

CATCHING, THROWING, KICKING GAMES



- bouncing
- rolling
- kicking
- catching
- tossing
- chasing
- throwing
- striking
- dribbling

- hard
- soft
- overhand
- underhand
- high
- low
- straight
- curved



READY, SET, CATCH!

Check out these books at your local library.

My Two Hands, My Two Feet
by Rick Walton

Here are My Hands
by Bill Martin Jr. and John Archambault

Snowballs
by Lois Ehlert

Pickle and the Ball
by Lynn Breeze

Snowmen at Night
by Caralyn and Mark Buehner

Feet are Not for Kicking
by Elizabeth Verdick and Marieka Heinlein

Beverly Billingsly Can't Catch
by Alexander Stadler

Little Pig's Bouncy Ball
by ?

The Berenstain Bears Get Their Kicks
by Stan and Jan Berenstain

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Tidy-Up Toss

1 or more players

What you need: An empty box, bin, basket

How to: Have your child pick up her outside toys and gently toss them into a box to earn points. Try overhand and underhand tosses, try from closer to the box and farther away. Later, let her use the points she earned for a prize — an extra story at bedtime, a special sticker on her activity calendar.

Variations: Try the same thing inside if you can't go out. If by chance the yard or house doesn't need picking up, practice tossing skills with balls — outside think snowballs, inside try sock or yarn balls!

Trash Bag Toss

1 or more players

What you need: For each player — unused trash bag, newspaper

How to: Fill a trash bag with crumpled newspaper. Tie it shut. Toss it, throw it, roll it or roll on it in the yard or inside.

Safety caution: Plastic bags can be a choking hazard and may cause suffocation — adults should use caution with infants and toddlers.

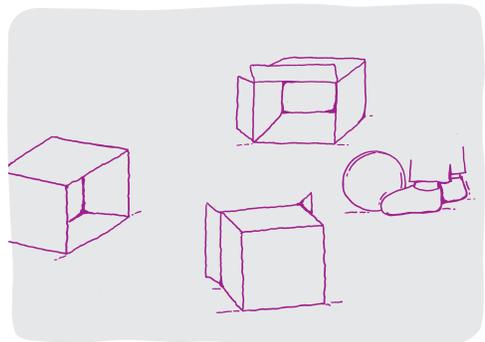
Kick Course

1 or more players

What you need: Ball for each player, containers such as boxes, wastebaskets, crates, some open on both ends

How to: Set up the containers around the yard or room. Have your child kick the ball through or into each container as they go around the course.

Variation: Make a course in the snow with shoveled paths, snow tunnels and mounds.



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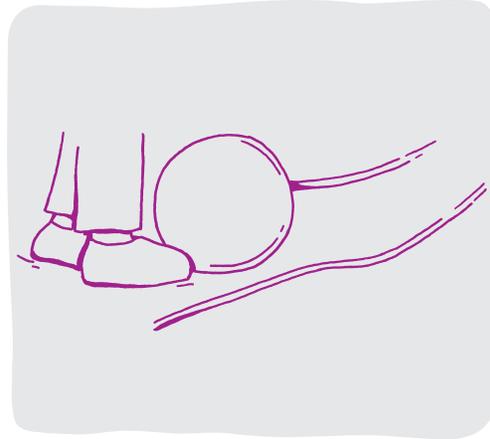
Foot Dribble

1 or more players

What you need: Ball for each player; snow shovel or rake; sidewalk chalk or masking tape

How to: Shovel pathways in the snow. Have your child use her feet to move the ball along the pathways. Once your child has mastered a straight path, make it harder with curved or zigzag paths.

Variations: Make pathways outside with sidewalk chalk, draw lines in the dirt, or rake a path in the leaves in fall. Inside, make pathways by putting 2 long strips of masking tape on the floor about 2–4 feet apart.



Milky-Crunchy Knock 'Em Down

1 or more players

What you need: Empty milk jugs, cereal boxes or 2 liter plastic bottles; ball

How to: Set up six or more empty milk jugs, cereal boxes or plastic bottles at one end of the sidewalk or on smooth ground. Ask your child to stand at the other end with a ball and roll the ball into the jugs or boxes. Count the number knocked down. If there is more than one child playing, let them take turns — one child can set them up, one can knock them down. If you can't get outside, Knock Em' Down can also be played inside.

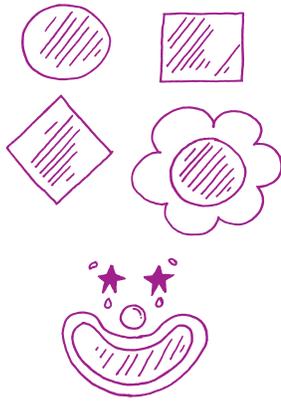
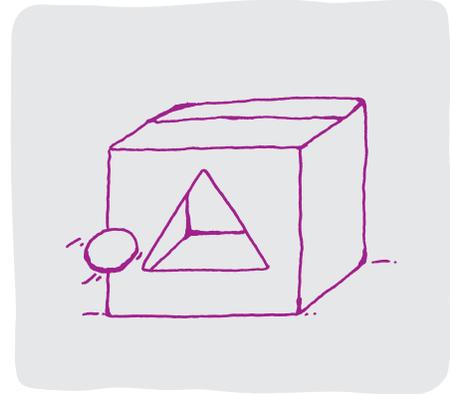
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Bean Bag Target Toss

1 or more players

What you need: Large cardboard box; 1 or more beanbags for each player

How to: Cut one side of a large cardboard box into a square, circle, triangle or other shape, or cut multiple shapes. Decorate the box if you wish.



shape ideas

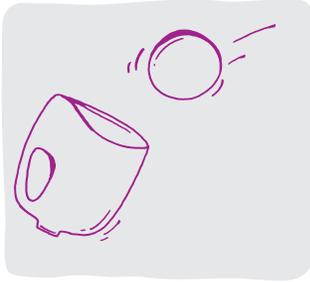
Throw beanbags into openings in the box. Try helping your child learn to toss underhand and overhand, and try having him stand different distances away from the target. You can mark the distance from the target outside with chalk or a line in the dirt or inside with masking tape on the floor.

Variation: If you have one or more hula hoops, lay them on the floor and let your child toss the beanbags into the hoops.

Remember: If it's too hard, your child will feel like a failure and if it's too easy your child will get bored.

Try to find the right distance so your child can get the bean bag into the hole about 7 or 8 times out of 10.

CATCHING, THROWING, KICKING GAMES



Milk Jug Catch

1 or more players

What you need: For each player — clean, empty, plastic milk jug; ball, bean bag or snowball; tape

How to: Cut the bottom off an empty plastic gallon milk jug to use as a catcher. Save the top end with the handle. If the cut edge is sharp, cover it with tape. Make a catcher for each player.

Go outside and let your child place a ball, bean bag or snowball in the catcher, toss it up and then catch it. He can also throw it underhand to another person. The other person catches it in her catcher and throws it back. If your child is successful, let him step back and try tossing the ball, beanbag or snowball from farther away.

Variations: Make a ball by crumpling up a piece of paper. You can make small, medium or large balls. Paper balls work well for tossing outside or inside.

The catcher can also be used to scoop up leaves or snow!

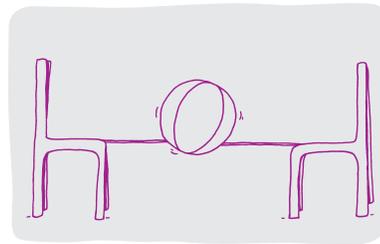
SAFETY CAUTION: Do not use balloons with children under 4 years old. Balloons can be choking hazards — only adults should inflate balloons. Some children may have a latex allergy.

Beach Ball Bounce Back

2 or more players

What you need: 2 chairs, masking tape or string, beach ball

How to: Make a “net” outside by placing the 2 lawn chairs about 4 feet apart and attaching tape or string across the seat of each chair. Hit, toss or bounce the beach ball back and forth over the net. Help your child practice hitting hard and soft, high and low. If you can’t get outside, you can make a net inside.



Variation: Use an inflated balloon in place of a beach ball. The balloon will move more slowly, making it easier for your child to hit the balloon over the net.

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Balloon Body Juggling

(best for 5-year-olds)

1 or more players

What you need: Balloon for each player

How to: Have your child toss a balloon into the air. You or your child calls out the part of the body to be used to strike the balloon (e.g. knee, foot, elbow). The balloon can also be batted, kicked or bounced between two players using different body parts.

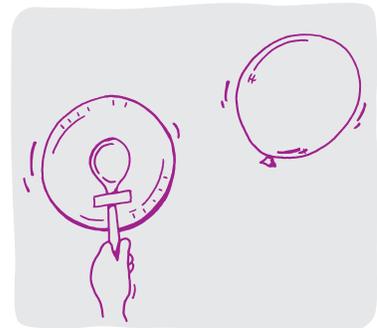
Racquet Balloon

1 or more players

What you need: For each player — wire coat hanger, old pantyhose leg, nylon knee high or large sock (or wooden cooking spoon or ruler, strong paper plate); masking tape; balloon; beach ball or paper ball

How to: Make a racquet with a coat hanger (see “Toys that Encourage Physical Play” page 16). Outside, have your child hit the balloon or a ball in various ways with the racquet — hard, soft, overhand, underhand, etc. Play with a partner, bouncing the balloon or ball back and forth.

Variation: Make a racquet by securely taping a paper plate to a spoon or ruler. Let your child hit the balloon or ball in various ways with the racquet. This variation works well for inside Racquet Balloon.



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Toss & Catch

2 or more players

What you need: Several soft balls of different sizes and textures, such as beach balls, punch balls, foam balls, sock balls, crumpled paper balls.

How to: Place the balls in a safe area where you and your child can play toss and catch — outside is best but you can do this indoors, too. Toss one of the balls to your child, choosing from the vocabulary below to direct the motions. Have child catch the ball and then toss it back to you using the same motions. Move on to try another type of motion. Repeat with different sizes and types of balls.

Overhand, underhand, add a bounce

Slow and fast

Hard and soft

From **close** up and from **far** away

Up **high** and down **low**

Variations: *Let child try bouncing, tossing in the air and catching different types of balls by herself. It's easier if you use larger, softer balls and stand closer together, and more challenging if you use smaller, firmer balls and move farther apart.*
