

Button, Button Toy

What you need:

- ∞ 12 feet of string (or longer if desired)
- ∞ 1 button with large holes approx. 1 to 1 ½ inches in diameter
- ∞ 1 blindfold

Historical Stuff:

String could always be found around the house in Victorian times (remember, they didn't have tape, so the wrapping on parcels and packages was held together with string). Buttons were not cheap, and so were always saved from old clothes in a jar or box, and kept with the sewing things for mother and the girls to use. There was always fun to be had: sorting the buttons, counting them, arranging them by colour and texture, but that is another heritage amusements story! With string and buttons around the house, making this game was fast and easy.

How to Make:

Take your 12 feet of string and thread a button onto it. Tie the ends of your string together in a knot. (Remember, you have to be sure to choose a button with a hole big enough so that it will slide over the knot easily.)

How to Play:

One child is chosen to be "it", and must wear a blindfold. The others stand in a circle, grasping the string. The players slide the button round, passing it from one to the other, and stop when the blindfolded child calls "stop". All of the children keep their hands still on the string, and try to look as though they are concealing the button. The blindfolded child may remove the blindfold, and has a predetermined number of guesses to find the player with the button (three guesses is a good number of tries). If "it" correctly guesses who is hiding the button, then he or she becomes "it". Otherwise, another child is chosen to be "it". To make the game more difficult, the children can pretend to pass the button after the child calls "stop". If you want to play by real Victorian rules, if "it" doesn't guess who has the button, he or she would have to pay a forfeit. A forfeit, or price, could be an action or something of value. Hair ribbons, a button from a dress, a prized marble or other small toy would be something of value to other children. An action might be to sing a song, recite a nursery rhyme, or act out something. The children playing decide the forfeit, and the loser must pay it. If the forfeits are objects, they go into a "kitty" and the greatest winner takes the kitty at the end of the game.