

# Obstacle Course Part 1

## Spatial Words

Players 1-4



Ages 4+



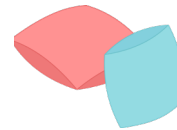
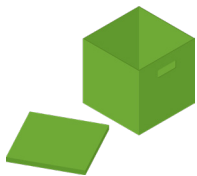
10-15 min

### GOAL

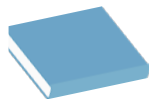
Children learn and practice spatial words and the obstacle course is set up.

### MATERIALS

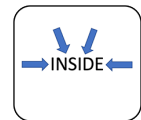
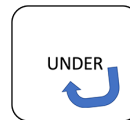
Any medium-to-large items (e.g., boxes, furniture)



One "mystery item" (e.g., toy, book)



Spatial word cards



### VOCABULARY

Over  
Under  
Around  
Inside

### QUESTIONS

Can you go over?  
Can you go under?  
Can you go around?  
Can you go inside?

### HOW TO PLAY

1. Clear a space for the obstacle course on the floor, in the hallway, or outside.

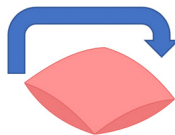
2. Arrange the medium-to-large items in an approximate path (e.g., left-to-right or top-to-bottom). *Optional:* use masking tape, washable marker, or sticks to mark the path through the obstacle course.

3. Hide the “mystery item” at the end of the obstacle course.

Say, “I made an obstacle course! I hid a mystery item at the end of the obstacle course. You get to choose spatial words to help you walk through the obstacle course and find the mystery item. But first, let’s practice our spatial words.”

4. Choose one item (e.g., a pillow) from the course to use when practicing the spatial words.

Hold up the “over” card and say, “What do you think this card means? This card means that you jump **over** something! Can you show me how you jump **over** the pillow?” Wait for the child to demonstrate **over**.



5. Then, practice the remaining spatial words. Hold up each spatial card and wait for children to demonstrate its direction.

“Can you show me how you go **under** the pillow?”

“Can you show me how you go **around** the pillow?”

“Can you show me **inside** the pillow?”

6. Let children be creative in how they model each card (e.g., slithering **under** the pillow on the floor like a snake, poking the stuffing of the pillow to show **inside**, etc.). Once children have practiced each spatial word, move on to **Obstacle Course Part 2: The Course!**

## WHAT CHILDREN ARE LEARNING

- Early spatial skills predict children’s later success in science, engineering, technology, and math.

- Spatial language helps us describe where things or people are in space: try using words like above, under, between, beside, around, up, and down when you describe the location of a person or object!
- Hearing, learning, and using spatial language helps children develop the spatial skills they need in elementary school.