

# Restrictions

by Frida Karlsson Lindgren and Sofia Stenler

**3+**

**Players**

Facilitator recommended.



**45**

**Minutes**



**Intensity**

**Supplies:**

Pens, paper, tape, room to move, a way to stream music, optional loudspeakers.

**Keywords:**

Dancing, nonverbal interaction, physical contact, intergroup dynamics.

## Background

In our culture, the way we are gendered restricts how and where we are permitted to move our bodies. This scenario explores that. It is a nonverbal game and plays with exaggerated stereotypes, to magnify these patterns and thereby make them visible. Furthermore, we hope you will simply enjoy moving together.

This game does not need a game master, but someone needs to inform the other players about how this game is played.

## Setup

Divide players, by lottery, into green or red groups. Try to have about the same number of players in each color.

Divide the room into three unequal parts using tape on the floor. The smallest part is for Red characters only, the next for Green only, and the largest is for both. The two smaller parts can be quite small.

## Facilitator Instructions

Tell players that the game is played with movement only, wordlessly. Talk about the theme and explain the two roles, Green and Red. Talk about the setup of the room, the different phases of the game, and the restrictions for Green and Red characters. If you feel the need, discuss your limits regarding physical contact with other players. Finally, let everyone know that it's okay to laugh during the game because sometimes it is quite silly.

The following restrictions dictate players' movement and interactions:

### Restrictions for Red

- Move in an oscillating, undulating style, never directly.
- Always look slightly downwards.
- Always touch with open hands, never with closed fists.
- Give way to greens.

### Restrictions for Green

- Move by ambling (i.e. left foot and shoulder at same time, then right side, etc.).
- Move only in straight lines.
- Always look slightly upwards.
- Only touch other greens with a closed fist.
- Touch reds with an open or closed hand as you prefer.

### Restrictions for all:

- You are only allowed to move in the two-color space and in your color space, never in the space for the other color.
- Alone, you cannot initiate interaction with a group of the other color. The group of two or more people of the other color can choose to interact with you if they wish, but are never obligated to do so. If you gather others into a group, you can initiate interaction with a group of the other color.

## Play

This game consists of three main phases (about 5 minutes each) and a short wind-down phase, all of which are accompanied by music. For three or four players, use one song for each phase, separated by the bell sound. For more players add more songs to phases two and three. It is a good idea for the facilitator to note the current phase on a whiteboard so everyone can see them during the game.

### Phase One:

Explore the space and interact within the limitations. Move together and apart, but do not form relationships yet.

### Phase Two:

Try to form a relationship with one or more people. This is done by "spooning". To spoon, one person embraces another from behind while standing and the two grasp one another's hands. A bit like the Lindy-hop move Tandem Charleston or Back Charleston (Google it!). Everyone involved has to hold hands for it to be a relationship. If one person holds on to another who does not reciprocate, they need to move apart after a little while. Move together and continue to interact with others. Form and break apart.

### Phase Three:

Try to form a relationship as before, but now you may only choose someone from the other color, and only one person at the time. Green must be the bigger spoon. You do not want to be alone. If you are, try to break up others. If you are in a relationship, break apart as soon as things become comfortable, if not before.

### Phase Four:

Wind down. Move as yourself, free of the restrictions of this game.

### Aftermath

Discuss and move about, unhindered by gender stereotypes.

### Game Hack

Allow switching of roles. Metatalk about your experiences as you play.

### Suggested Playlist:

<https://open.spotify.com/user/sofia.stenler/playlist/21N7poS5CI6ffD9ICI9Pd8>

A bell sound signals a change of phase in the playlist. The Swedish folk tune is for the final wind-down phase. Additional music for use in the earlier phases can be found after this song.

We chose some Contact Improv tunes with different feelings for the different phases.

If you don't want to use our playlist, you can probably find something suitable on YouTube.

Sample play list for three to four players:

“Hybrid” by Michael Brook; “Valiha” by Del Jef Gilson; “No Seas Antipática” by Juana Molina, and “Swedish Folk Tune” by Andrew Bird.

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## About the Designers

Frida Karlsson Lindgren (Sweden) is a psychology student, larp lecturer, and game master with a firm belief that people talk too much, and not enough.

Sofia Stenler (Sweden) holds a Ph.D in gene therapy, a black belt in Jujutsu and is a long time larper. Sofia is the president of the association Ursula, through which she organized *UnderStockholm*, an urban fantasy project that examined alienation, and *Last Will*, a dystopian future larp about poverty, agency, and self-worth.