

21 Pirate Pursuits

At our camp, cabin groups are given a half hour every other day for a counselor directed activity. The following activities were created to match our division theme of Seven Seas. Within the Seven Seas, the third and fourth grade boys are divided into four groups called the Marauders, the Swashbucklers, the Raiders, and the Buccaneers. The following pirate themed activities were designed to challenge these pint-sized pirates during that CDA time, but your camp could easily modify these activities for use as station-type evening programs. Providing each camper with a pirate bandana and a tattoo (both available cheaply from Rhode Island Novelty) adds to the fun. (By the way, we also have what are called the **Seven Cs** of the Seven Seas: **cooperation, competition, collaboration, courtesy, creativity, camaraderie, and celebration**. These could likewise be worked into your weekly program).

1. Name Games

(Since our boys are together all summer, these were used to make introductions. Sorry, but they're not too pirate-themed).

Game One: Name Pass

Materials: two foam balls

- First stage: I say my name, and pass the ball. I then cross my arms. The catcher says his name, passes the ball, and crosses his arms. And so on.
- Second stage: Repeat the game, exactly the same.
- Third stage: Repeat the game again, but now, I do not say my name, I only say the name of the person to whom I am passing the ball. Arms still get crossed.
- Fourth stage: Repeat the game again, same rules, but with two balls, and no arm crossing. Stop only when counselor says stop.

Game Two: Action-Interests Name Game

No materials needed.

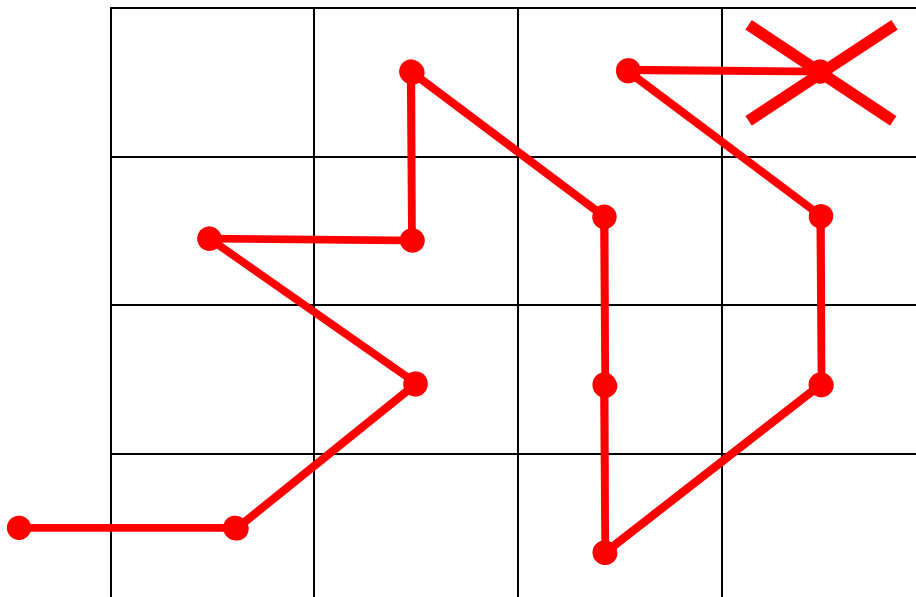
Tell campers: Think of a hobby, sport, or interest you enjoy, and then think of some action that can represent that. Take a moment to move around in your space and come up with one movement that represents

your interest. This can be something as simple as a movement of the arm, or it can involve your whole body. (Perhaps have a couple of "hams" that know this exercise demonstrate for everyone else). A counselor will go first and do his movement, saying his name as he does it. Now everyone says that counselor's name and does the movement at the same time. Now the person on his left will do his name and movement. Everyone should repeat this, and then repeat the first name–movement again. Continue until everyone in the circle has had a turn.

2. Treasure Map

Participants must work together to “break the code” and follow a mystery path laid out on a 4 x 4 or 5 x 5 grid (drawn on the cement with chalk). Every member must follow the predetermined path which utilizes no single square more than once. The only squares which are marked are the **Start** square and the **X** (treasure square). Players go one at a time, continuing on what they believe is the correct path. The counselor provides feedback by either remaining silent (which signifies accuracy) or by saying “Arrr!” (which signifies a misstep). A player who steps on the wrong square is sent to the back of the line, where he/she can observe other players’ attempts in order to discover the correct sequence.

(The leader would need the map laid out on paper, in a fashion similar to this, in order to correctly judge players’ movements).



3. Confounded Knots

The group stands in a circle, shoulders touching (groups should ideally be about ten participants). Participants raise their right hands over their heads and grab the right hand of the person directly across the circle from them. Now with their left hands, they should grab the hands of any other person in the circle. Without letting go, the group must unravel so that they are again standing in a circle.

4. Plunder Wonder

Pirates have plundered treasures from our camp! First, have campers consider what items might have been taken. Tell where the items were stolen from (recreation, dining hall, arts and crafts, etc.). Prior to this, the leader places about 30-40 objects on a table and covers them with a sheet. Now, each team in turn is brought to the table and the sheet is removed for 30 seconds. The team goes back to its place and lists all the objects it can recall (counselors can record the information). Teams are awarded one point for each object. The leader then reveals the objects one at a time, seeking some information first to further test observation skills ("What color were the scissors? How many spoons were there total?"). It's always funny to hear what campers *think* they saw! (There are several variations to this, including one in which the leader removes one object at a time, and players must identify what was removed during each subsequent unveiling).

5. Earn the Rank or Walk the Plank

Counselors are asked to answer questions relating to ocean and pirate life; in order to be safe a counselor must answer two questions correctly. (Using electronic game buzzers makes the process easier). The last counselor remaining is forced to walk the plank. Other competitions can be substituted.

6. Plug the Bucket

Campers are divided into two teams. Each is presented with a bucket that has at least a dozen holes drilled into it at various heights. A good distance away is a source of water for filling the bucket (a larger bucket of water or a garbage can full of water). Each team is given eight cups. The team's task is to decide how many campers should plug holes and how

many campers should fetch water. The first team to fill the bucket to a designated height wins.

7. Buried Treasure (Memory)

A Memory board is created by gluing a number of envelopes to a large piece of cardboard (an array of 4 by 6 will provide for 24 cards, which is a good number for an average length game). The envelopes are numbered (1 through 24) and pairs of pirate-related picture cards are randomly placed into the envelopes. The first player chooses two numbers. If the two pictures match, that team keeps the cards. If the pictures don't match, they're placed back into the envelopes. The team with the most cards by game's end wins. (The picture cards are a separate file; email me if you need them: klschoch@aol.com).

8. R!

The point of this game is to unscramble letters to form words. Campers are divided into two teams that form into two circles some distance apart. In each team, each camper is given a card (two if needed) with both a number and huge letter (cards are provided below). The leader calls out a series of numbers (such as 2, 12, and 3) from a prepared list (also available below). The campers with those numbered cards quickly meet in the center of the circle and attempt to form the letters into a word. The first team forming a word gets a point. Any words which are pirate related are announced in advance and are worth double points. Counselors may assist with more difficult words which are not formed within a set amount of time. As a last challenge, the team that can form the BIG WORD using all the letters receives triple points. (Why is this game called R? Because every word on the list has at least one R).

9. Musical Islands

A nautical alternative to the old party standby, Musical Chairs. Simply replace the chairs with "islands" represented by hula hoops and scatter them around the area. Make sure you have two or three less islands than you have pirates, and start the music. When the music stops, the pirates left island-less is out of the game.

10. Pass the Parrot

Played like Hot Potato, but with a stuffed parrot or similar pirate item used as the passed item. When the music stops, the person holding the object is out.

11. Swab the Deck

Campers are divided into two teams. In this relay race, campers use brooms to sweep ping pong balls (or any other kind of ball) across a designated space. To make it more difficult, hazards such as tunnels or inclines could be added.

12. Ship Wreck

Set up a row of chairs, one chair behind another. Players sit and count off (players keep these numbers throughout game). Everyone sits except for one player, the "Captain." He/she stands in front of chairs and calls out a series of numbers (at least two), and yells "Ship Wreck!" That phrase is the cue for people whose numbers were called to change chairs (all others remain seated). At same time, Captain attempts to take a seat. Remaining person is now the Captain. Play again in same manner. If Captain calls out "Abandon Ship!" then all players must change seats. (Larger groups can form several lines, but players cannot change rows).

13. Bombardment

In this dodgeball variation, the group is divided into two teams, separated by center line which cannot be crossed by any player. Four batons (bowling pins) are given to each team, and they must be stood on end along a line at an appropriate distance from the center line (same distance for both teams). Each baton is placed within a hula hoop (which creates a boundary that cannot be entered by players attempting to protect the baton). The object of the game is to knock down all of the opponents' batons or get all opponents out. If a player gets hit, he/she stands along the side, closest to center line. The next player out stands beside the first, so that a line begins to form in order that players were eliminated. The referee normally stands at center to monitor the "out" lines. Players can protect batons, but must remain standing. Accidental knock downs count, and batons cannot be reset (they are simply rolled out of playing area). If a player catches a ball, he/she indicates that and the first "out" player can return to the game (the easiest way to do this is that they pass the ball they've caught to that player, who then reenters the game with ball in

hand. The thrower of a caught ball is not out. Missed attempts at catching a ball result is an "out". Game ends when all batons are down or all players on a team are out. (In this game, as in #20, I recommend Rhino Skin balls, which are rubber coated foam rubber balls typically smaller in diameter than kickballs. DO NOT USE KICKBALLS).

14. Sword Swat

For this game you need a foam rubber sword, or a length of foam rubber pipe insulation, or another similar soft sword-like object. All players sit in a circle, with exactly enough chairs in circle for each person (although chairs are not needed). Leader stands in middle, by empty chair. Leader walks around inside of circle, and swats someone (lightly). After doing this, he runs and places sword on the empty chair in center (he must pick it up if it falls off), and then runs to get chair vacated by person he hit. That person, meanwhile, runs and picks up bat off of chair, and tries to hit leader before he sits down. If leader safely sits down, the new person must do the swatting. If leader is swatted before seated, he must continue as leader, and swat someone else. If sword falls off the chair, the swatted person is safe and can return to his seat. Continue in this way.

15. Steal the Treasure

Divide players equally into two teams. Give every camper on each team a number (so that there are matching numbers on each team). Have teams form two lines, facing each other, 40 feet apart. Place "treasure" in center of field (a stuffed animal). Leader calls number (or numbers), and campers with corresponding numbers run out and attempt to grab the treasure and return to their line without being tagged. Points are given only if team gets treasure to the line (no points for tagging).

16. Parrot's Tail

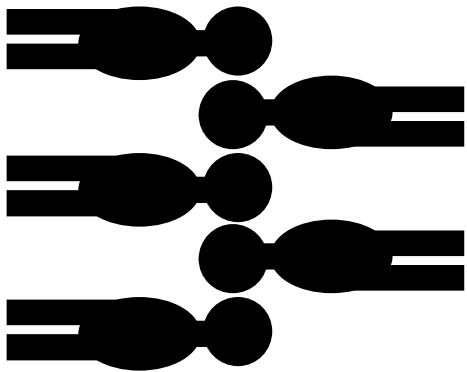
Each player inserts a handkerchief (parrot's tail) in hip pocket or waistband of pants, so that it extends out about three inches. At signal, each attempts to pull out other's handkerchief and protect his own. All tactics are fair except unnecessary roughness. Losers must retire to sideline. From the sidelines, however, they can also reach in (but not step in) to pull tails from remaining players. Player or team with most "scalps" wins.

17. Pirate Pictionary

An activity very similar to "Win, Lose, or Draw." Each team sends one person to the leader who provides a name or title to be drawn (related to the ocean or pirate life). Each runner must return to his or her team, and on the word "go!" must draw the title or name, without using any numbers or letters as clues. First team to guess correctly wins ten points (have that artist show all groups the drawing). Groups choose a new artist (be sure everyone gets a chance) and game continues. Specific words could be decided beforehand, and then put on slips of paper to be drawn from a hat. Decide also if you will allow groups to see each other's pads (if not, then place pads in circle facing outward, and arrange groups like the spokes of a wheel).

18. Man Overboard

The object of this cooperative activity is to move a rigid person from one end of a line of players to another. All participants except spotter and volunteer lay on floor, ear to ear in a row, bodies alternating directions (see horrible diagram below). They should be as close to each other as



possible. All participants then put hands straight up in the air, palms up. Volunteer then sits on first set of hands, and spotter helps him/her to lay back on other sets of hands. Volunteer stays stiff, and holds arms out crucifix-style for balance.

Participants then proceed to pass volunteer down the line. It works very well, but only if people on floor all help to carry the load. Spotter helps

person off the end of the line.

19. Alarm

Divide players into two equal teams. A player from side one enters side two's area, and has exactly 30 seconds to tag as many players as he can, scoring one point for each one tagged. Player calls out number of opponents he has tagged every time he tags one. No one can be tagged twice in a row, but all can be tagged as many times as possible. Once the 30 seconds are up, leader calls out "ALARM!" and player must make it back to center line without being tagged. If he makes it, his team scores a point for every opponent that was tagged. If he doesn't make it, the

opposing team scores half that many points. A player from side two now enters one's side, and so the game continues until every player has gone, or time is up. Total up points for both sides to determine winner.

20. Mutiny

In this dodgeball variation which is also called *Every Man for Himself*, players are spread out on perimeter of playing area. Balls are spread out on the interior. At signal, players move forward, grab the nearest ball, and start throwing. Any player hit returns to the perimeter. As in traditional Dodgeball, if you catch a ball that was thrown at you, the throwing player is out. Players who were hit are technically “out,” but they “come back to life” (rejoin the game), when the player who put them out is, in turn, hit, and sent out. So if Player A eliminates seven other players, those seven players are immediately back in the game when Player A gets hit and put out. Last player standing is the sole survivor, although this game rarely ever ends with one survivor (you may want to play it in five minute increments). (In this game, as in #13, I recommend Rhino Skin balls, which are rubber coated foam rubber balls typically smaller in diameter than kickballs. DO NOT USE KICKBALLS).

21. Day in the Life of a Pirate

This is simply an obstacle course, which is only limited by your imagination. Campers can run it individually, or in a parallel format as team against team. Some possibilities:

- swim through the ocean (across a blue tarp that's hosed down);
- walk the plank (across an elevated board) while avoiding the flying fish (wet sponges lobbed by staff);
- board the ship (over a bench or stack of tires);
- navigate the cave (through a play tunnel);
- shimmy under the sail (a suspended parachute or sheet);
- explode a cannonball (sit on and bust a balloon); and survive the storm at sea (a bucket of water poured over their head).

The availability of other equipment provides for dozens of variations.

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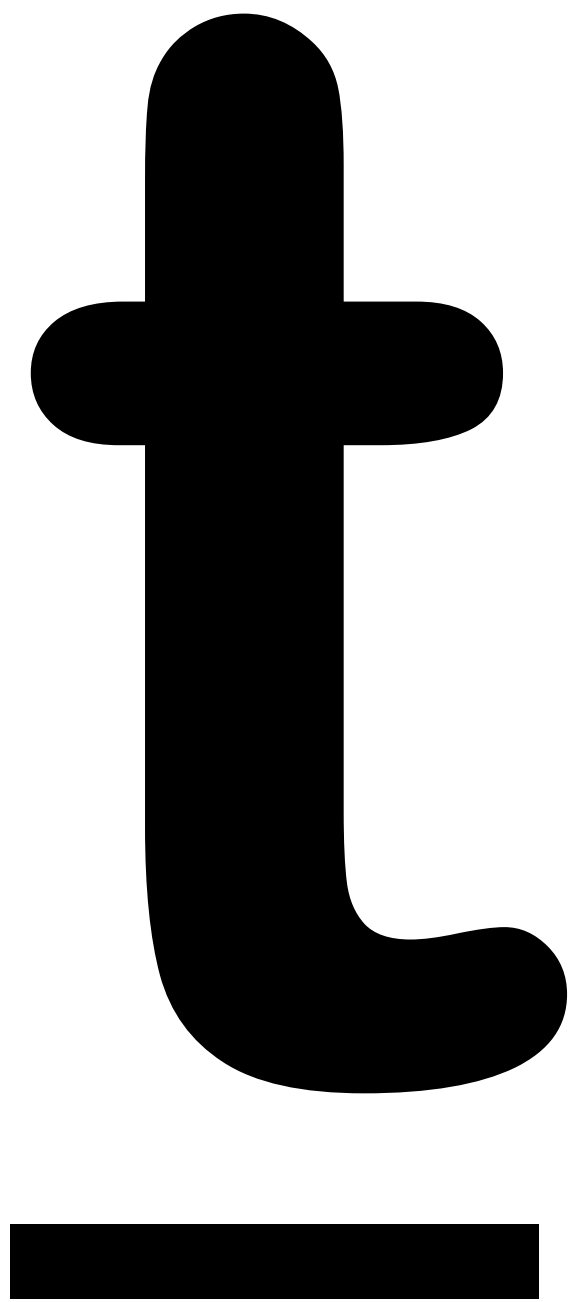
(the pirate spelling game)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
t	r	a	n	s	p	o	r	t	a	t	i	o	n

air, 2, 12, 3
 airport, 8, 10, 2, 12, 6, 13, 9
 apart, 3, 10, 6, 2, 11
 apron, 6, 10, 13, 8, 4
 art, 3, 2, 1
 artist, 12, 10, 5, 8, 11, 9
 iron, 8, 12, 7, 14
 nitro, 12, 4, 13, 2, 9,
oar, 2, 13, 3,
 pair, 8, 10, 12, 6
parrot, 2, 6, 7, 11, 8, 3
 part, 6, 8, 1, 10
 patriot, 3, 6, 11, 1, 2, 12, 7
 pirana, 3, 12, 2, 6, 10, 14
 poor, 13, 7, 6, 8
port, 2, 6, 1, 7
 print, 9, 8, 6, 14, 12,
prison, 6, 14, 12, 5, 8, 13
rain, 4, 10, 12, 2
 ran, 4, 3, 2
 raptor, 7, 10, 8, 6, 11, 2
rat, 8, 9, 10

ration, 11, 10, 12, 14, 8, 13,
 riot, 12, 7, 2, 1
 rips, 5, 6, 12, 8
roars, 2, 8, 7, 3, 5
 roast, 5, 10, 13, 2, 9
 rotation, 7, 9, 11, 2, 10, 14, 7,
 12
rots, 1, 8, 5, 7,
sir, 8, 5, 12
 snort, 2, 4, 7, 5, 9
 soar, 3, 5, 13, 2
 sonar, 10, 4, 5, 7, 8
 sort, 8, 5, 13, 11
 sport, 2, 7, 6, 5, 1
 sprint, 6, 14, 5, 8, 12, 1
 stir, 11, 8, 12, 5
 stop, 9, 6, 7, 5
tar, 10, 9, 2
 tarp, 8, 1, 3, 6
tattoo, 1, 9, 11, 7, 13, 3
 train, 3, 12, 4, 8, 1
traitor, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 2, 1
trip, 6, 2, 12,

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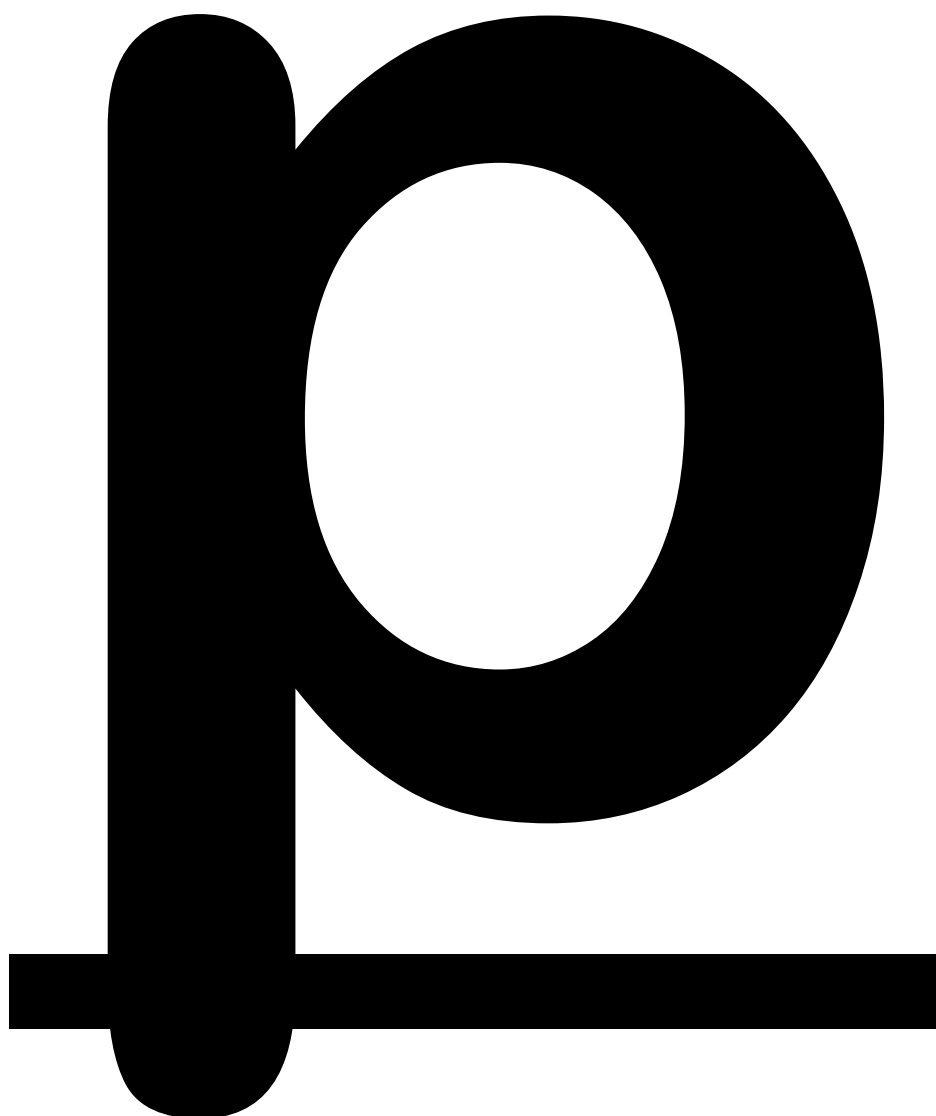


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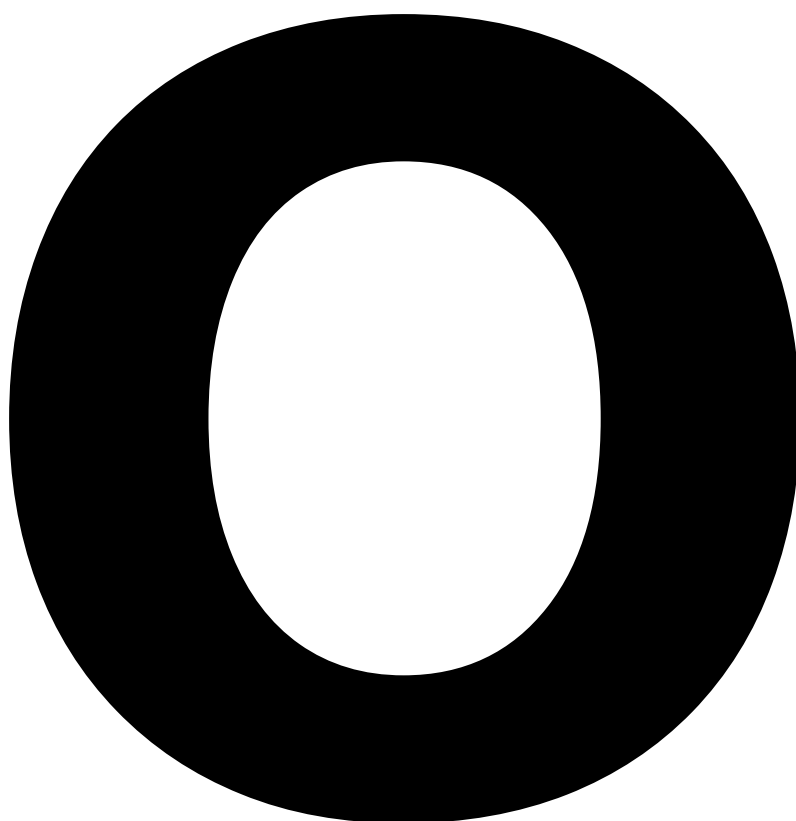
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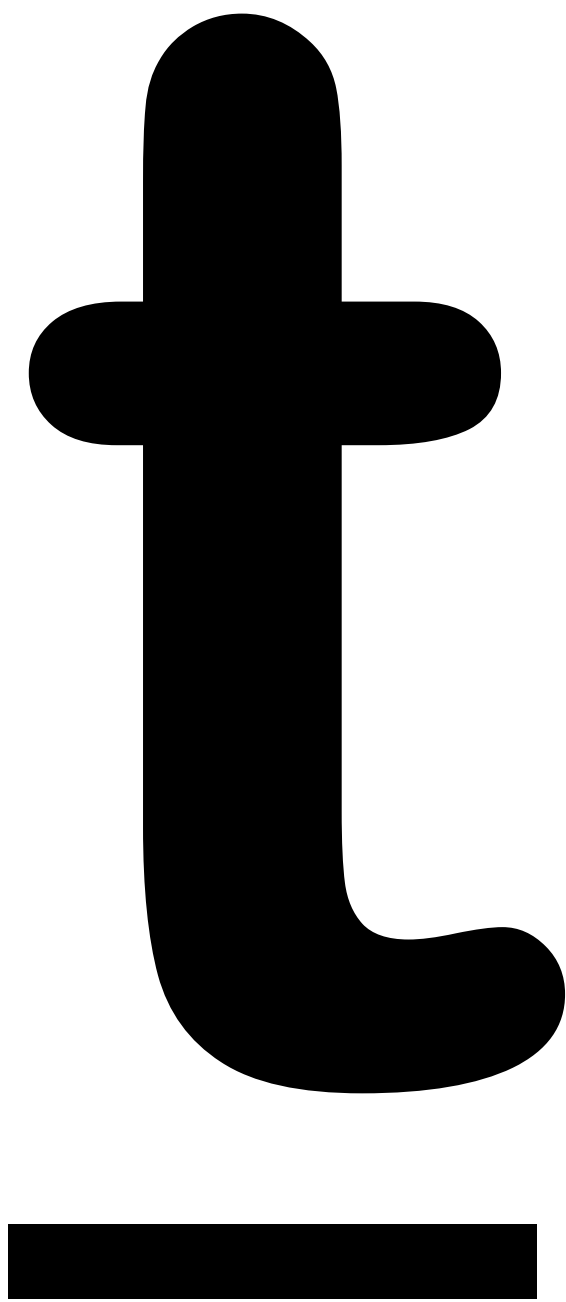
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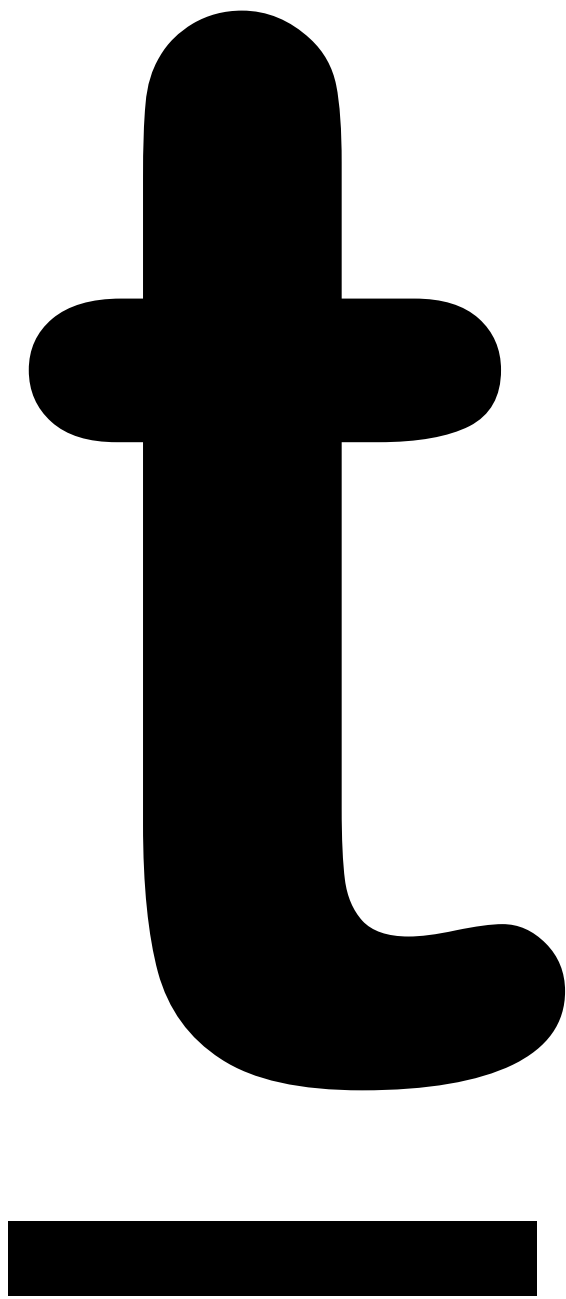
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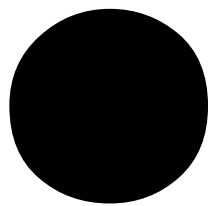
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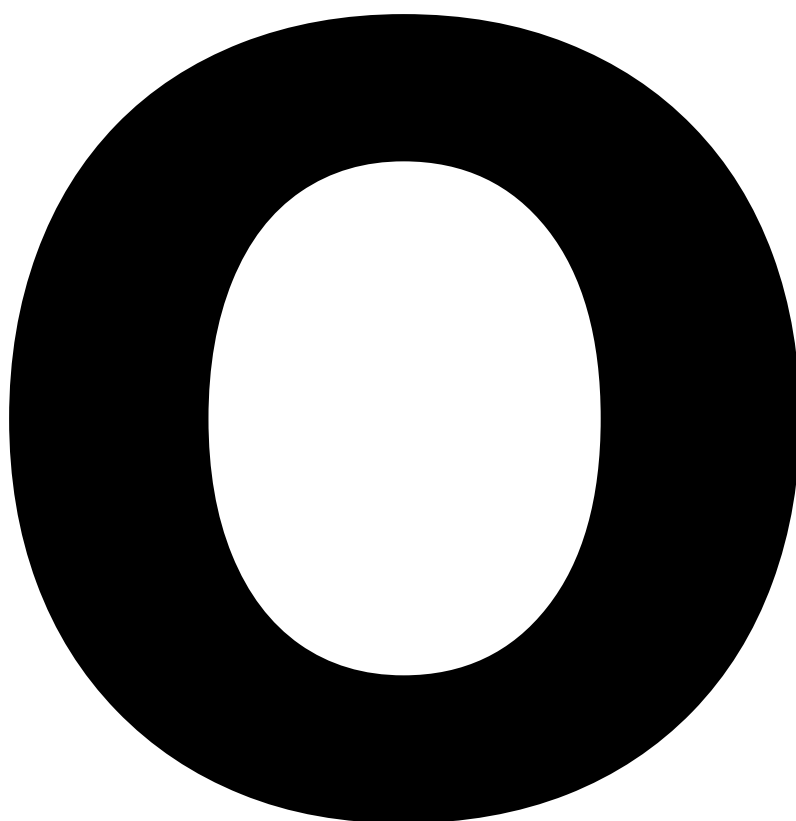


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