

# Teambuilding activities



**Title of activity:** BIRTHDAY SHUFFLE

**Category:** “Hurry up and Wait”, Teamwork, non-verbal communication

**Submitted by:** Capt Aaron Johnsen (USMC), Volunteer to the National HQs staff

**Props required:** None

**Directions:**

Ask the participants to line up in order by birthday month without talking. You can also think up some sequential categories on your own such as lining up by height, by number of siblings, by rank, by shoe size, etc. Remember, no talking.

**Title of activity:** PAPER-ROCK-SCISSORS CHALLENGE

**Category:** “Hurry up and Wait”, Low organized, mixed relay, (no props), can be started and stopped quickly

**Submitted by:** Chester the puppy bulldog, Official Mascot of the Young Marines

**Props required:** None

**Directions:**

Participants begin this game by challenging another person to a game of Paper-Rock-Scissors. Participants then play one game, or two out of three depending on the group and time constraints. The loser of the game will then get behind the winner, and make a train by holding on to the winner’s shoulders. They will then find another game of Paper-Rock-Scissors in the same fashion as before, play the game and the losing team will hook onto the winner’s train. The process will continue until there is two long lines of teams and the final round of Paper-Rock-Scissors will be played to determine the winning team.

**Title of activity:**                   **BALLOON TROLLEYS**

**Category:**                       Teamwork, Hurry up and Wait, Communication

**Submitted by:**                   Capt Aaron Johnsen (USMC), Volunteer to the National HQs staff

**Props required:**               **Balloons**

**Directions:**

Blow up enough balloons so that you have one to fit between every person when they stand in a single file line. For example, if X is a person and O is a balloon, the line would look like this: XOXOXOXOXO

The challenge is to move the entire group across an area, partially obstructed with various items. For example, you could place some of these items on the ground: tires, large pieces of wood, a rolled up wrestling mat. You can increase the difficulty by prohibiting people from hugging the players in front of them. The players will have to move simultaneously but without being linked together physically.

Rules:

A balloon touching the ground could result in:

- The entire group having to start again
- The two people who dropped the balloon having to go to the front or the end of the line and replace the balloons
- The group having to figure out a method to pick up the balloon and re-insert it where it was without losing any other balloons

**Title of activity:**                    **BRIDGE ON THE RIVER KWAI**

**Submitted by:**                    Stacey Rosborough, Adult Volunteer

**Name of YM unit:**                    Space Coast Young Marines (FL)

**Props required:**                    **Use your imagination**

**Directions:**

You have 2 teams competing against each other on the same exact course, trying to get done first.

We make it a straight 25 yard course. Give them "pieces of the bridge" at the start line, each team has the same exact bridge pieces, and they have to build a bridge as they go and all their team mates have to cross with them at the same time. If someone touches the grass or falls into the "river", everyone on the team has to start over. They pass the bridge pieces ahead as they move along.

To make it more interesting they have to carry an ammo can with them and a sand bag and also pass the bridge pieces and stay on the bridge at the same time. This involves team work.

During the summer we also make it fun by throwing water balloons at them. If someone gets hit with the water balloon, there is a stretcher on the other side of the river waiting. They have to put their wounded on the stretcher and run 25 yards to the finish.

For the bridge pieces I use hula hoops, concrete blocks, stepping stones, rubber mats, 4x4's, or 2x4's, partial wood pallets, ammo cans with bricks in them and sand bags. Whatever is lying around the house.

**Title of activity:**                    **BACK TO BACK – SIT DOWN AND STAND UP**

**Category:**                            Team Building, Cooperation

**Submitted by:**                    Stephanie Guiles, Unit Adjutant

**Name of YM unit:**                Temecula Valley Young Marines (CA)

**Props required:**                 **None**

**Directions:** Have two Young Marines of compatible sizes sit back to back on the ground with their elbows locked together. The object is for both Young Marines to stand up without the use of their hands. After the Young Marines have stood up take two more Young Marines and make a foursome and repeat the activity. Continue building the circle two at a time to make the circle larger.

**Title of activity:**                    **BALANCING FIRE TEAMS**

**Category:**                            Leadership Decisions & Teamwork

**Submitted by:**                    Michael Guiles, Unit Commander

**Name of YM unit:**                Temecula Valley Young Marines (CA)

**Props required:**                 (2) 10' 2x8 planks taped together, Cinder block, Chalk or tape

**Directions:** This activity takes about 5 to 10 minutes to setup and 15-20 to complete. The objective in this lesson is to teach the Leader how to maintain control and make their own decisions. When the setup is complete or when the teams cross their lines there is no more talking except for the Leader.

Demonstrate by standing in the middle of the plank to the Young Marines how a slight shift in weight can cause a see-saw effect and throw everyone off. Make a V on the ground and have the teams mount and dismount at that point. The teams must work together and listen to the leader in order to keep their plank from touching the ground.

The Leader is the first one on the beam, he or she must maintain balance of the beam and directing their teams to either side of the beam (**\*\*\*hint the teams must mount and dismount the beam together using team work in order to maintain balance\*\*\***). Each team mounts in the "V" taped or chalked out or in the center of the cinder block. Both teams must be on the planks for 10 seconds before they can dismount. The task is complete when both teams have dismounted. The objective is complete when the team leader has gotten all of their Young Marines are off the planks.

To make the objective more interesting add an egg or water balloon under each end of the plank and ask for no more than one break or none at all.

**Title of activity:** BALLOON CHALLENGE

**Category:** Team Building, Hand and Eye Coordination

**Submitted by:** Michael Guiles, Unit Commander

**Name of YM unit:** Temecula Valley Young Marines (CA)

**Props required:** 1 Bag of Large Balloons

**Directions:** This activity can be done anywhere and at anytime to break the ice or just keep busy. Break people into teams of (3) try to make sure the circles are not larger than 12 Young Marines. Give each team a different color Balloon. Tell everyone that they must keep their balloon in the air without touching the ground.

Set up a circle with no more than 12 Young Marines in it pair everyone up with the team mates. Give each team a different color Balloon. Give the instructions that each team must keep their balloon in the air without letting it touch the ground. The Balloons must be large so they bounce better and higher. Only one Young Marine for each team can touch their balloon. If team drops their balloon they must leave the circle while the others keep going until one team is left. Did I mention that the circles start out close together and then get larger and larger? The Balloon cannot stop, pop or touch the ground and only the person who hit the balloon can go into the middle of the circle to save it once.

Variations can include adding a small amount of water into each balloon they are harder to control.

**Title of activity:** BLIND NAVIGATION

**Submitted by:** Michael Guiles, Unit Commander

**Name of YM unit:** Temecula Valley Young Marines (CA)

**Props required:** Blindfolds, Pencil Paper, (2) two-way Radios

**Objective:** Trust in one another and Leadership control

**Directions:**

In this leadership control scenario the Leader must pick three Young Marines: a radioman, a navigator and a point man. The Radioman will sit outside of the challenge area with a map (turned upside down) a pencil and a radio. All of the Young Marines will be inside of the course area and blindfolded and in a single file line. The Navigator will have a radio to communicate with the Radio man on the outside. The Young Marines will be blindfolded and line up single file with a hand on each others left shoulder.

**(BLIND NAVIGATION continued)**

The point man will be up front to steer the group of Young Marines. The leader will be the second Young Marine the navigator will be the last Young Marine.

The Radioman will read the map and mark off the position of the Young Marines inside the course area. It is this Young Marines responsibility to get the group to their objective and back again.

The navigator will be at the rear of the group they will talk to the radioman and tell the Young Marine in front of them where to go. The Young Marines must talk quietly as they pass the information to each other up to the Point man. The Point man will guide the group through the course by the directions relayed up from the Navigator. The Leader must keep control of the noise, silliness, and reliability of the information passed up from the Navigator.

The ultimate objective is to make it to the designated area on the map and back again without losing anyone or breaking apart their formation. The Formation must make it to the target area and the leader must then switch everyone (except the Radioman around). The Formation must then make it back to the starting point. There is a time limit and the formation must all make it back if a Young Marine stops without communicating they will break the formation apart and never find each other to link back up.

<b><u>Title of activity:</u></b>	<b>BRIGDE OVER TROUBLE WATERS</b>
<b><u>Category:</u></b>	Team Building, Decision Making, Trust
<b><u>Submitted by:</u></b>	Michael Guiles, Unit Commander
<b><u>Name of YM unit:</u></b>	Temecula Valley Young Marines (CA)
<b><u>Props required:</u></b>	<b>(1) 6 foot 2X6's, (6) pallets Barrels or Hay Bales, Chalked string,</b>
<b><u>Objective:</u></b>	Team Work
<b><u>Directions:</u></b>	

Set up your course using Hay Bales, Pallets or Barrels (50 gallon Drums). Or a combination of all three objects can be used. Have the team start at one end using 1 2X6 with a rope at each end. The Young Marines must navigate through the maze and reach the end by placing their board on each object and walking across the board to the other side.

**(BRIGDE OVER TROUBLE WATERS continued)**

The Young Marines start at a designated spot once the first person touches the first objective no one can go back. The team leader must choose their Young Marines wisely no more than four Young Marines can be on an object at a time. The Board must be picked up with the rope and maneuvered into place on the next object the Young Marines must get everyone across and use the rope to maneuver the board to the next object. The only thing that can touch the ground is the rope. If a Young Marine touches the ground with a foot or hand - their leg or arm is paralyzed. This presents a problem for the team leader to work out, if both feet and hands touch the ground the Young Marine is eliminated form the event. The goal is to get everyone working together while they figure out which way to go. If the course is set up correctly the Young Marines will end up in a dead end in which the object is to far for them to place the board. They must then backtrack and find the right route to the end of the objective.

**Variations can include:** A blindfolded Young Marines that need to be guided from one objective to another. Securing an egg at the other end and bringing it back to the beginning without dropping it. Time qualifications can be used with the fastest team wining.

**Safety Warning:** Please ensure a safety person walks with the Young Marines at all times in case someone falls. If the objective is more than six feet off of the ground you **must** use safety helmets.

<b><u>Title of activity:</u></b>	<b>HARD DECISIONS</b>
<b><u>Category:</u></b>	Team Building, Knowledge, team work, Decision making, patience
<b><u>Submitted by:</u></b>	Michael Guiles, Unit Commander
<b><u>Name of YM unit:</u></b>	Temecula Valley Young Marines (CA)
<b><u>Props required:</u></b>	<b>(4) 2x6's, 1 bucket, String, 1 Egg, 12 cinder blocks, stopwatch, water and mud</b>

**Directions:** The team leader must get the container carrying the only vaccine to a potent virus back across the Canyon without breaking the inner container. All of the boards must be used and they must make fast decisions as they cinder blocks move every 60 seconds. The team leader is given the order that they must get their team over the valley of toxic sludge and back again with the vaccine for the dreaded ooggie-boogie disease. As the team leader gets ready to go one of the adult staff members will have a stop watch every 60 seconds the other Adult staff must move the cinder blocks.

Using the 2x6's The Team leader must move from the staging area to the containment area with their Young Marines. If anyone touches the toxic muck (mud) they are "contaminated" and cannot go back to the staging area they must be left at the containment area.

**(HARD DECISIONS continued)**

If a Young Marine is on a cinder block and the other cinder blocks are moved so as to leave them stranded, they are left there as the team continues on. If a board touches the toxic muck the board cannot be used. You cannot jump from cinder block to cinder block.

Once at the containment area the Team leader can pick up a new board, now the journey back to the staging area begins. The team leader must leave anyone who touched the toxic muck behind. The Team leader can pick up any stranded Young Marines on the way back if they can. They must be very careful because the vaccine is inside an egg that has to be suspended over a special solution (water) if the container is dropped, moved to fast or jarred heavily the string may break or swing violently breaking the inner container (egg). The team only completes its mission if the vaccine makes and 50% of the team makes it back to the staging area.

<b><u>Title of activity:</u></b>	<b>HOOLA HOOP CIRCLE</b>
<b><u>Category:</u></b>	Team Building, Communication
<b><u>Submitted by:</u></b>	Stephanie Guiles, Unit Adjutant
<b><u>Name of YM unit:</u></b>	Temecula Valley Young Marines (CA)
<b><u>Props required:</u></b>	<b>One Hoola Hoop</b>

**Directions:** Have Young Marines stand in a double arms circle with everyone holding hands. Start with the Hoola Hoop between 2 Young Marines, hanging on their arms. Pass the Hoola Hoop around the circle without letting go of their hands. Young Marines must put their body through the Hoola Hoop and then pass it along to the next Young Marine. The object is to get the Hoola Hoop around the circle and back to where it started from without letting go of their hands. (**\*Note the Hoola Hoop moves not the circle**). **Variations:** Use two Hoola Hoops with Young Marines broken into teams and race against each other. Hoola Hoops go around the circle and the first team to get their Hoola Hoop around the circle and back again wins.

**Title of activity:** HUMAN KNOT

**Category:** Team Building, Communication

**Submitted by:** Stephanie Guiles, Unit Adjutant

**Name of YM unit:** Temecula Valley Young Marines (CA)

**Directions:** Have Young Marines stand in a tight circle shoulder to shoulder, everyone puts in their right hand first and grabs someone else's hand in the circle and holds on (like shaking hands). Once everyone has someone else's hand, do the same thing with the left hand. However, you cannot hold the same persons hand. The object is to untangle or untie everyone and form a large circle. Hands may not come undone or un-grip to untie, but you can re-grip your hands to keep from getting totally twisted.

If you have an odd number of Young Marines have one person be the leader and no one else can talk. It is the leader's responsibility to tell everyone how to untie the knot and give directions.

**Title of activity:** PLUTONIUM SHUFFLE

**Category:** Leadership, Teamwork, Concentration, Self control

**Submitted by:** Michael Guiles, Unit Commander

**Name of YM unit:** Temecula Valley Young Marines (CA)

**Props required:** (13) 12 foot ropes, (1) Large empty Can, (2) medium size cans, (1) bungee cord, chalk or tape

**Directions:** Your Young Marine squad leader must keep control of their squad and make decisions while at the same time listening to ideas others have that may work.

A Nuclear device has been found and the only way to deactivate it is to pour the radio isotopes from the large container into the smaller containers. The Squad leader must have their Young Marines slip their ropes under the bungee cord so that they have two ends in their hands. Every Young Marine except the leader will be tied in.

The team must figure out how to lift the full large can of water together without spilling it and then moving it to the first chalk circle. Once at the circle the Young Marines must pour half of the contents in the large can into the medium can without dumping the all of the water out of the large can.

**(PLUTONIUM SHUFFLE continued)**

Once the first can is filled the Young Marines must move together to the second circle and do the same thing as in the first circle. To finish the objective the Young Marines must move together back the to the starting point.

Variations could include a time limit or spill amount.

<b><u>Title of activity:</u></b>	<b>SPIDER WEB</b>
<b><u>Category:</u></b>	Team Building
<b><u>Submitted by:</u></b>	Joshua Smith, Adult Instructor
<b><u>Name of YM unit:</u></b>	Temecula Valley Young Marines (CA)
<b><u>Props required:</u></b>	<b>chalked string (amount depends on size of web), 4 or more posts (more is better), trees also work if they are close together (3 to 6 feet), items that are easy to pick up one handed (as many as you want), blind fold.</b>

**Directions:** Place the posts in the ground at a reasonable distance around 4 or 5 feet apart. Take the chalked string and wrap it around as many post as you can (trees can also be used if they are reasonable close together). As you are wrapping the string you should over lap it and wrap the string around it self so that it interweaves together making what looks like random lines of string. Try to make the string cross at crawling level, ducking level crouching level, and standing level. You can add as much string as you like, the more string the harder the course gets. Either put a few items inside the course that need to be picked up before exiting the course or you can make the course longer so that they simply make their way from beginning to end.

Challenge: You need two people, one person to go through the web and another to lead them through. Put the blindfold of the person who will be going through the course. Start the person who will be going through the course on one side of the web. The person who is not blindfolded gives commands to the blindfolded person inside the course telling them to crouch, squat, crawl, step over, or kneel under the string, while directing them either to the end of the course or the items that need to be gathered. If the person inside the web touches the string they fail. Or you can make it so that the course is timed and each time they hit the string a certain amount of time is added so that if no one can finish the course without hitting the string it can still be used.

<b><u>Title of activity:</u></b>	<b>TIMING IS EVERYTHING</b>
<b><u>Category:</u></b>	Team Building
<b><u>Submitted by:</u></b>	Michael Guiles, Unit Commander
<b><u>Name of YM unit:</u></b>	Temecula Valley Young Marines (CA)
<b><u>Props required:</u></b>	<b>(4) 2x6's, (6) 2'x2'x2' wooden boxes, (1) 4'x4'x2 wooden box, (1) Left to Right timed Sprinkler, a hose and water hook up and warm weather.</b>

**Directions:** Make sure the 2x6's are sanded down and the edges are rounded this will help prevent splinters. Set the 2x2x2 wooden boxes in line with (3) boxes in the left side and (3) on the right side. Set the sprinkler in the middle of the course. Put the 4x4x2 box at the top of the course. Young Marines must go from the left side to the right side using only the 2x6's.

The Young Marines are set-up into two teams- one on the left, and one on the right side of the course. The leader must make the decisions on when to go, who to send and how many people on the team will participate. The more Young Marines the less likely you are to win (there can be no less than four Young Marines on either side). When the Young Marines start they must time their advance from the sprinklers movements if they are hit by the sprinkler they are caught in an acid bath and can no longer continue. As the Young Marines progress through their courses they will get to the 4x4x2 box this is a safe zone.

The Young Marines on the right side can only use one side of the box while the left side uses the other. The team that makes it from one side to the other with the fastest time and no less than 4 Young Marines wins. There are some rules though:

- Only one Young Marine can be on a box at a time.
- No more than two Young Marines can be on a 2x6 (weight dependant Adults must determine this).
- You have two move using both 2x6's and they cannot touch the ground.
- If you lose a 2x6 you can only use one if you loose both you are done.
- Take Caution the boards will be slippery when wet so crawling on your knees is advised.
- There is no pushing aloud in the safe zone, if no one listens to the leader then that team fails.

**Variations:** Have two teams of 12 Young Marines on each side and only take 6 to the either the left or right side. You must send at least two Young Marines back to the beginning to pick them up.

**Title of activity:**                   **SENSORY DEPRIVATION KNOWLEDGE TESTING**

**Category:**                           Team Building, Knowledge, Trust, Orienteering

**Submitted by:**                   Michael Guiles, Unit Commander

**Name of YM unit:**               Temecula Valley Young Marines (CA)

**Props required:**               **1 blind fold, 2 Radios and a map**

**Directions:** Place a blindfold over a Young Marine's eyes, they must make it to each station trusting what the team leader tells them over a radio. At each station they must answer a Young Marine Knowledge question to go further. They can only miss three questions or they stop where they are at. The team that gets the farthest and has the most successes is the winner.

These events involve everyone, set the Senior Young Marines up at a knowledge station and ensure the Adults are following the blindfolded Young Marines to each station. Have the groups pick a leader for this activity. The leader takes their place with their back to the course. The Young Marine has a blind fold placed over their eyes. The Leader must guide the Young Marine to each station with a two way radio. Once at a station The Young Marine is asked a basic knowledge question. If they miss it, they are asked a different one and if they answer it correctly they move to the next station. If they miss all three questions they stop where they are at and they and the radioman switch out places. The winners are the team with the most number of people making it to the finish line.

**Title of activity:** YOUNG MARINE CHECKERS

**Category:** Team Building

**Submitted by:** Michael Guiles, Unit Commander

**Name of YM unit:** Temecula Valley Young Marines (CA)

**Props required:** (2) 6 foot 2X4's, (5) pallets, Chalk or string,

**Objective:** Team work

**Directions:** Place the string on the ground or chalk out two lanes on the ground, the rules are simple. The Young Marines must get from one end to the other without stepping into the dead zone or arguing. The only voice that should be heard is the leaders. If everyone talks the mission fails. The 2x4's must be carried through the whole course.

The Young Marines start out with two pallets in each of their starting squares. The Young Marines must work together as a team to move the pallets from one square into another. Only one team may occupy a square at a time. If a team gets ahead of another team they can toss their pallets into their (**unoccupied**) opponents square cutting them off (**\*Note the team must end in their own lane to complete the mission**).

The mission is complete when a team has crossed from their last lane to the last pallet using their 2x4 as a balance beam. There can be only one winner.

**Title of activity:** YOUNG MARINE RESCUE

**Category:** Teamwork, Determination, Trust & Strength

**Submitted by:** Michael Guiles, Unit Commander

**Name of YM unit:** Temecula Valley Young Marines (CA)

**Props required:** Climbing rope, harness, helmet, carabineer, blindfold, tape or chalk & 15 water balloons

**Directions:** Have your Young Marines placed in to three teams. Using good mountaineering knots have the ends of the rope tied tightly (leaving slack for the rope to sag a little). Draw a circle around each tree and one in the middle of the rope. Have the leader pick one Young Marine to take a "poison antidote" across the canyon to his fellow Young Marines.

**(YOUNG MARINE RESCUE continued)**

Once the rope is tied the leader must pick a Young Marine to clip in and pull themselves along the rope to the other side (**\*\*\*Note leaders can choose themselves**). Not so easy if you have a 150 foot rope and you have an egg in one hand. The Young Marine must get the egg to the Young Marines in the middle circle by pulling themselves along the rope. They cannot touch the ground or the water balloon will explode and they will fail their mission.

Once the Young Marine is in the middle of the rope the Young Marines there will take the egg and hand the Young Marines a very big and unstable water balloon that must make it to the end of the rope.

Once the water balloon has reached the other end of the rope the mission is complete and the Young Marine that just arrived can sit out while the next team sends their Young Marine across.

Variation can be timed or point scores between teams. The Objectives are to teach the Young Marines teamwork by cheering their Young Marine across the line. The Young Marine on the rope will learn determination to complete the mission while utilizing their sense and strength. Trust is learned when the blindfold is placed on was the ropes tied right are the Young Marines there in the middle and the end.

**Title:** **GOLF BALL TEAMBUILDING/COMMUNICATION EXERICSE**

**Submitted by:** Iris Davis

**Name of YM unit:** White Plains Young Marines (NY)

Have a bucket with 10 strings holding ½ bucket golf balls

Each YM holds a string – straight (no slack)

Object: to get all the golf balls from this bucket into another bucket without spilling them

Note: this was not my original idea