Ant Power Lift Races

These fun, family games are designed for full participation and enjoyment. While playing you and your family can have a good time and learn a little about the marvelous world of ants. Make any changes you would like. Adapt to your home, ages of your kids, and your family needs and abilities. Everyone can play.

To play this game, gather a big pile of bulky items you have in your house. We are looking for things that won’t break when dropped. Suggestions include pillows and cushions, stuffed animals, and large towels. These will be used to make the bulky weight the ants lift and carry in their races.

You will also need a bed sheet or light blanket for each player plus one. The sheets/blankets will serve to hold an ever-growing bundle of mass and weight in a sheet wrapped bundle. Figure out what you can use to ‘tie’ the bundles. Maybe belts, big rubber bands, shoelaces or rope pieces so the items won’t fall out.

Fun Fact

Ants can carry up to 50 times their weight. If the average 10-year-old could lift as much as an aunt, they could easily lift a small car.
Find a space where you can run a little distance. One end of the open space, is the start/finish line. Use a wall or furniture like a couch or chairs to designate the other end of the racing space. In these races the ants are racing from the start/finish line to the designated other end, touching it, turning around and running back. In each race their carrying loads get progressively larger.

In this game, all children and adults are ants. If there is one child, the adult ant races the child ant. Of course adults can race no matter how many children ants there are!

**Race One**

Each ant fills a pillow case with mass and weight. All ants step to the starting line and put their pillow case load down in front of them. Together all ants yell, "Ants Get ready!" to focus their attention. At the cry of "Ants Get Set!" ants pick up their loads. At "Ants Go!" the race begins with ants running carrying their loads to the turnaround spot. They touch the spot with their elbow or their backside, turn around, and race back with the load.

**Race Two**

Each ant spreads out a sheet or a blanket on the floor and places the filled pillowcase from race number one in the middle and adds more volume from the pile of pillows and jackets etc. Try for twice as big. Use your judgment. Roll the sheet bundle up and secure the with belts, ropes or what have you.

Run race two the same way as race one. If it doesn’t work well for all the ants to yell out the starting calls together, an adult ant or designated child ant may act as the starter.
ANT POWER LIFT RACES

RACE 3—TEAM CHALLENGE

Spread out another sheet or blanket and place all the bundles all the ants carried in race two. This should be a Super Duper Load. The entire team of ants carries the big load together running the race as in the previous races with this extra challenge. During the race Team Ant attempts to communicate nonverbally.

Ants have no ears. Some of them have no eyes. They communicate with touch, body language, sound and scent. See if you can communicate without words while moving your heavy load.

Set a timer. Do the race twice. Can Team Ant beat its own time?

Now you are prepared for the team and obstacle course carrying challenge! In this last and most challenging race, Team Ant will go through the house and designate a route for the race. The challenge is to reenact taking a load, say a dead grasshopper, from outside your colony where you found it and carrying it safely back through the tunnels of your colony into the place you store food. With adult supervision, the ants decide on an obstacle course through which the team will carry the giant load. The obstacle course represents the tunnels of the ant colony. Clear the space! Make sure nothing can be knocked over or broken. Here is a possible example of a course route to inspire you. You could maybe go around the couch, under the table, down the hall, into a bedroom, over a bed and finish by putting the load down in a corner space designated the food storage area.

You can make your obstacle course as long or as short as you want. Once everyone knows the obstacle course route, start with the load from the starting line.

Try to communicate nonverbally.

Set a timer.

"Ants get ready! Ants get set! Ants go!"

How did you do moving this large load as a group? Try again. Can you beat your time?

Have fun.

FUN FACT

Ants lived alongside dinosaurs 130 million years ago.

Ants need to drink water just like us.

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