

Old MacDonald Had A Fitness Farm

Sing the classic farm song — but every animal comes with its own fitness move.

SCAN TO SEE IT PLAYED



The core game

How it works

- 1 Sing the chorus of Old MacDonald Had a Fitness Farm to the classic tune, replacing 'E-I-E-I-O' with the same letters sung the same way.
- 2 For each new verse, introduce a new animal and its matching exercise: squats for the first animal, commandos for the second, crunches for the third, plank jacks for the fourth, and lunges for the fifth.
- 3 Perform the exercise every time that animal's line appears in the song — just like in the original, each new verse builds on all the previous ones.
- 4 Finish the final verse doing all exercises in sequence, from squats all the way through to lunges, then take a bow!

Ways to play

Two versions for every occasion

Way 1 — Full Song Workout

Best for 2+ players · Backyard, living room, or any open space

- Clear some floor space and assign a leader to start the song.
- Verse 1: 'With a squat, squat here and a squat, squat there' — everyone squats on each 'squat'.
- Verse 2: Add commandos — lie down and push up to a plank and back, each time 'commando' appears.
- Verse 3: Add crunches — sit up and reach each time 'crunch' is sung.
-

Way 2 — Morning Energiser

Best for 1-4 players · Bedroom or kitchen, before school

- Choose just two or three animals from the song to keep it short — squats, crunches, and plank jacks work well.
- Set a timer for three minutes and sing through those verses as many times as you can.
- Whoever performs the most complete repetitions of each exercise wins bragging rights for the day.
- Finish with ten deep breaths and a stretch — you're officially warmed up and ready to go.

Verse 4: Add plank jacks — jump feet wide and together in a plank; Verse 5: Add lunges, then sing the final cumulative verse combining all moves.

TIP FOR PARENTS

Try this at home

Don't worry about doing the exercises perfectly — the goal is to keep moving and keep singing. Laughing when someone does a squat at the wrong moment is half the fun, and it keeps kids coming back for more.

THE SCIENCE OF
PLAY

Why it works

Combining familiar music with movement leverages the brain's natural tendency to link rhythm and motor patterns, making exercise feel effortless and memorable. Research shows that exercising to a known song reduces perceived effort and increases enjoyment — especially in children — making it easier to build a regular movement habit.

SCHOOL ' HOME

The connection

Your child brought some serious fitness-farm energy to school today — ask them to teach you their favourite verse when they get home, and let them be the trainer for once.