been set on a ledge behind the door. For an extra surprise, we have the operator (behind the wall) spray Silly String at some players. We watch out for little ones that might be scared by the spray. The wall can be painted to match the theme of your carnival. If you're not handy with a paintbrush, you can decoupage magazine pictures or large stickers to the wall.

## Target Knock Down

The basic idea is to have the player throw beanbags at targets that are hinged to fold down when they are hit. We found that a little Velcro keeps the target from bouncing back up too quickly.

### *Variations:*

**Shoo the Crows:** Use crows sitting on a fence as the target. Make beanbags in the shape of boots. Yowling cats would work well on a fence (or garbage can) too.

**Snowball Toss:** Use snowmen or penguins on a snow bank as the target. Make beanbags in the shape of snowballs.

## Tattoo Parlor

Temporary tattoos are inexpensive and quick to apply. You can set it up next to the face painting and hair spray for a whole "beauty parlor" effect.

## Tic Tac Toe

This can be played with bean bags or plastic balls. For the bean bag version, just mark out the lines on the floor or a mat. For the ball version, make or buy a box with nine holes for the balls to be tossed into. Three in a row wins!

## Wheel of Fortune

There are some beautiful wheels available ready-made (they can be expensive!).

### *Variations:*

**Variations on the "lay down sheet" version:** The lay down sheet and wheel can have colors, professional sports team logos, race horse silk colors, shapes (stars, circles, etc.), etc. As long as the wheel and the sheet have matching items, it's up to your imagination!

**Variations on the "instant prize" version:** Again, the wheel can have any symbols, as long as each symbol clearly represents a specific prize. Each space on the wheel does not have to be the same size, a bigger prize could have a smaller space on the wheel. You can even put a sample of the prize directly on the space on the wheel, if you land on that space you see the prize you will get.