Energizers for training: 48 seated-first resets for adult groups

Energizers for training are one- to five-minute resets that bring attention back in the middle of a session, after lunch, between modules or late in a long day. This page gives 48 original energisers for adult groups in eight situations, each with its time, the space it needs and a seated or chat version. None needs standing, touching, singing or personal disclosure, and most of them review the content as well.

5 minutes | 4–40 participants | Online and adaptable in person

Updated 2026-10-10

The outcome

In five minutes or less the group has done one short task, seated or in the chat, that changes the pace of the session, and you have said in one sentence how it links to the next module. Across a training day you have planned a reset into every stretch of content longer than about an hour, without anyone having to move, touch, perform alone or say anything personal.

Before the session

- For trainers and facilitators of adults at work who run half-day or full-day sessions for 4–40 people, in a room, online or hybrid. Energizers restore attention mid-session; icebreakers open a session.
- Mark every stretch of content longer than about an hour on your plan, then choose a card for each from the chooser table.
- Print and cut the card pages you need. For cards marked “Table and cards”, prepare the cards or slides the night before: statements, key points, shuffled steps or a planted-error example.
- Accessibility: say the seated or chat version first, put every instruction in writing as well as aloud, describe any slide used, and accept passes without comment.

Included in this kit

A facilitator run of show, participant worksheets with real tables, reference tables, debrief questions, adaptation notes and a follow-up plan. Use the editable Word copy to tailor examples and prompts before delivery.

Original material by Superglue. Timings are suggestions; adjust them to your participants. This resource has not been independently evaluated.

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Energizer ground rules

Every card in this kit keeps these six rules. Read the first and the fifth aloud before the first energizer of the day.

Rule	What you say	What it means in practice
Seated is the default	“Everything in the next few minutes works sitting down. Moving is optional.”	Nobody has to stand, walk or reach. Whoever moves and whoever stays seated is never named.
Nobody touches anyone	“You work with your own pen, paper or screen.”	No hand-holding, no passing objects round a circle, no physical contact of any kind.
Nobody performs alone	“Answers come from tables, pairs or the whole group at once.”	No singing, acting or speaking alone in front of the room. A spokesperson is a volunteer.
Nothing personal	“It is about the content, not about you.”	No questions on private life, health, background or feelings. Rating your own knowledge stays private or anonymous.
Passing is fine	“If you would rather watch this one, that is fine.”	A pass needs no reason. Do not call on someone again after a pass.
Short, and linked back	“Three minutes, then back to the module.”	Stop on time. Say in one sentence how the reset connects to what comes next.

Choose an energizer by situation

Find the situation, then start with the suggested card. Card numbers match the card pages and the workbook.

Situation	Cards	Signs you need one	Start with
After lunch	1–6	Slow answers, heavy eyes, people checking phones in the first 15 minutes after a meal.	Card 1 with paper on the tables, or card 4 with nothing.
A long online block	7–12	More cameras off than at the start, slow chat, an hour or more since the last pause.	Card 7 for one minute, or card 11 if you have breakout rooms.
Before a hard topic	13–18	The next module is demanding, unwelcome or sensitive, and the room is tense or flat.	Card 13, then card 17 if you want the questions first.
Between modules	19–24	The last module ended and the next starts with a new tool or topic.	Card 21 for one minute, or card 22 to sort what was learned.
Quick resets, two minutes or less	25–30	Attention drops in the middle of a module and you cannot stop for long.	Card 25, or card 28 if you want it to be about the content.
Review with energy	31–36	You want a pause that also checks what has stuck.	Card 33 with cards ready, or card 32 with paper only.
Large or hybrid groups	37–42	25 to 40 people, or a room plus a remote group on a screen.	Card 37, or card 41 to bring both groups in.
Late afternoon	43–48	The last third of a long day, before the final module.	Card 48 to hand the group a choice, or card 43.

Cards 1–12: after lunch, online

Cut between the rows. Cards 1–6: after lunch. Cards 7–12: a long online block. Time runs from invitation to link-back.

Card	Energizer	Time and space	Seated or chat version
1	Paper tower: Pairs get one sheet of A4 and 90 seconds to make the tallest shape that stands on its own, with no tape. Compare heights against a pen.	3 min Seat and paper	Fully seated. Online, each person builds alone and types the height in centimetres.
2	Four letters on the wall: Ask a multiple-choice question on the morning's content, with A to D on four walls. People point to a letter, walk to it or hold up a card.	4 min Seat only	Hold up a letter card or type the letter in the chat. Walking is never needed.
3	Sixty-second list: Tables have 60 seconds to list every way a task from this morning could go wrong. Count the lists, then fix the most likely one together.	3 min Seat and paper	Online, the whole group types its list in the chat at once.
4	Odd one out: Show four terms from the morning. Tables pick the odd one out and give a reason. Any answer with a sound reason counts.	3 min Seat only	Type the term and a five-word reason in the chat.
5	Sketch, no words: Each person sketches the morning's main idea in 30 seconds, no words. Neighbours guess what it shows. Showing it is optional.	3 min Seat and paper	Online, hold the sketch to the camera or describe it in five words in the chat.
6	Wrong answers only: Ask a simple question on the content. Tables give the most tempting wrong answer, then the right one and why the wrong one tempts.	4 min Seat only	Type the wrong answer first, then the right one, in the chat.
7	Far focus: Everyone looks at the farthest point they can see for 20 seconds, then types a guess of the distance in metres. Do not ask what they saw.	1 min Screen and chat	In a room, look out of a window or down a corridor. Typing is optional.
8	Hold until three: Ask a one-word question. Everyone types an answer but waits. On "three", all press Enter together. Read the spread aloud.	2 min Screen and chat	In a room, write the word on a card and hold it up on "three".
9	Mark the slide: Share a dense slide and switch on annotation. Each person stamps the one spot they would like explained again. Explain the busiest spot.	3 min Screen and chat	Type the slide area in the chat. In a room, use dot stickers on a printout.
10	Screen-off minute: Say: "Cameras off and microphones muted for sixty seconds. Rest your eyes or refill your water." Show a countdown and stay on screen.	1 min Screen and chat	In a room, dim the projector and give a quiet minute at the tables.
11	Five-word summary: Send pairs to breakout rooms for two minutes to agree a five-word summary of the last half hour. Each pair posts it in the chat.	4 min Screen and chat	Without breakouts, each person types their own five words.
12	Guess the poll: Run a one-question poll. Before the result, everyone types the share they expect for the top answer. Reveal and compare.	3 min Screen and chat	In a room, use a show of hands and written guesses.

Cards 13–24: hard topic, between modules

Cut between the rows. Cards 13–18: before a hard topic. Cards 19–24: between modules. Time runs from invitation to link-back.

Card	Energizer	Time and space	Seated or chat version
13	Sixty seconds of quiet: Say: “One minute of quiet before we start. Eyes open or closed, as you like. Then write one question you bring to this topic.” Collect nothing.	2 min Seat and paper	Online, cameras off for the minute. The question stays private.
14	Jargon check: Show five terms from the next module. Each person privately marks each 1, 2 or 3 for how well they could explain it. Poll anonymously on the hardest.	3 min Seat and paper	Use an anonymous poll for all five terms.
15	Two headlines: Tables write the trade-magazine headline if this change went badly, then the one if it went well. Read both aloud.	4 min Seat and paper	Online, type both headlines in the chat or a shared document.
16	Pick two ground rules: Show six ground rules for the next hour. Each person votes for two with a pen mark or a poll. Put the top two on the wall.	3 min Seat and paper	Use a poll or type two rule numbers in the chat.
17	Questions in the box: Everyone writes one question about the topic on a card, unsigned, and folds it into a box. Draw three and say when each will be answered.	4 min Seat and paper	Online, use an anonymous form or a private message to the trainer.
18	Myth or fact: Read three statements about the topic. Tables decide myth or fact and hold up a card. Reveal each answer with its source.	4 min Table and cards	Type M or F in the chat for each statement.
19	Bridge sentence: Each table completes: “The last module was about …, so the next one will need …”. Read two sentences aloud.	3 min Seat and paper	Type the sentence in the chat.
20	Pick a metaphor: Show six objects: a kettle, a map, a ladder, a key, an umbrella and a sieve. Tables pick the one that best explains the last module and say why in one sentence.	3 min Seat only	Type the object and the reason in the chat.
21	Clear the desk: Everyone puts away the last module’s papers and tabs, takes a fresh page and writes the next module’s title at the top.	1 min Seat and paper	Online, close the old tabs and open a new note.
22	Three-pile sort: Give each table six cards with the key points of the last module. Sort them into “use this week”, “use later” and “check with my manager”.	4 min Table and cards	Online, type each point’s number under the three headings.
23	Twenty-second teach-back: In pairs, each person explains one idea from the last module in 20 seconds. The partner replies with one word they will remember. Passing is fine.	3 min Seat only	Online, breakout pairs, or 20 typed words in the chat.
24	Steps in order: Show the steps of a process from the last module, shuffled. Tables write the right order. The first correct table reads it out.	3 min Seat and paper	Type the order as numbers in the chat.

Cards 25–36: quick resets, review

Cut between the rows. Cards 25–30: quick resets, two minutes or less. Cards 31–36: review with energy. Time runs from invitation to link-back.

Card	Energizer	Time and space	Seated or chat version
25	Stand or sit back: Say: “Thirty seconds to stand, stretch or simply sit back. Your choice.” Count down aloud. Nobody comments on who stands.	1 min Seat only	Online, the same invitation, with cameras optional.
26	Spot three changes: Show a slide for ten seconds, then a copy with three small changes: a word, a number and the position of a heading. The group names the changes.	2 min Seat only	Type the changes in the chat. Describe both slides aloud for anyone who cannot see them.
27	Alphabet sprint: Tables have 90 seconds to name a term from today for as many letters from A to Z as they can. Count the letters covered.	2 min Seat and paper	Online, the whole group types terms in the chat.
28	Half a sentence: Say the first half of a definition from today and stop. Anyone calls out or types the rest. Repeat with two more definitions.	1 min Seat only	Answers in the chat count the same as spoken ones.
29	Air and water: Open a window or the door, raise the blinds and invite people to refill their water. Restart after one minute.	1 min Seat only	Online, a one-minute pause to refill water, cameras off.
30	Silent ranking: Show four options, such as four ways to tell a client about a delay. Each person ranks them privately in 30 seconds, then compares with a neighbour.	2 min Seat and paper	Type the ranking as four letters in the chat.
31	Swap the quiz: Each table writes three quiz questions on the session so far and swaps them with another table. Answer, swap back and mark.	5 min Seat and paper	Online, each breakout room posts its questions in the chat for the next room.
32	Answer first: Give an answer, such as “within 24 hours”. Tables write the question from today’s content that it answers. Compare the questions.	3 min Seat and paper	Type the question in the chat.
33	True, false or it depends: Read four statements. Everyone holds up a card or types T, F or D. Ask one “it depends” to say what it depends on, or move on if they pass.	4 min Table and cards	Type T, F or D in the chat.
34	Find the three errors: Show a filled example with three planted mistakes. Tables have two minutes to find them. Reveal and explain each one.	4 min Seat and paper	Share the example on screen and take answers in the chat.
35	Definition grid: Each person has a grid of nine terms, three by three. Read definitions in any order. People tick the matching term. The first full line calls “line”.	5 min Table and cards	Share the grid as a file and take “line” in the chat.
36	Five-step checklist: Tables have three minutes to write a five-step checklist for a task from today. Compare with your own list and note what each table added.	5 min Seat and paper	Online, each breakout room writes in a shared document.

Cards 37–48: large groups, late afternoon

Cut between the rows. Cards 37–42: large or hybrid groups. Cards 43–48: late afternoon. Time runs from invitation to link-back.

Card	Energizer	Time and space	Seated or chat version
37	Fingers for numbers: Ask a question with an answer from 0 to 5. Everyone holds up fingers or types the number. Describe the spread aloud.	2 min Seat only	Type the number in the chat. A spoken number counts too.
38	Table race: Each table or breakout room is a team. Ask five quick questions. Teams write each answer on a card and show it, or post it in the chat.	5 min Table and cards	Remote teams post in the chat. Read every answer aloud.
39	Remote asks the room: Remote participants ask the room one quiz question on today's content. Tables answer on paper. Then the room asks the remote group one question back.	4 min Seat and paper	Remote answers go in the chat and are read aloud.
40	One-word cloud: Everyone submits one word for the most useful idea so far, by poll or sticky note. Read out the three most frequent words.	3 min Seat and paper	Use a word-cloud poll or the chat.
41	Random table: Number the tables and breakout rooms. Roll a die or show a random number. That team has 30 seconds to agree an answer to a content question, or passes it on.	4 min Seat only	Remote teams take part by number like any table.
42	Five in an office: Teams have two minutes to list five examples of today's concept in an ordinary, fictional office. Read the most unusual example from each team.	3 min Seat and paper	Type the list in the chat or a shared document.
43	Talk walk or talk seated: Pairs discuss one question about the next task for four minutes. Pairs who want to may walk the corridor. Others stay seated.	5 min Seat only	Online, pairs in breakout rooms with cameras optional.
44	Rename the module: Tables give the afternoon's module a more useful title in under eight words. Vote for the best one and use it on the next slide.	3 min Seat and paper	Type titles in the chat and vote with a reaction.
45	Parking check: Read the open questions on the parking board. Each person ticks the ones they also want answered. Answer the top two now.	4 min Seat and paper	Online, list the questions in a poll that allows several answers.
46	Hundred-word case: Read a fictional work problem of about 100 words. Tables have three minutes to agree the first step, using a tool from today.	5 min Seat and paper	Online, paste the case in the chat and use breakout rooms.
47	Which tool fits: Give each table eight short fictional situations on cards. Sort them by the tool from the course that fits each one best.	5 min Table and cards	Online, number the situations and type the tool for each.
48	Choose the next format: Offer two ways to run the next exercise, such as pairs or tables, paper or discussion. The group votes by hands or poll. Run the winner.	2 min Seat only	Vote by poll or in the chat.

Energizer day planner

One row per module, break or energizer. Plan a reset into every stretch of content longer than about an hour. Write the card number and check that the space and materials are ready.

Course: _____ Date: _____ Room or platform: _____ People: _____

Start	Minutes	Module, break or energizer	Card	Space and materials ready

Filled example: energizers in a one-day course

A fictional in-person course, “Writing clear reports”, for 14 people on Tuesday 3 November 2026, 09:00 to 16:30. Six energizers take 20 of the 450 minutes (4.4%). The longest stretch of content is 60 minutes.

Start	Minutes	Type	Activity	Card
09:00	60	Module	Module 1: what the reader needs. Opens with an icebreaker question.	–
10:00	4	Energizer	Three-pile sort on the module 1 key points	22
10:04	41	Module	Module 2: structure and headings	–
10:45	15	Break	Morning break	–
11:00	3	Energizer	Steps in order: the five steps of planning a report	24
11:03	57	Module	Module 3: plain sentences	–
12:00	45	Break	Lunch	–
12:45	3	Energizer	Paper tower in pairs	1
12:48	52	Module	Module 4: tables and figures	–
13:40	4	Energizer	Find the three errors in a fictional summary table	34
13:44	46	Module	Module 5: editing your own draft	–
14:30	15	Break	Afternoon break	–
14:45	5	Energizer	Hundred-word case: a report the reader ignored	46
14:50	35	Module	Module 6, part 1: rewrite practice in pairs	–
15:25	1	Energizer	Stand or sit back, half way through the practice	25
15:26	34	Module	Module 6, part 2: peer feedback on the rewrite	–
16:00	30	Close	Closing activity and evaluation form	–

Facilitator run of show

1 Name the reset and the options | 1 minute

Say: “Let us take a short reset before we go on. It takes a few minutes. You can do all of it sitting down, and you can type instead of speaking. If you would rather watch this one, that is fine.” Show the instruction on a slide or paste it in the chat. Do not explain why the group needs a break.

2 Run the energizer from the card | 3 minutes

Read the card aloud once. Start a visible timer. Give the seated or chat version in the same breath as the main one: “Hold up a card or type the letter.” Walk the room or watch the chat, but do not comment on who joins in or how. Stop on time, even if some tables are not finished: “Pens down. Thank you.” These timings fit a five-minute card. For a shorter card, shorten this step and keep the invitation and the link-back to one sentence each, so that a one-minute card takes one minute in all.

3 Link back and move on | 1 minute

Take one or two answers, from volunteers only. Then say one sentence that connects the reset to what comes next: “You found three errors in that table. In the next module you will check your own tables for the same three.” Note the card number on your plan. Move straight into the next module.

Reference tables

Make any energizer work for everyone

Seven adjustments that apply to every card. Plan them before the session, not when someone asks.

If	Change this
Someone cannot or prefers not to move	Use the seated version on the card. Say it first, so that sitting is the normal choice, not the exception.
The group is online	Use the chat version. Read the question aloud and paste it as plain text. Read typed answers aloud.
The group is hybrid	Let remote people answer first and read their answers aloud. Pair or team the remote group like any table.
Someone uses a screen reader or cannot see the slide	Describe every slide used in the energizer aloud. Avoid tasks that rely on colour or on spotting a visual detail alone.
Someone is hard of hearing	Put the instruction in writing on the slide or in the chat, and give countdowns visually as well as aloud.
Someone works in a second language	Prefer paper and chat tasks to fast spoken ones. Give the instruction in writing and allow a few seconds more.
The group finds energizers childish	Choose a content-linked card from “Review with energy” or “Between modules”, and say how it helps the next module.

Debrief and next steps

Questions for reflection

- Which energizer brought the group back to the content fastest, and which did not?
- Did anyone sit out more than once, and was there a seated or written version for them?
- Did each energizer stop on time, and did the link-back sentence connect it to the next module?
- Where in the day did attention drop without a planned reset, and which card would fit there next time?

Adapt the session

- For a small group of 4 to 6, run table tasks as one group and replace pair work with a written answer each. Cards 4, 21, 25 and 28 work with any number.
- For a short version, use only the one-minute cards: 7, 10, 21, 25, 28 and 29. A one-minute card still needs the invitation and one link-back sentence.
- Online, use the chat version on the card, keep cameras optional and read typed answers aloud. After 45 to 60 minutes on a call, use a card from “A long online block”.

- For quiet participants and people who prefer not to move, say the seated or chat version first and let a table or a pair answer rather than a person.
- For a group that dislikes games, choose content-linked cards from “Review with energy” and “Between modules”, and call them a review or a reset rather than an energizer.

After the session

Mark the cards you used on your plan and note which fell flat. Next time, swap those for another card from the same situation. Note card numbers and timings, not who joined in. These energizers change the pace of a session; they are not a cure for a session that is too long or too full. If attention keeps dropping in one place, shorten that module. This kit has not been independently evaluated, and the timings are planning estimates.

Questions people ask

What are energizers for training?

One- to five-minute activities that change the pace of a training session when attention drops: after lunch, between modules or late in the day. This page has 48 original ones.

How is an energizer different from an icebreaker?

An icebreaker opens a session; an energizer restores attention in the middle of one, often with a short task on the content. For openings, use the icebreaker questions for training sessions or the virtual icebreakers; this page does not repeat them.

Do participants have to stand up or move?

No. Every card works sitting down, and movement is always optional. None involves touching, singing, performing alone or saying anything personal. Say the seated or chat version first, so that sitting is the normal choice, and accept a pass without comment.

How often should I use an energizer in a training day?

A common planning habit is a reset in any stretch of content over about an hour, plus one after lunch: a starting rule, not a research finding. The example day uses six, 20 minutes in all.

Can I use these energizers online?

Yes. Every card has a chat version, and cards 7–12 are written for video calls. Keep cameras optional, paste each instruction as plain text and read typed answers aloud.

What is in the free PDF and the editable files?

The open PDF has the ground rules, the chooser table, all 48 energizers on four pages of cut-apart cards, a blank day planner, a filled example day, the five-minute run and the table of adjustments. Subscribers also receive the editable Word file, an Excel workbook with the energizer bank, a finder by situation, time and materials, and a day planner that calculates times, energizer minutes and the longest stretch of content, plus a CSV of the 48 energizers.

Use and sharing

Free to use and adapt in your own training sessions, including paid client work. Do not resell or redistribute the unmodified download as a standalone product. Share the resource page instead.