

eslactive

Hot Potato

Tags: [advanced](#), [beginner](#), [grammar](#), [icebreaker](#), [intermediate](#), [kids](#), [vocabulary](#), [warmer](#)

In the Hot Potato ESL game, the student holding the ball when the music stops has to complete a challenge.

 4+  10-20 mins  Ball; Music; Internet **or** Prepared Challenges

Setup

You will need a set of suitable questions/challenges according to your level and target language. If you have an Internet connection, use our [Challenge Generator](#).

If not, prepare the challenges on slips of paper and put them in a box/hat. Post-it notes stuck on a whiteboard or table (text on the back) also work well.

Game

1. Play some music.
2. Students stand in a circle and throw the ball to each other in a random order.
3. Stop the music at a random time, while facing away from the students.
4. The student holding the ball when the music stops has to complete one of the challenges as a forfeit.

For an extra twist, why not try adding another ball into the mix? That way one student can ask a question and one can answer it. This is great if you want to repeat the game without your students getting bored.

Target Language

Use the Hot Potato ESL game as a warmer to review almost any grammar/vocabulary topic your class has been studying. As such, you can adapt it for any level, beginner, intermediate or advanced. You could even add in a couple of silly forfeits, like “stand on one leg for the next two rounds”.

You can also use this game as an [icebreaker](#) for new classes, with students sharing something about themselves instead of completing a forfeit.

Kids will love the opportunity to throw something around, and the use of music is particularly good with teenagers, as you can motivate them by letting them choose the song.

For a similar game using a countdown timer instead of music, try [Time Bomb Hot Potato](#).