

Squirrel Chase



Overview

Here in the park, we have lots of dogs and LOTS of squirrels. In this adventure, we'll practice being extra sneaky as we play a game of predator and prey along the trail.

No Gear Needed!

Step 1

This is a game of stealth! Before you get started, let's practice using a few tools borrowed from our forest friends. Head over to Azalea Way!

Step 2

Ever heard a predator walking in the woods? They have to be extra sneaky. Put on your "fuzzy feet" - as you walk, make your footsteps as quiet as you can. Step with your tiptoes and slowly roll your weight to the back of your foot. Try using the outside edge of your foot and then rolling slowly to the center of your foot.

Build on: Watch your teammates to see what they're trying. What are your different strategies for silent steps?

Step 3

Prey animals like deer, rabbits, and mice have big ears on top of their head, helping them listen closely so that they can avoid becoming a predator's lunch. You can make Prey Ears by cupping your hands and putting them behind your ears (like you're having trouble hearing someone). Try whispering to your friends. Can they hear you?

Build on: *What other adaptations (special qualities) do animals have that help keep them safe?*

Step 4

Let's play! Choose one person to be the squirrel; everyone else is a pack of dogs. The squirrel starts about 20-30 feet down the path in front of the pack with a stick, rock, or some kind of place marker 6 feet behind their back. The dogs try to stealthily sneak up on the squirrel from behind to be the first to reach the place marker.

When the squirrel hears a dog, they will turn around and look back behind them. When the squirrel turns around, the dogs must freeze! If the squirrel sees a dog move, then that dog must go to the back of the pack. Each time the squirrel turns back to face forward the sneaking resumes.

The first dog to reach the squirrel's place marker is the new squirrel.

Take it home: *What prey animals live near your home? What predators are trying to catch them?*