



# UPWARD BOUND

## Recreation Manual

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“Therefore, God  
has Highly  
exalted Him ...”

Philippians 2:9



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# INTRODUCTION

An enjoyable, well-organized, and energy-releasing recreation program can contribute greatly to the purpose and daily flow of Upward Bound. As your church seeks to prepare young hearts and minds to respond to Gospel truths, we encourage you not to underestimate the importance of having this *Trail Recreation*. Backpackers need time to run and play, especially during a morning of concentrated, tightly-scheduled learning. As you direct this high-energy aspect of your ministry keep in mind that in addressing the physical needs of the children, you are ministering not only to their bodies at the moment but to their innermost beings eternally. The release of physical energy during your Trail Recreation period enables them to come more quietly before the Lord throughout the remainder of the day.

The games and activities that follow:

- have been adapted for the Upward Bound adventure theme.
- cover a wide range of activities from gentle games to those of a more “roughhousing” nature to accommodate the diversity of children as well as recreation philosophies of the churches using this Recreation Packet.
- can for the most part be played either outdoors or indoors, though some may require a little adaptation to be suitable for one or the other.

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## Preparing For Trail Recreation

- Read the “Bible Lessons At a Glance” to have a good understanding of the Scriptural truths the children will be learning throughout the week; then be attuned to opportunities to reinforce those truths during Trail Recreation.
- Choose the games you will use and gather/prepare supplies needed for each game prior to the start of your week.
- Recruit two or more assistants to help with game setup and “crowd control,” and to come alongside children with special needs or those needing extra encouragement to participate.
- Have a list of backup games and accompanying supplies available for quick access.
- Each day have game supplies ready and set up for use before the children arrive.
- Pray as you prepare yourself for your role in Trail Recreation, and enlist the prayer support of others throughout the week. You and your assistants’ attitudes, enthusiasm, and encouragement will significantly impact the lives of your Backpackers.

## During Trail Recreation

- Cheerfully encourage full participation and *friendly* competition. Be especially sensitive to the noticeably shy, lone, or insecure child as well as those children with special needs. If there is a child with special needs, work with the parent to adjust a game for that child’s abilities. The goal is that every child be included and enjoy each game.
- Keep the more active games under control to avoid potential injuries.
- If a game is not working out, is too difficult, or is not keeping the interest of the children, change the game rules, or go to a game on your backup list.
- If a game is taking too long, shorten the length of the game, or if space and staffing allow, divide the group and have two games running simultaneously.

# TRAIL RECREATION SCHEDULE

DAY	EXPEDITION D (4's-K)	EXPEDITION C (Grades 1 & 2)	EXPEDITION B (Grades 3 & 4)	EXPEDITION A (Grades 5 & 6)	
<b>DAY 1</b>	Critter Cascade <i>(p. 6)</i>	Critter Cascade <i>(p. 6)</i>	Bee Swat <i>(p. 5)</i>	Bee Swat <i>(p. 5)</i>	
	Bear Hunt <i>(p. 5, 16)</i>	Plains Races <i>(p. 9)</i>	Ant Camp <i>(p. 5)</i>	Ant Camp <i>(p. 5)</i>	
<b>DAY 2</b>	Blister Blues <i>(p. 6)</i>	Blister Blues <i>(p. 6)</i>	Blister Blues <i>(p. 6)</i>	Blister Blues <i>(p. 6)</i>	
	Rock Hop <i>(p. 10)</i>	Trail Mix-Up <i>(p. 11)</i>	Hiker Hook-Up <i>(p. 8)</i>	Hiker Hook-Up <i>(p. 8)</i>	
			Dig Mountain <i>(p. 8)</i>	Dig Mountain <i>(p. 8)</i>	
<b>DAY 3</b>	Drop the Bandana <i>(p. 7)</i>	Drop the Bandana <i>(p. 7)</i>	Suspension Bridge Walk <i>(p. 10)</i>	Suspension Bridge Walk <i>(p. 10)</i>	
		Rock Hop <i>(p. 10)</i>	Boulder Ball <i>(p. 6)</i>	Boulder Ball <i>(p. 6)</i>	
<b>DAY 4</b>	Climbing to the Mountain Top <i>(p. 6)</i>	Bear Hunt <i>(p. 5, 16)</i>	Rocky Cliffs Relay <i>(p. 10)</i>	Rocky Cliffs Relay <i>(p. 10)</i>	
	Duck-Duck Bear <i>(p. 8)</i>	Thirsty Hiker <i>(p. 11)</i>	Thirsty Hiker <i>(p. 11)</i>	Thirsty Hiker <i>(p. 11)</i>	
<b>DAY 5</b>	Treasure Hunt <i>(p. 11)</i>	Treasure Hunt <i>(p. 11)</i>	Mountain Top Round-Up <i>(p. 9)</i>	Mountain Top Round-Up <i>(p. 9)</i>	
		Dizzy <i>(p. 7)</i>	Dizzy <i>(p. 7)</i>	Water Balloon Toss <i>(p. 12)</i>	
<b>RAINY DAY ACTIVITIES</b>					
Anatomy Shuffle <i>(p. 13)</i>	Balloon Bust <i>(p. 13)</i>	Bear's Got the Bacon <i>(p. 14)</i>	Mountaineer Swat <i>(p. 14)</i>	Tail Grab <i>(p. 14)</i>	Trail Guide Says <i>(p. 15)</i>

# GAME DESCRIPTIONS

## Ant Camp

*“You just set up camp—on an ant hill! Now you not only have to move your campsite but you need to stomp on all those ants!”*

**Needed in advance:** balloons (1 per Backpacker)  
15" pieces of string or rubber bands (1 per Backpacker; see sidebar)

Everyone receives a balloon and a piece of string or rubber band. Older Backpackers blow up the balloon and tie it to their ankles; younger children will need assistance. When the game begins, the children try to stomp and pop everyone else’s balloon while trying to keep their’s intact. The last person with a balloon wins. (see sidebar)

## Bear Hunt

*“While we are on our hike, stay alert! The path is narrow and tricky, and there can be dangers hiding around the corners, so follow your leader carefully.”*

**Needed in advance:** pop-up tent  
stuffed toy bear

Set up the tent in advance and hide the toy bear in the tent. Backpackers form a single line behind the “Trail Leader.” Leader recites intro line of lyrics (see page 16), and has the children repeat (or answer). Leader chants each verse and leads the children in acting out the activity as they progress closer and closer to the “cave” (tent). Leader and children chant the chorus together. Repeat for verses 1–5. On verse 6, the Leader “finds” the bear, and leads in racing back through each place they came through, doing the motions quickly as they are racing back to where they started, to get away from the bear!

## Bee Swat

*“You have just run into a beehive and you need to swat the bees off the heads of your friends.”*

**Needed in advance:** rolled newspapers (1 per child)  
lunch-size paper bags or paper boat hats (1 per child)

Give all the Backpackers a paper bag/hat and a rolled piece of newspaper. Have them place the paper bags/hats loosely over their heads, pulling them down to their ears. The object is for each child to knock the other Backpackers’ hats off without losing his own. It can be played boys vs. boys/girls vs. girls, or with all the children together. No one is allowed to hold his hat on. This game will require supervision by all Trail Recreation Guides and helpers. Backpackers are to hit only from the back side of the head—not from the front.

## Day 1

Expeditions A & B  
Grades 3–6



*Use rubber bands in place of string for younger Backpackers. Affix rubber band to tie end of blown-up balloon by slipping it through itself, around the tie, and pulling securely. Child can then slip rubber band around ankle.*

## Day 1

Expedition D  
4’s–K

## Day 1

Expeditions A & B  
Grades 3–6

**Day 2**  
Expeditions A–D  
4’s–Grade 6

### **Blister Blues**

*“You have just walked six miles this morning and your feet hurt terribly! It feels so good to take your boots off and just sit down for a minute.”*

Divide the Backpackers into even relay teams and have them line up single file. Ask children to each take off one shoe and put it in one large pile at the designated finish line. On the signal “GO,” the first person from each team runs to the pile and tries to retrieve the shoe of the next person in his line. The funny aspect of this game is that many of the children will have the same type, or look-alike shoes, and shoes will be brought back and forth until the right ones are located. When that person puts his own shoe on, the shoe locator in front of him is finished and goes to the end of the line. The person with the shoes on now goes down and finds a pair for the next person in line. The race continues until the last person has his shoes on and tied.

**Day 3**  
Expeditions A & B  
Grades 3–6

### **Boulder Ball**

*“Avalanche! Boulders are falling! Move quickly so you don’t get hit!”*

**Needed in advance:** 3 foam balls

Have the Backpackers form a wide circle. Choose three children to go into the center. Using three foam “boulders,” the children in the circle try to hit those in the center. When someone gets hit, he exchanges places with the person who hit him, and the game continues. With three balls, the game can get pretty exciting. You may want to start with one “boulder” and add the others according to the age level of the participants.

**Day 4**  
Expedition D  
4’s–K

### **Climbing to the Mountaintop**

*“Our destination is the Mountaintop, which is a long distance to travel, and it’s all uphill. Let’s see if we can get there!”*

This game is played like “Ring Around the Rosy.” Rather than the traditional poem, teach the children to recite:

Climbing to the Mountaintop,  
Climb because you just can’t stop,  
Climbing, climb—oops! We all fall down!

**Day 1**  
Expeditions C & D  
4’s–Grade 2

### **Critter Cascade**

*“Your hike over the next week will be very exciting and adventurous. But it will also be challenging and difficult at times, so we want to make sure you are in shape. We are going to do some exercises in the form of a relay to help you stretch out those muscles. Here we go!”*

**Needed in advance:** stuffed forest animals (1 or 2 per team)

Divide the Backpackers into even teams of no more than 15. Direct each team to line up in a straight line; give each team a stuffed animal. When play begins, the first Backpacker in line passes the “critter” back over his head to the second Backpacker, who passes it through his legs to the third Backpacker who passes it back over his head, etc., down the line. When the last Backpacker gets the stuffed animal, he runs to the front of the line and passes it back over his head, and play continues in this manner until the first Backpacker is again at the head of the line. The first team to finish wins. *Note:* For more excitement with older children, add a second stuffed animal when the first one is halfway through the line.

### **Dizzy**

*“The high altitude has affected your balance and you are having trouble adjusting to the lack of oxygen on the Mountaintop. Will you ever be able to get back down?”*

**Needed in advance:** baseball or softball bats (1 per team)

Divide the Backpackers into equal teams and have them line up in straight lines. Place a bat about 20 yards in front of each team. Each team member must run to the bat, put his forehead on it, and spin in a circle seven times (less for Expedition C) before running back to his line. The first team to finish wins.

### **Drop the Bandana**

*“As you hike along the mountain path, try not to lose anything along the way. If you drop anything you’ll have to go back for it, and then run hard to catch up to the rest of the group!”*

**Needed in advance:** 1 large bright bandana or handkerchief

This game is an old favorite that is always fun. Have the Backpackers form a circle. Choose one child to be IT. IT carries the bandana around the outside of the circle, inconspicuously drops it behind a Backpacker, and continues walking around the circle. When the Backpacker discovers the bandana behind him, he starts chasing IT around the circle. If IT makes it back to the place vacated by the Backpacker without being tagged, the Backpacker must stand in the center of the circle. But if the Backpacker manages to tag IT, IT goes to the center of the circle and the Backpacker now becomes IT.

A child in the center may be rescued if IT tosses the bandana into the circle, at which point the child immediately starts in pursuit. IT tries to make one complete circle—returning to the place where he threw the bandana into the circle—without being tagged. If IT is tagged, he goes to the center of the circle; otherwise, the game continues. In either case, the chaser is the new IT.

### **Day 5**

Expeditions B & C  
Grades 1–4

### **Day 3**

Expeditions C & D  
4’s–Grade 2

**Day 4**  
Expedition D  
4's–K

## Duck-Duck Bear

*"As we walk across the plains on the way to the mountain, we must always be on the lookout for food that we can take on the rest of our trip. Wouldn't a roast duck or goose taste great? Can you catch one?"*

This is played with the Backpackers sitting in a circle. Select one Backpacker to be IT and instruct him to go around the outside of the circle gently tapping the head of each seated person, simultaneously saying "duck duck duck duck..." When IT says "goose," the child whose head was just touched jumps up and chases IT around the circle and back to the spot where they started. If IT gets tagged before reaching the spot, he remains IT. But if IT is able to sit down in the spot first, then the new person becomes IT and goes around the circle repeating the game.

**Day 2**  
Expeditions A & B  
Grades 3–6

## Hiker Hook-Up

*"Sometimes while hiking you will cross rough or slippery paths which could cause you to fall and be in a very dangerous situation. That is when you need to hook up with a friend for safety."*

**Needed in advance:** 1 whistle

Hiker Hook-Up is an active chase game that works best with 20 or more children. Divide into pairs and have the partners link elbows, forming a circle of pairs with at least four feet separating one pair from the next. If more Backpackers are playing, scatter the pairs over the area in random order to stand as obstacles. Choose one child to be the chaser, and another to be the "chasee." The chaser weaves through the hooked-up couples, attempting to tag the chasee. At any time, the chasee can "hook-up" by grabbing the free elbow of one of the pairs. Doing so makes the chasee safe, and takes him out of the chase; but the person on the other side of the one whose elbow he has grabbed must break free to become the new chasee. If the chasee is tagged, he becomes the chaser and the chaser becomes the chasee. Blow the whistle as needed to encourage frequent hook-ups, thus giving more children a chance to run.

**Day 2**  
Expeditions A & B  
Grades 3–6

## Dig Mountain

*"The Trail Guide has just signaled for a rest stop. You are really ready for a break, but there are not enough seats. You may just have to fight for one."*

Have the backpacker sit close together in a circle. One person is left standing in the middle. The person in the middle asks a question (see list below). Whoever can answer "yes" has to get up and switch seats. The person in the middle has to go and find a seat, which in turn will leave somebody else in the middle without a chair to ask a question. The catch is that the people changing seats (this applies to each individual round) cannot move to the seat on either side of them, or if they get up and can't find a seat, they cannot return to the seat where they just sat. This is a great way to "dig" up some information on people.

- Did you like apples?
- Do you play baseball?
- Do you wear glasses?
- Have you ever gone on a long hike?