

GA GA BALL

EQUIPMENT: 6-8 Benches; Utility ball

PARTICIPANTS: Depends on size of bench area or “Pit Area” (10-25players).

OBJECT OF THE GAME: The game of gaga is usually played in an octagonal-shaped “pit.” It combines the motor skills of dodging, striking, running and jumping. The object of the game is to hit opponents with a ball below the waist while avoiding being hit.

HISTORY: In the 1950’s, the game was believed to have been invented by John Crosley at his summer camp and introduced in Israel when Israeli counsellors from Crosley’s camp returned home. The Israeli translation for “hit” is “gaga”.



RULES:

1. **Start the game** by allowing the ball to bounce 3 times, chanting “Ga Ga Ball” with each bounce.
2. **Ways to be eliminated:**
 - a. A player leaves the gaga pit if they are hit from the waist down (for primary/junior); Intermediate students, I allow any part of the body to be hit except from the shoulder to hand.
 - b. A player leaves the gaga pit if they hit the ball over the “pit wall” (benches) without hitting a player on the way out.
 - c. A player leaves the gaga pit if players touches the ball two times in a row (gives a variety of players a change to hit/touch the ball).
 - d. If the ball leaves the gaga pit, the last player to touch it is out and must leave the gaga pit. If no one touches the ball, the player who hit the ball out exits the gaga pit.
3. **Hitting the ball:** You can hit the ball with two hands or one hand (fist or open hand).

4. The **game is over** when there is one player remaining. If the game is taking an extended period of time, a 10-second countdown is used, and there are multiple winners! I prefer multiple winners!

MODIFICATIONS:

- a. Primary Students, I give a “free life” before being eliminated.
- b. Players can hit the ball repeatedly, provided that between hits they rebound it off the wall.
- c. Have students strike the ball only with one hand (open or closed).

REFEREE: The game is ‘self-referred’ but can have players someone who left the gaga pit become a ref and assist with the game. The can also throw the ball into the gaga pit if it exits the playing area. They toss the ball back into the gaga pit with back spit and the players chant “ga ga ball”.

Adapted from <http://www.northstarpubs.com/articles/cb/going-gaga-over-gaga-ball>

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