

Gymnasium Quidditch



Incorporating various skills, fitness and fun in an imaginative way

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This game is derived and adapted from the popular Harry Potter stories by J.K. Rowlings. Since the ability to catch a ball is important in this game, it is best played by grade four classes and beyond. It is really three games in one; a simplified continuous team handball, running dodgeball and tag. All three aspects of the game are played simultaneously.

The Three Component Parts:

Part 1. Continuous 'Ultimate' Handball

Four to seven players (+ or -) on each team are called "**Chasers**". The **Chasers** pass a "**Quaffle**" ball (a yellow gatorskin ball) in an attempt to score on the other team's net(s) and/or wall goal(s) (painted or taped goal on gym end wall). Chasers are not allowed to move when in possession of the **Quaffle** ball; they must pass; or shoot the **Quaffle**. Each goal scored is worth two points. After any shot on goal, whether it scores or not, the goalie gets possession of the **Quaffle** and initiates play towards the other team's goal.

Other Points to Remember:

1. In front of the goal(s) there is a goal line beyond which the opposing team cannot shoot on goal (but can pass back to a teammate not yet beyond the line).
2. Any player with the **Quaffle** ball cannot be stripped of the ball (loose balls are up for grabs), so interceptions are the usual cause of turnovers.
3. If your gym has basketball hoops off of the end walls, count two points for every basket scored with the **Quaffle**. After a successful basket, the **Keeper** (goalie) gets possession of the ball. A missed shot at the basketball net likewise results in a turnover...ball goes to the **keeper** (in other words, no rebounds).
4. Each team may have two nets (or goals) or just one. Having two goal areas per team adds more scoring to the game and allows you to add another **Keeper** (goalie).
5. The gym walls are the boundaries, so in effect there are no boundaries.

In a nutshell: A passing game leading to shots on goal.

Part 2. Running Dodgeball

Each team designates one player (who wears a red "pinnie" or scrimmage vest over his/her team's colours) to be the "**Beater**". The **Beater's** function is to try to hit members of the opposing team (excluding **Keepers**) with a "**Bludger**" ball (a red gatorskin ball). Once hit by a **Bludger** ball, a player must touch any 3 gym walls before re-entering the game. Any player who is hit in the head with a **Bludger** ball does not have to touch walls. Only **Beaters** are allowed to handle the **Bludger** ball, but they cannot move with the ball (must throw it at opposing players and then can run after their own shot). A **Beater** can be hit by the opposing team's **Beater** and must then touch three gym walls before resuming his/her role as **Beater**.

In a nutshell: **Beaters** are their team's snipers, looking to temporarily remove opposing players and/or the other team's beater from the game.

Team players and their functions:

Chaser - 3-4 chasers to a team

Function: To score with the "**Quaffle**" ball (a gatorskin ball) either on a net (or wall marking) and/or on a basketball hoop. **Chasers** are not allowed to move when in possession of the **Quaffle** ball - must pass or shoot.

Beater - one **Beater** per team

Function: To hit members of the opposing team with a "**Bludger**" ball (a red gatorskin ball). Once hit by a **Bludger** ball, a player must touch any 3 gym walls before re-entering the game. Head shots do not count. Beaters are not allowed to move with the ball and cannot hit the other team's **Keepers** (goalies). Only beaters are allowed to handle the **Bludger** ball. A Beater can be hit by the opposing team's beater.

Keeper - Function: The goalie(s) on each team

Seekers - one **Seeker** per team

Function: On a double whistle cue, the seeker attempts to tag the "**Golden Snitch**". When not chasing the "**Snitch**", the seeker plays the role of "**Chaser**".

Golden Snitch - two or more **Snitches** may rotate into the game, but only one at a time may enter the game. **Snitches** do not belong to either team. They try to elude the **Seekers** who are trying to capture them. On a double whistle cue, the **Snitch** enters the game and tries to elude the **Seekers** from both teams. After 5-10 seconds, double whistle again to end the chase if the **Snitch** has not been caught. You might have the **Seekers** keep track of how many escapes they make and see who is the top seeker at the end of the game.

Teaching the Game

You will only overwhelm your students if you attempt to explain the entire game the first time out. Introduce the simplified continuous team handball first and provide the students an opportunity to move up and down the gym with the sole objective being to pass and score. Once the students are comfortable with this aspect of the game, you might then introduce the **Beater**, **Seeker**, and **Golden Snitch** roles into the game.

Quidditch in the Gym

Right when the Harry Potter storyline first took off, the grade fours at Victoria Albert School were doing a Harry Potter unit and, with the help of some of those fourth grade students, I developed this indoor version of the quidditch game found in the Harry Potter books (sans flying brooms, flying balls, etc.). Once I had the framework completed, the students helped me flesh out some of the details. We then tried it out, tweaked it some more, and then brought it to our grade 4,5 and 6 classrooms to try in class and later as an intramural activity. It was an instant hit!

The best part of the game is that it allows all students in an average-sized class (20-28) to find their comfort level, because there are a variety of roles players can assume on each team (and they can rotate between roles through-out the game). For example, a student who might otherwise be a wallflower in one part of the game because he/she is not really confident throwing or catching a ball, might feel very comfortable doing the tag part of the game or the dodgeball part of the game. I've found that everyone can find a role that suits their particular set of skills.

I generally start by having my students play either 'Ultimate' or 'Ultimate Football' in the week or two preceding the introduction of Quidditch (not a requirement, but it closely mirrors the first phase of the game and when that phase is introduced, the students will already feel comfortable:

1. moving without the ball and getting into open spaces for a pass.
2. with the concept of offence and defending against a scoring attempt.

There are three parts to the game and I introduce them one at a time in successive Phys. Ed. classes. From there, the game moves into the intramural program. I start with the grade six students doing it in intramurals, with the grade fours and fives getting to watch. I find that this gives them a better sense of which strategies to employ and they are motivated to do what the sixth graders are clearly having fun doing.

Give it a try and feel free to modify the game to suit your own needs.

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Part 3. Tag

In the Harry Potter Quidditch game, each team has a “**Seeker**” whose task it is to capture the “**Golden Snitch**”; a small, winged golden ball that speeds across the sky trying to elude each team’s seekers (who are on flying broom sticks).

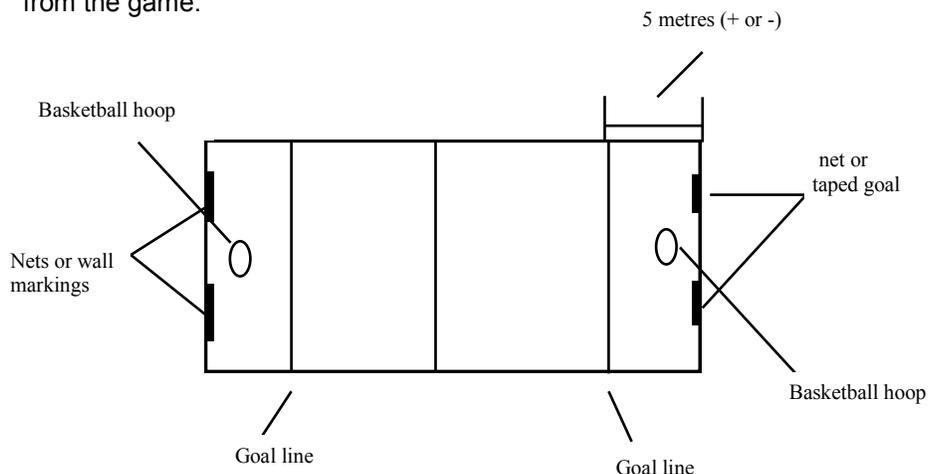
In the gymnasium version of Quidditch each team designates a **Seeker** (who wears a green pinnie or scrimmage vest over his/her team’s colours). The “**Golden Snitch** that enters the game will of course not be a winged ball, but rather, a speedy student (wearing a yellow or golden coloured pinnie or scrimmage vest) who belongs to neither team! Two quick blasts of a whistle cue the entry of the **Golden Snitch** into the game. The double whistle is also a cue for the **Seekers** to chase after the **Golden Snitch**, who tries to elude the **Seeker** from each team with speed, changes of direction, feints etc. for approximately 7-10 seconds or until one of the **Seekers** tags the **Golden Snitch** (which ever happens first). After the 7-10 seconds, another double whistle blast signals the departure of the **Golden Snitch** from the game. If the **Golden Snitch** was tagged during the 7-10 seconds, the **Seeker** who first tagged the **Snitch** earns his/her team a point.

Helpful Pointers:

1. When the **Golden Snitch** is not in the game, the **Seekers** play the role of **Chasers**.
2. In order to avoid a scenario where the **Seekers** merely wait to ambush the **Golden Snitch** as he or she enters the game, you can have 2-4 **Golden Snitches** placed along the gym sidelines and have them each enter the game in random order so the **Seekers** will not know which **Golden Snitch** will enter the game.
3. Every player will want to be the **Seeker** and **Golden Snitch**. If you have several **Snitches** available to use, have them each enter the game in quick succession. This will quickly tire out the **Seekers** and they will be more than willing at that point, to switch roles with a teammate.
4. While the **Seekers** are chasing the **Golden Snitch**, the **Chasers** continue in their efforts to score with the **Quaffle** ball and the **Beaters** likewise continue in their attempts to hit opposing players with the **Bludger** ball.
5. Should a **Seeker** when in pursuit of the **Golden Snitch** get hit by the **Bludger** ball, that **Seeker** must discontinue the chase until he/she has touched three gym walls (this is a strategy the **Beaters** quickly pick up).
6. Students selected to be the **Golden Snitches** need to be fast and elusive or at least as quick as the **Seekers** chasing them.
7. Try to find a special shirt for the **Golden Snitch** that clearly identifies them. A gold Lamé blouse for example or something that glitters ... the kids really eat it up.



One of the great features of this game is its versatility. The number of players per team can vary from class to class depending on the number of available students. The goal area may be one or two nets, or goal markings on the gym wall (painted or taped on). End wall basketball hoops are also incorporated into the game, but if your gym does not have any hoops, then simply delete that from the game.



Scoring

There are three possible ways to score points:

1. Two points for any shot going in the goal (the shot must be taken from behind the goal line).
2. Two points for any shot that goes in the basketball net.
3. One point each time for the team whose “**Seeker**” tags the “**Golden Snitch**”.

Students not playing the game can be recruited to keep a running tally of points scored either on a gym whiteboard or on a clipboard.

Starting the Game

The game opens with one team in possession of the **Quaffle** ball and the other team in possession of the **Bludger** ball.