

Zoom Games, Ideas and Resources *updated 22nd September 2020*

There is nothing new under the sun - says so in the Bible - so I've borrowed almost all these ideas. Please let me know if you want me to put your name against any of them. With thanks to Dawn, Tim, Si, Abi, Ali, Bea, Lorraine and everyone else who shared their ideas.

Be creative in scale. Yes, you can play a game with everyone shouting out the answers from Gallery View. Or, you can mute all, and have everyone typing out their answers in the Chat. Or, you can do both. You can mute all, ask for some volunteers to play a game, maybe 3 or 4, unmute those people and everyone else can help those playing by typing out answers in the Chat. Then the game works a bit more like an upfront game. This works best if you've enabled chat between different participants so people can help out their friends.

Icebreakers

1. Fetch it!

Explain that you will be calling out a list of items and the challenge is to go and get them and bring the item to the camera screen. Optionally, the winner could be the first person to type a silly word or name into the chat. You can say, 'Bring me a sponge' or 'Bring me something beginning with S'. This is proving the best icebreaker so far.

2. 6 things

A development of 'Fetch it!' Give people 5 minutes to get together 6 things, for example:

- a. A hat which needs to be on your head
- b. Something you couldn't take on a plane
- c. A triangle
- d. Something connected with a superhero
- e. A book with 'And' in the title
- f. Something that makes a sound

Share a 5-minute timer as you play, preferably with the list of what people need to gather. This is a great game to play as people arrive on Zoom, so you don't have to wait till everyone gets there to do anything. If people are late, they just don't have as much time to find the six things. Choose another six things if you want to play again.

3. Two lies and a truth

Invite each person to prepare a list of three interesting "facts" about themselves, two of which must be made up. These could be anything, from a pet they own or a hobby they love to a famous person they say they've

met. As a group decide on the facts they think are true. The team member who receives the most incorrect votes wins.

4. Quick answers

Tell the group that you are going to ask a question and then everyone has to type their answer into the chat as quickly as possible. The speedy writing and thinking will create some funny answers.

5. Word association

Say a word, maybe round a theme for the session, and invite everyone to type into chat the first word they think of. This could lead into a discussion on a topic.

6. I'm a bit like...

Invite people to find an item in their house that represents them and to say why.

7. Similarity

Split the group in half and ask them to come up with something that the people in the group have in common. The most obscure the better. The bigger the group the harder it will be.

8. Would you rather?

Ask the group some 'Would you rather' questions and let them answer by clicking thumbs up or clapping. Make sure everyone is on grid view so they can see how people have voted. Invite others to ask the questions too. You could use this to split the group into a breakout for a small group activity.

9. Dressing up game

Give participants one minute to get dressed up as someone/something famous and come back e.g. Darth Vader, Dumbo, Mickey Mouse, Iron Man. The person who has their costume voted best gets a point.

10. Dodge

One person has 30 secs to dodge out of their screen. Once they dodge, everyone else has to do the same. Last person to do so is out and turns off their video to blank their screen. One person will be judge, and then they can use people that are out to help judge. Pretty comedy, especially with the delays in WiFi.

Icebreaker Questions

1. Give an example of something you've done this week that you feel proud of
2. If you weren't on this Zoom call, what would you like to be doing?
3. If you could eat any meal right now, what would it be?
4. If your last week was going to be an animal, what animal would it be?
5. Describe your last week in 3 words.
6. If you could visit anywhere in the world today, where would you go?
7. If you could meet anyone who has ever lived, who would you like to meet?
8. Glow - low - hero. What's been your best thing this week (your glow), your worst thing (low) and who's been your hero?

Games

1. Scattergories (sometimes called Town and Country). Chose about 8 categories like town, country, fruit, etc. Choose a letter. In three or five minutes, people try to think of something that fits into each category beginning with that letter. They score two points for an answer no one else gets, one for an answer that someone else gets.
2. Tell me (e.g. 'Tell me a river beginning with', choose a random letter. First person to shout out a right answer wins). Remember to unmute people.
3. Hangman. You can use the whiteboard function in Zoom for this.
4. Pictionary
5. Charades
6. Articulate, with someone describing what is on the card and participants trying to guess them. Can play in teams against each other.
7. Higher or lower (cards), turn off your screen if you got it wrong till one person is left
8. Rock paper scissors. One person chooses, everyone else plays against them. If they beat them or draw, they stay in. If they lose, they turn off their camera until only one person is left.
9. Guess the sound - take turns to turn off your camera feed and make a repeatable noise with something and everyone else guesses what it was
 - a. You can adapt this by having someone put together a recording of a range of sounds round their house.
10. Show the most [insert obscure adjective e.g. cheerful/stretchy] object - give a 3/4-minute time limit and then everyone has to show their object and justify it (cleverest wins)
11. With small groups, play Pass the Bomb. Draw a playing circle on your shared screen, and share half-screen. People go in turn following the circle on the screen.
12. Tension/Call 'em All. Play in two teams using the game cards e.g. Name 10 Beatles Songs and people need to name as many of the 10 listed on the card in one minute.
13. Beetle
14. Jenga. A host numbers each of the Jenga blocks then the group take it in turns to call out the numbered block to be removed by the host.
15. Bingo.
16. Guess the answer
Host chooses a topic e.g. Boys name beginning with 'B', animal with a tail beginning with 'R', pizza topping beginning with 'M', a day of the week, a month of the year, a colour of the rainbow, a sport played with a ball (make it fairly specific). A different leader (or young person) each time writes down their answer off camera. When they have done that, each Participant types what they think the chooser will have put into the Chat. Then the chooser shows their answer. If a Participant gets it right, they get a point. Play a few rounds and see who scores the most points.

- a. Add some jeopardy to this game! Get each young person to bring a bottle lid of water to the meeting. Have the chooser hold their bottle close to their face. Each Participant says their answer in one by one. If any match the choosers, they need to throw the water in their own face. If any of the rest of the group hesitate too much or if they say one already said - that group member gets it.
17. Psychiatrist - one person goes out of the group (best to put them into a breakout room on their own), the rest think of some symptom. The person who left re-enters and while asking questions, they need to guess what symptom the others are showing. Speaking symptom works best online, doing not so much e.g. touch your ear every time someone answers a question, spell the person's name asking the question.
18. Zoom in on Zoom. Hold an object really close to your webcam and slowly move it away until people shout out what it is. Best to bring the object in from the side of the camera really close to it, and gradually move it away. Host can lead but participants can bring something in too.
19. Dingbats. Hold Dingbats card up to the camera until someone shouts out what it is.
20. Hide the thimble or any other object according to the season. One person chooses a place to hide the thimble, e.g. the top of the Eiffel Tower. First person asks a yes/no question to narrow where it is down e.g. 'Is it in Europe?' Continue until the thimble is found. You can hide it somewhere in your town/city or somewhere in the Bible e.g. in the Ark of the Covenant or riding on the pale horse in Revelation. When it's found, the next person can choose a hiding place.
21. Countdown. Put a Scrabble rack in front of you facing the camera. Like the TV game, people choose vowels or consonants from a Scrabble set to make nine in total (separate them before you start). Start the 30-second timer and have people enter their longest words in the Chat. Longest word wins (or fastest word if two people have longest words) then play again with a new set chosen by the winner of the previous round.
22. Either/or. Classic youth games that can certainly be played online. You can play it knockout (turn your video off if you get it wrong) or just for fun. You can use Powerpoint slides and Sharescreen or just ask the question.
 - a. Taylor Swift or Lamentations (you can use the video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BB6PrCrjMI8> or just use the idea)
 - b. Mineral or Old Testament tribe (get in touch if you want to save time!)
 - c. Psalms or Justin Bieber fan (you'll need to pay for that one at <https://www.downloadyouthministry.com/psalm-or-crazy-bieber-fan-youth-group-game> which has some great Lockdown youth resources)
 - d. Cheese or disease (it might be too gruesome for some groups, but close-ups of cheese and various skin diseases are scarily similar)
 - e. And the almost unbelievably good Slavic salutation or Biblical character (again, get in touch to save time!)

23. Marble Run. Check out Jelle's Marble Runs on Youtube (for example https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cBHmu_cNww). These are colourful and have fun commentaries. Share the video with Screenshare and pause it on Choose Your Marble at the start of the video (if you can avoid showing identifiers that young people can look up online (!), all the better but you should be able to rely on a quick start to beat that). Get people to write down in Chat which marble they think will win (names make it easier at the end than numbers). When everyone has done that, type STOP into the Chat (to make sure nobody adds a name to the Chat when they see who's in the lead) then show the video. Give people points according to where they finished. Play several games and see who scores the most points. Some churches have done whole nights of marble races. Some of the marble races are long so it might be best to avoid those and play more two-minute ones.
24. Speak out. If you don't mind making yourself look a little bit ridiculous, play the game Speak Out. Put in the mouthpiece which makes your mouth into a big circle (which looks hilarious on screen) and ask the young people some simple questions which they need to answer on the chat, like "What is the fourth colour of the rainbow?", "How many weeks have we been in Lockdown?" The mouthpiece makes your questions much more difficult to understand. Whoever answers correctly first wins a point, or you can just play for fun. If a couple of leaders have the game, you can alternate asking the questions. It's funny, but try not to dribble on your keyboard!
25. A school end-of-term classic: The Pirate Game. Full instructions here: https://www.tes.com/teaching-resource/the-pirate-game-end-of-term-activity-6258063?fbclid=IwAR2yyTbrNW8AQGgAUr_g9InbhtRHP7GcKutobCAYJnSvXxLNj24ydnY-3E. You send a grid to each participant. Each player chooses where to put various symbols. A leader chooses grid numbers and points are scored, points are swapped etc. Surprisingly tense. Loads of teachers say it is the best game ever!
26. Kim's game. Another classic that works well on Zoom. Get a tray, put on it lots of interesting items but make sure that they can be seen on your camera. Spotlight yourself and show young people the tray. Give them a minute to remember all the items. Turn off your camera. Remove an item. Turn on your camera again. The first person to put on Chat what is missing wins a point. Continue for as many rounds as you want.
27. Box of lies. Have several people (young people can do it as well as leaders!) gather or create something odd beforehand. One person keeps their object out of sight and describes it or lies. Other people put thumbs up or thumbs down to show whether they think what you're describing is the truth or a lie. Show what it was then move on to the next describer. Watch Jimmy Fallon and Chris Pratt play it at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Md4QnipNYqM>.
28. Crazy cuts. You can play in person or online where you set everyone the task of cutting out something e.g. a fish, within a timeframe and they then had to hold them up to the screen at the end of the time. People's interpretations can be hilarious. If a young person forgets their scissors and paper, they can be judges.

29. Carrot in a box. Two people play against each other. One looks inside their (virtual) box - send them 'carrot' or 'no carrot' on Chat. They try to convince the other player to swap/not swap their box but both players are trying to end up with the carrot in their own box. Not sure? Check it out on Youtube.
30. Heads and tails. That classic youth work game can be played online. Flip a coin. If people think it's going to land on heads, they put their hands on their heads. If it's going to be tails, they put their hands down. If they get it wrong, they turn their video off to turn their screen blank. Play continues until only one player remains.
- This can of course be extended to be a quiz on any subject, giving people two answers.

Remember that many games that can be played face-to-face can also be played online, but not WINK MURDER!!!

There are eight more great ideas for online games at <https://fevr.net/youth-group/eight-games-to-play-during-virtual-youth-group>

Activities

- Encourage people to bring their own drink & snack if that's what you normally have at your group.
- Get everyone to take a picture of their shoes, or show their foot on the screen, and tell a short story about their shoe and where it has been.
- Tell a story one word, or sentence, at a time. Take turns to add to the story. The host or co-host can type it into chat as it is being said so that it is easy for everyone to keep up with the story. You can add a theme or base it on a Bible story.
- Invite the group to bring a favourite Bible verse and an item with them next week and a short explanation of why they have chosen them.
- Do a daily/weekly creative task. You can present the finished product in your Zoom meeting. Check the list of ideas for tasks on the website.
- Quizzes. In teams/individually/turn your camera off then turn the camera on if you know the answer. Any arrangement will work well.
- Daft Debates. Get two teams to argue for and against the position of a daft idea like every animal should have a social media page

Discussion starters

- Interviews: put people together in twos with the task to tell each other in one minute what they did last week. When the group comes together each

person tells the group what their partner did. How well did they do?
Go deeper with the activity by asking where did you see God at work last week?

2. Create a scenario for small groups to work on in a short time. Bring the group together and ask each group, in turn, to present their feedback to the wider group.
3. Burning questions: this gives each person the opportunity to ask a burning question. Type them onto the screen as the questions are asked and decide as a group which ones to answer. Don't feel as though you need to answer them yourself but invite the group to pool their wisdom. Get them to use the hands-up facility when they want to speak.
4. Tell the group that you are going to ask a question and they should type their answer on the chat. It might be worth muting everyone while people type in. Depending on the question asked it might lead to a discussion.

Small groups

Use the Breakout Rooms feature which is good in terms of getting young people in smaller groups to discuss/share/pray, a bit more of a logistical nightmare trying to assign people to the right groups, especially if they have left the session and rejoined on their mum's phone!

Bible studies

1. Scripture drill - first to find book and chapter and show to the camera
2. Challenge the group to read the weekly Bible passage and respond to the questions. Use the chat to start a deeper discussion on the passage during the Zoom meeting.
3. Choose Bible passages on a theme for breakout groups to work on in a short time. Give them 3 questions to answer such as: what does the passage say, what do you think it means, what does it say about God? Bring the group together and ask each group, in turn, to tell what they have discovered about God.

Prayer and Worship

1. Where have you seen God at work today? Use the answers to encourage each other and be reminded of Philippians 4:6-7.
2. Play a worship song and invite each person to write down the phrases that speak most to them. Afterwards share the phrases and whys. The host can type the phrases and let them form a new song and prayer for the group.

3. One group I've heard of managed to lead worship using Logic and a sound desk, putting the audio direct into Zoom. People had to mute themselves so not to lag, but they could all sing together which was awesome.
4. One group member put a band together in her house, put up a screen in the background with words on and everyone joined in (muted!).
5. It's worthwhile explaining to people before you start a prayer time that it might be a bit weird to begin with. Normally, if two people pray at the same time, you notice within one word. Delays can be a couple of seconds on Zoom which means that you're at the end of your first sentence and someone else just prays over you!!! They're not being rude. It's just that they haven't heard you start yet. If that happens, one of you drop out (you can say, 'Go on, John!' if necessary) and just pray after them.
6. Pray at the same time out loud. That will work well and get everyone involved. Lag time doesn't matter.
7. Light a candle and place in front of the screen. Reflect quietly together. Invite people to speak out one-word responses. Make sure you put a time limit on it so that people know what to expect. The host may want to move out of the way so they are not visible behind the candle.
8. Ask people to put up prayer requests on the chat and then pray for other people's requests.
9. Prime some people beforehand to start prayer times off. The first bit is very daunting.

Do please let me know if you have more ideas that will work on Zoom.

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