

Try Mounted Games

Here are four mounted games you can play at home.

By Micaela Myers

Mounted games are relay races played by teams of five riders, with four riders riding in each game. There are dozens of games to choose from--all involving speed, agility and skill from both the horse and rider. More and more families are turning to mounted games for exciting, family-oriented competitions. Here, the U.S. Mounted Games Association highlights a few easy games you can try at home. If you don't have multiple riders, you can play with a partner.

Bending Race: This doubles race is a lot like traditional pole bending but with a relay component. First, set five poles about 24 to 30 feet apart. The first rider starts with a baton in one hand and bends his or her pony up and back through the poles, then hands the baton to the teammate who will repeat the race. As with all the games, the pair that finishes fastest wins!

Bottle Race: This race requires two trash bins with flat tops set up in a line about about 100-feet apart. Two bottles with two cups of sand inside are also needed--one goes on the second bin and the other one starts with the first rider. When the race begins, the first rider places a bottle on the first bin and rides to the second bin to collect the other bottle. The rider then hands the bottle to his or her teammate who will put the bottle on the second bin and pick the other bottle off the first bin.

Mug Race: For this team game you'll need one trash bin and four poles set up in a line. Set three metal mugs on the trash bin, which is set upside down just past the bending poles. The first rider starts with the fourth mug and puts it on a pole, and then rides down and picks up a mug from the bin. This rider then rides back and hands the mug to the second teammate to go. Once all four teammates have gone and all the mugs are on the poles, the game is complete.

Mug Shuffle: For the Mug Shuffle you'll need four poles with a metal mug on the first and the third poles. One teammate will be positioned at either end of the poles. The first rider will ride down the line of poles moving each mug from one pole to the next (the first mug goes from pole one to pole two, and the second mug goes from pole three to pole four). Then the teammate goes down the line of poles, again moving the mugs from one pole to the next.

For the top 10 mounted games, as voted by the Mounted Games Across America members, click here >>

To see more mounted games in action, click here >>

To learn more, visit the U.S. Mounted Games Association at www.usmga.us.