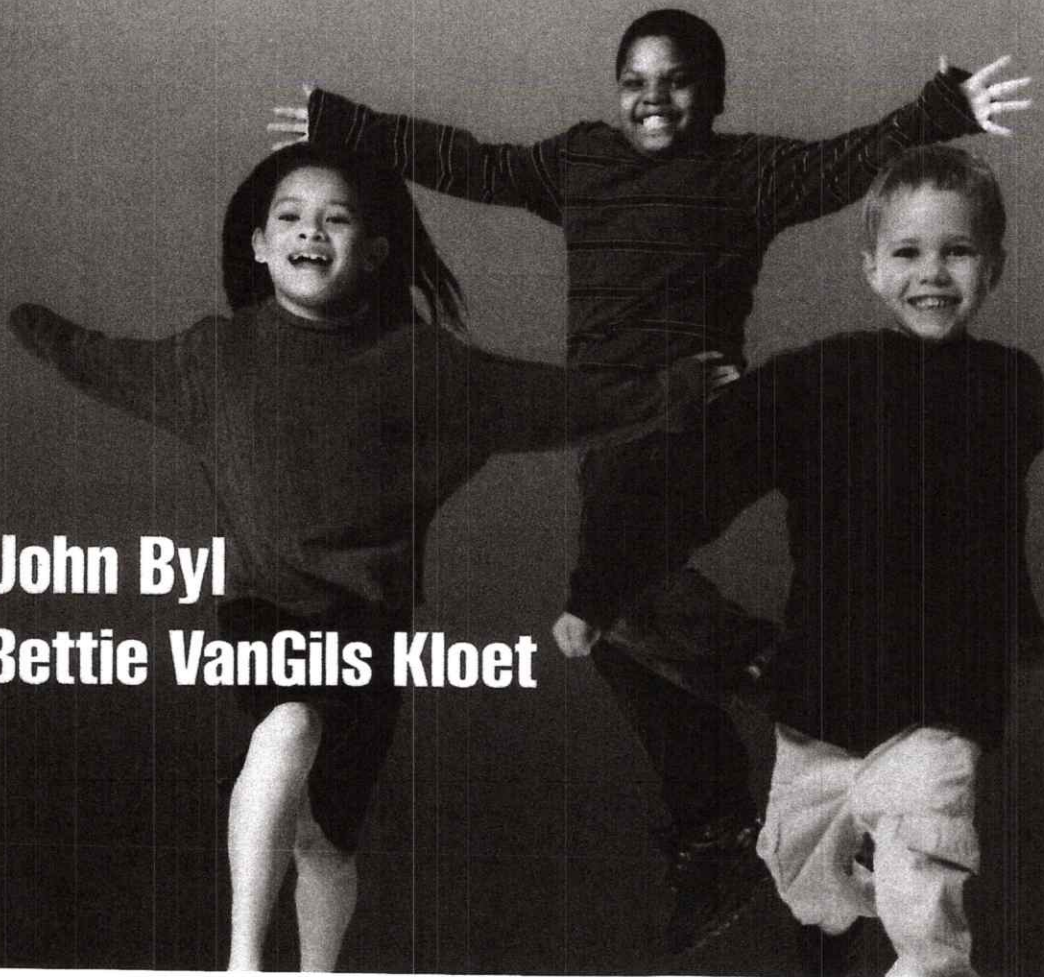


Physical Education for Homeschool, Classroom, and Recreation Settings

102 Games With Variations

John Byl
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Then search for:

Homeschool

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Warm Up

CONE SQUARE

Objective

To follow the leader around the cones

Specific Skill Focus

Movement changes, speed changes, direction changes (e.g., forward, sideways)

Equipment

Four cones

Setup

- Set up the cones to form a large square.
- The distance between cones can be from about 3 steps to about 10 steps.
- Identify which two opposite sides are the ends and which are the sides.
- The players line up behind the leader.

How to Play

- Moving around the outside of the square, the leader calls out a movement, such as "Jog on the ends" and "Side-shuffle on the sides," and the group does this a few times.
- Then the leader changes one command, such as "Change the ends to walking lunges" or "Jog the ends and sprint the sides," and the group follows.

Variations

- Change the leader to allow other players to lead.
- Add other cones, such as a single cone off one corner, and instruct the group to run and touch that cone each time they hit that corner cone.
- Change the shape into a rectangle.
- Dribble a ball while moving.

Questions for Understanding

- How can you vary a move like the side shuffle to challenge each leg equally?
- How can you vary the intensity to stay challenged but still be in control of your breathing?

GRID

Objectives

To not get caught in the middle

Specific Skill Focus

All sports

Equipment

Four markers per group

Setup

Make a square four steps across; four players are positioned at the four corners, and one player is in the middle of the square—if you have four players, form a triangle shape; form a pentagon with six players.

How to Play

- On the middle player's signal ("Go"), all players switch corners.
- When players switch, the middle player tries to get an open corner.
- If two players are tied, they play a quick game of rock, paper, scissors, with the winner getting the corner.
- The player without a corner goes to the middle and says, "Go." Continue.

Variations

- No-Call Grid: The middle player does not call the move. Instead, players in the corners try to switch places when the middle player is farther away or not looking. Once a player leaves a spot, she cannot immediately go back to it.
- Grids With Eight: Two adjacent squares join into one game. There are eight markers for eight players. Two players are in the middle who try to move onto any vacant marker.
- All Spots: Players try to be the first to get to all the spots.

Questions for Understanding

- What is the best way to get a spot when you are in the middle?
- What is the best way to keep a spot when moving away from your corner?

RUNNING CIRCLES

Objective

To run around a circle and tag the player in front

Specific Skill Focus

General warm-up or specifically for basketball, soccer, lacrosse, or hockey

Equipment

Four cones and three pool noodles

Setup

- Position the four cones four steps apart in a square formation.
- Two players stand opposite each other outside the cones; one player stands in the middle of the cones.
- Each player holds a pool noodle.

How to Play

- On the signal to begin, each player runs around the cones in a counterclockwise circle and tries to tag the other player in front of her with the pool noodle.
- When a player is tagged, the tagged player goes into the middle of the cones and the player in the middle moves outside to stand opposite the remaining runner; these two players now chase each other.
- After a minute or two, switch directions so the players do not get dizzy.

Variation

While players are running around the circle, they dribble a basketball, soccer ball, or hockey ball or puck.

Questions for Understanding

- What are key considerations in controlling the dribbles when running hard around the cones?
- What path around the square corners is the most efficient route when running fast?

TAIL BALL

Objective

To learn different ways of catching a ball with a tail

Specific Skill Focus

General warm-up

Equipment

One leg of a nylon stocking with a tennis ball placed inside the toe of the stocking for each player

Setup

Each player holds a stocking by the tail in an outside area with lots of room in the air above the player.

How to Play

The players swing the ball into the air and count how many different ways they can catch the ball before it hits the ground. For example: Catch the ball, catch the tail, do one push-up and then catch the tail, and so on.

Variation

Have players toss the ball to each other, and each player needs to try to catch the object in a new way each time. See who can successfully catch the ball in the most different ways.

Questions for Understanding

- How does increasing the height of the throw increase or decrease the difficulty of catching the object?
- Is it easier to catch the ball or the tail? Why?

Throw

DISC GOLF

Objective

To score as low a score as possible by hitting the targets in as few throws as possible

Specific Skill Focus

Throwing (bowling, soccer, disc, football, lacrosse, hockey, badminton, baseball)

Equipment

One disc (or any kind of ball—even a soccer ball that is kicked) per player; natural objects such as trees or equipment such as cones or hoops

Setup

- Set up nine targets (for younger children, the targets might be only about 10 steps away; for older children the distances can be increased by 10 times—probably best played on a larger field).
- The targets could be natural targets such as trees, posts, and parts of buildings, or they could be cones or hoops with numbered flags or labels on them.

How to Play

- A player begins at a starting line.
- The player throws her disc toward the first target and throws again until the target is hit.
- Players keep track of their scores (each throw counts 1) by adding in their heads—good mental mathematics development.
- When the first target is hit, the player then throws her disc toward the next target.

Variation

Speed Golf—Players try to time how quickly they can make their throws (or kicks), hit each target in order, and complete the entire course—players must hit each target in five throws or fewer or 10 seconds is added as a penalty per extra throw. Speed Golf makes for a great warm-up.

Questions for Understanding

- How does one gain both the greatest distance and accuracy?
- Is it easier to stand directly facing the target or standing sideways to the target? Why?

DOUBLE DISC COURT

Objective

To get the other team to be holding both discs or balls or birdies

Specific Skill Focus

Catching, running, and throwing (soccer, disc, football, lacrosse, badminton)

Equipment

Two discs or balls or birdies and racquets and eight or more markers to mark two courts

Setup

- Officially, the courts are 13-step squares that are 17 steps apart from each other. For children, you will need smaller-sized courts that are closer together, something like 5-step squares that are 5 to 10 steps apart—mark these with the cones or other markers.
- Position one player, or teams of two players, in each court (when playing with two players, the two players must take turns catching and throwing the disc).
- One player in each court holds a disc.

How to Play

- When the two teams are ready to serve the servers call out, "Ready, two, one, throw." On "throw" they throw the disc into the opponent's court. After the first serve, players have 3 seconds to get ready to make their return throw—no need to wait for the other team to get ready.
- If the disc lands outside the court, then the game stops and the other team scores a point.
- If a disc is dropped by someone, then the game stops and the other team scores a point.
- If a disc lands in a court without being touched, then the throwing team scores a point.
- If a team is holding both discs, then the game stops and the other team scores two points.

Questions for Understanding

- How can you make one disc take a long time to land in a court and then make the next disc get to that court quickly?
- How do you know where to go to catch the disc or ball?

For more detailed rules, go to www.wfdf.org/index.php?page=rules/art2.htm.

TWO-PLAYER BOWLING

Objective

To try to score points by bowling or kicking a ball as close as possible to a target

Specific Skill Focus

Rolling and kicking (bowling, soccer)

Equipment

One ball for each pair of players

Setup

- Two players stand a predetermined distance apart.
- The bowler holds the ball.
- The other player spreads her feet two ball widths apart.

How to Play

- The bowler rolls a ball toward the target player.
- If the ball goes through the legs without hitting either leg, then the bowler scores three points.
- If the ball hits one of the legs, then the bowler scores two points.
- If the ball goes outside the legs without hitting either leg, then the bowler scores one point.
- From the position he was in, the bowler now becomes a target, and the target is the new bowler.
- Bowl 10 times and see how many points each bowler can get.

Variation

Players stand facing each other 10 steps apart, with legs shoulder-width apart. They take turns kicking the ball and trying to have it go between the opponent's legs. Each successful kick counts for one point.

Questions for Understanding

- How can you increase the success of your bowling?
- How can this game be made easier or harder?
- What is the most accurate way to roll or kick the ball?

HOPSCOTCH POTSY

Objective

To hop from square one to the finish without stepping out of the boxes

Specific Skill Focus

Throwing, catching, hopping, and jumping

Equipment

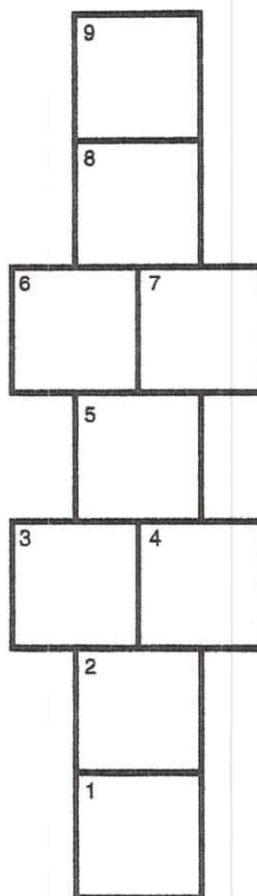
Chalk and a small stone

Setup

- Draw a hopscotch pattern on the ground, making a line of boxes (see figure).
- Number each box sequentially.

How to Play

- The player stands behind the first box and throws a stone onto box one.
- He then hops over number one, lands on two, and then continues to hop into each box in order to the finish.
- The player then turns around and hops in all the boxes, stopping at box two, and bends over to pick up the stone.
- If no errors are made, the player throws again, this time onto box two, and repeats the sequence; he then tosses into box three, then four, and so on.
- If the marker does not land in the appropriate box, the player tries again.
- If there is a marker on either box three or four or six and seven, the player lands with one foot in the box beside it (not with both feet as in previous times when there was no marker in either box. For example, if the marker is in box three, the player would balance on one foot in box four, which is beside it).



Variations

- The number of boxes can be varied to suit the age and ability of the player.
- The shape of the hopscotch pattern can be changed to a circular, linear, snakelike, or snail pattern.
- When played with two or three players, when a player throws a marker and misses the correct box, the marker is returned to the box the marker was last in, and the next player attempts to land his marker in his box and then hop through the course.

Question for Understanding

- How can you change your body position to allow you to bend over on one foot without falling?
- Is it harder to skip on one foot than the other? Can you change feet?

THREE IN A ROW

Objective

To throw accurately enough to get three beanbags in a row on a tic-tac-toe target

Specific Skill Focus

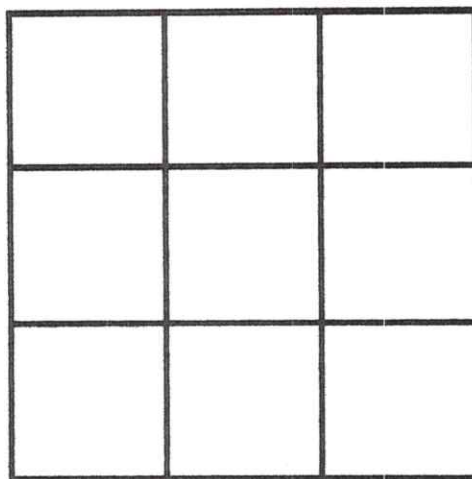
Throwing (baseball)

Equipment

10 beanbags or stuffed animals per pair of players (half should be a different color from the other half)

Setup

Design a tic-tac-toe board by taping lines on the floor with masking tape or using chalk on pavement. Squares should be about one shoe length in width—make the targets bigger if you want the students to throw from farther away.



How to Play

- The players take turns throwing their objects onto the tic-tac-toe board.
- The first player to get her objects to land on three squares forming a line across the board is the winner.
- Two objects from different players can be on the same square. If one player gets two of his objects on one square, he can remove one of the objects and use it on a subsequent turn.
- When all the objects have been thrown, players collect their objects that are not on the board.

Variations

- If a player is the first to land an object on a square, the other player cannot land and keep her object on the same square.
- If two players are competing and one is older, challenge the older player to use a more difficult way of tossing the object (e.g., standing on one foot when tossing, standing farther away).

Questions for Understanding

- How can you increase or decrease the difficulty of this game?
- How does the shape of the object affect the final landing?

Dribble

CARD BOUNCERS

Objective

To dribble and collect as many points as possible in a set amount of time (2 or 3 minutes should be plenty)

Specific Skill Focus

Dribbling and kicking (soccer, basketball, hockey)

Equipment

Basketball or soccer ball for dribbling, or hockey stick and ball or puck for shooting against a wall, or volleyball for serving against the wall at a specific height, plus a deck of playing cards

Setup

- Three steps from the wall, lay a deck of cards facedown and add a restraining line from which the player must kick or serve.
- Eight steps from the wall, position a starting line; this is where the player begins and returns to each time.

How to Play

- On the signal to begin, the player dribbles or stickhandles to the deck of cards and picks one up.
- The player quickly bounces the basketball in one spot, or kicks, shoots, or serves against the wall, the number of times indicated on the card (face cards are worth 10; an ace is worth 1 point).
- When the challenge is finished, the player returns to the start line, deposits the card, and dribbles or stickhandles back to the deck of cards to repeat the challenge.
- When the time is up, the number of points is the total of the numbers on the cards.

Variation

Card Bouncers With Defense: Play this game with two players, one trying to cross the line where the cards are and the other trying to keep this player from advancing.

Questions for Understanding

- How can you dribble more quickly?
- If this game were a race between an older and younger player, how could you change the rules to make the race more fair?

Pass-Shot

GRID PASS

Objective

To pass the ball to a partner on an adjacent corner without having the ball intercepted or without being tagged while holding the ball

Specific Skill Focus

Catching, kicking, running, skipping, and throwing (soccer, basketball, disc, football, lacrosse, hockey)

Equipment

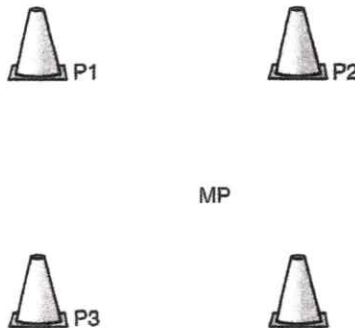
One soccer ball and four cones or markers to delineate a square

Setup

Define a square with sides approximately four to six steps long. Three players stand on corners of the grid, and one player stands in the middle.

How to Play

- One player (P1) begins with the ball in one of the grid corners.
- The other two players (P2 and P3) are positioned at adjacent corners, leaving one corner open.
- The player with the ball can pass it only to one of the two adjacent corners (he cannot pass the ball across the grid or dribble the ball).
- Once the pass has been made, the player who did not receive the ball moves to the open corner to give the receiver two corners to pass the ball to.
- The middle player (MP) tries to intercept the ball or force a bad pass or tag the player with the ball.
- Play continues until a player makes a bad pass or the player in the middle intercepts the ball or tags the player with the ball.
- When that happens, the player who made the errant pass or was tagged goes into the middle and is replaced by the MP.



- This game helps players learn to execute accurate passes. Players should use deception and not telegraph whom they intend to pass the ball to. Players without the ball should always go to the open space to ensure the possibility of two receivers.

Questions for Understanding

- How can the offense best avoid being intercepted or tagged while in possession of the ball?
- How can the defense best intercept the ball or tag a player in possession of the ball?

Adapted, by permission, from J. Byl, 2004, *101 fun warm-up and cool-down games* (Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics), 152.

DOUBLE CONE BALL

Objective

To score more goals, by kicking the ball against one of the opponent's cones, than the opponent does

Specific Skill Focus

Dodging, dribbling, running, and throwing (soccer, lacrosse, hockey)

Equipment

One soccer ball and four cones for each pair of players

Setup

- Set up two cones three steps apart (like a goal).
- Set up another pair of cones 10 steps away.
- One player begins at each set of cones.

How to Play

- One player begins with the ball and attempts to dribble by her opponent and kick the ball against one of her opponent's cones.
- The other player tries to prevent her from doing so and tries to intercept the ball and kick it against her opponent's cones.
- After a player has scored a goal, the other player gets to dribble the ball three steps from her goal line before her opponent can defend against her.

Variations

- Use just one cone or pin per player or team.
- Play two on two or three on three.
- Instead of hitting the cones to score, the players must kick the ball in between the two cones to score.

Questions for Understanding

- What are the best ways to control the dribble so that the opponent does not get the ball?

FOREARM FOUR SQUARE

Objective

To advance to the king's or queen's court by successfully using a forearm pass into each other's squares

Specific Skill Focus

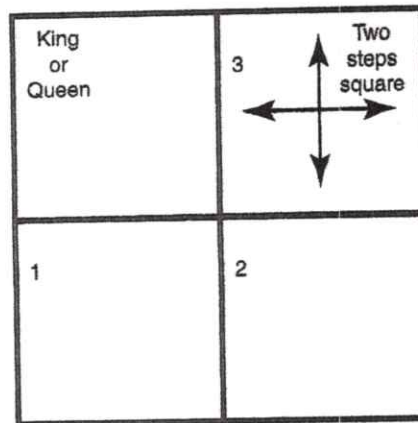
Forearm pass (volleyball)

Equipment

One volleyball

Setup

- Draw a four-square box as shown in the figure, with each section approximately two steps square.
- Players stand in each of the squares; the player in the king or queen square holds the ball and begins play.



How to Play

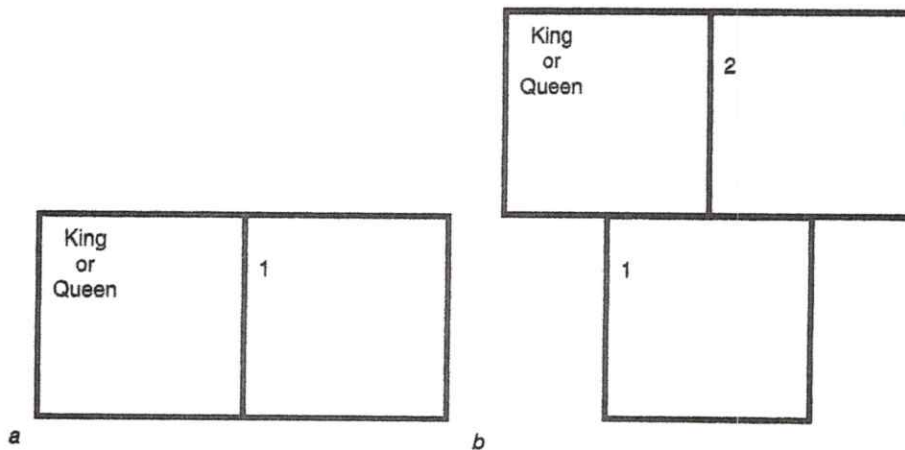
- The queen (or king) tosses the ball up and does a forearm pass that goes higher than her waist and bounces on the ground inside one of her opponent's squares.
- The player in whose square the ball lands must forearm pass the ball so that it goes higher than her waist and lands inside one of her opponent's squares.
- If a player does not hit the ball high enough, or does not hit the ball inside one of her opponent's squares, she is out.
- When a player is out, she goes to the number 1 square and everyone else moves up one square (in other words, if the player in number 2 makes an error, player 2 goes to the number 1 square and the player in the number 1 square goes to number 2; if the player in number 3 makes an error, then this player goes to the number 1 square, the player in the number 1 square goes to number 2, and the player

in the number 2 square goes to number 3; if the king or queen is dethroned by making a mistake, that player goes to the number 1 square, the other players move up one square, and the player that was in number 3 becomes the new king or queen).

- The king or queen gets the ball and begins play again.

Variation

Four square can also be played with two or three players, with the court outlined as shown in the figures.



Questions for Understanding

- How can you most effectively get other players out?
- How can you control the direction of the ball with a forearm pass?

Strike Field

BASEBALL WITHOUT BASERUNNING

Objective

To score as many runs as possible

Specific Skill Focus

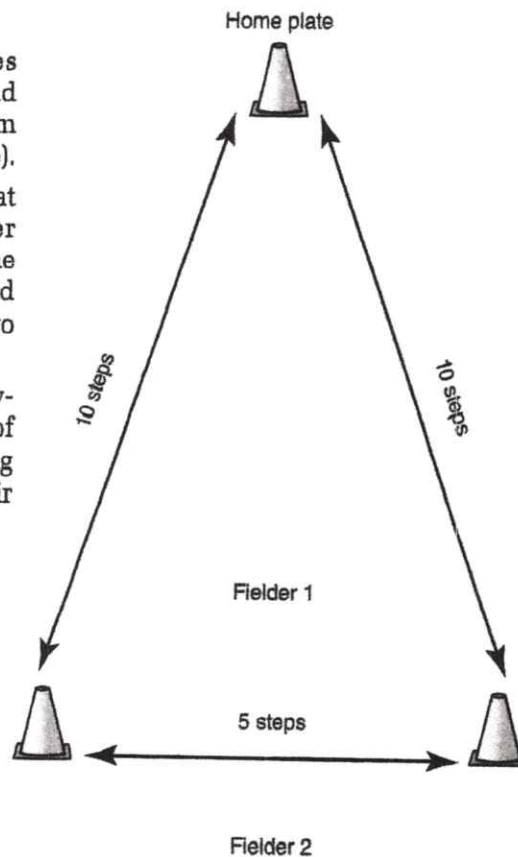
Catching, running, striking, and throwing (baseball)

Equipment

One bat, one ball, three cones, and two baseball gloves

Setup

- Place the two cones about 5 steps apart and about 10 steps from home plate (third cone).
- One player is at bat at home plate, another player is in front of the two cones, and a third player is behind the two cones.
- If you have four players, have two teams of two, with players taking turns batting when their team is up.



How to Play

- The batter tosses the ball to himself and hits the ball. If the ball
 - rolls past the first fielder and is stopped by the second fielder, it is a single;
 - lands past the first fielder and is stopped by the second fielder, it is a double;
 - rolls past the second fielder, it is a triple; or
 - goes over the head of the second fielder, it is a home run.
- Imaginary players on base can move forward only one base ahead of where the hitter ends up.
 - No one runs any bases, but the player positions are shouted out after each successful hit.
 - For example, if a hitter hits a double, there is a player on second. If a player then hits another double, there is a player on second and third. If a player then hits a single, there is a player on first, second, and third. If a player then hits a double, there is a player on second and third, and two runs score.
- It is a strike if a batter misses the ball, if a batter hits a foul ball (outside the cones), or if the fielder standing in front of the cones catches the rolling ball.
- A batter is out if he gets three strikes in a row or if a hit is caught in the air before hitting the ground.
- When there are three outs, the batter becomes the near fielder, the near fielder goes back to the deep outfield, and the deep outfielder comes up to bat.
- If you are playing with two teams of two players, then the players can decide between them who plays in front of the cones and who plays behind the cones.

Questions for Understanding

- How does moving the cones closer together or farther apart or closer to home plate or farther from home plate affect the level of difficulty of the game?
- When batting, can you change the way you are standing to influence where the ball goes?

GHOST BASEBALL

Objective

To score the highest number of runs for your team

Specific Skill Focus

Catching, running, striking, and throwing (baseball)

Equipment

Bases, gloves, bat, and ball

Setup

- Set up two teams, with three players per team.
- One team goes out to the field; the other team lines up at the bench, and one player prepares to bat.
- The pitcher can be an adult instructor.
- This game allows a small number of participants to make two teams and still play a regular game of baseball.

How to Play

- The first player from the hitting team hits the ball and makes it to a base.
- The second player is a “ghost player,” and this imaginary player automatically gets a one-base hit, forcing the first player to second base.
- The next player goes to bat and, if successful, makes it to first or second base, pushing the ghost player to second and the first player to third, or the ghost to third and the runner home.
- Two real players must leave a base between them for the ghost player.
- Play continues, with every other batter as a ghost player.
- Only runs scored by the real players count as team runs.

Questions for Understanding

- Where can you hit the ball to gain the most time on your run?
- How can the defensive team determine where the most important out will be on the field?

NOODLE PADDLE

Objective

To hit a balloon a set distance as quickly as possible

Specific Skill Focus

Running and striking (baseball)

Equipment

One pool noodle (cut in half), one balloon, and a watch with a second hand

Setup

- One player stands behind a start line and holds a balloon in one hand and a pool noodle in the other.
- Establish a finish line 20 steps away.

How to Play

On the signal to start, the player hits the balloon in the air with the pool noodle, striking it hard and repeatedly in an effort to get the balloon from the start line to the finish line in as little time as possible.

Variation

Count how few hits a player can use to get the balloon to the finish line.

Questions for Understanding

- How can you most effectively strike the balloon so it goes the farthest each time?
- Is it more effective to wait for the balloon to settle or to keep it in constant motion with the noodle?

SOCCER BASEBALL

Objective

To score more runs than an opponent by kicking a ball far and then dribbling a ball around the bases

Specific Skill Focus

Catching, dribbling, kicking, and running (soccer, baseball)

Equipment

Two soccer balls and three cones

Setup

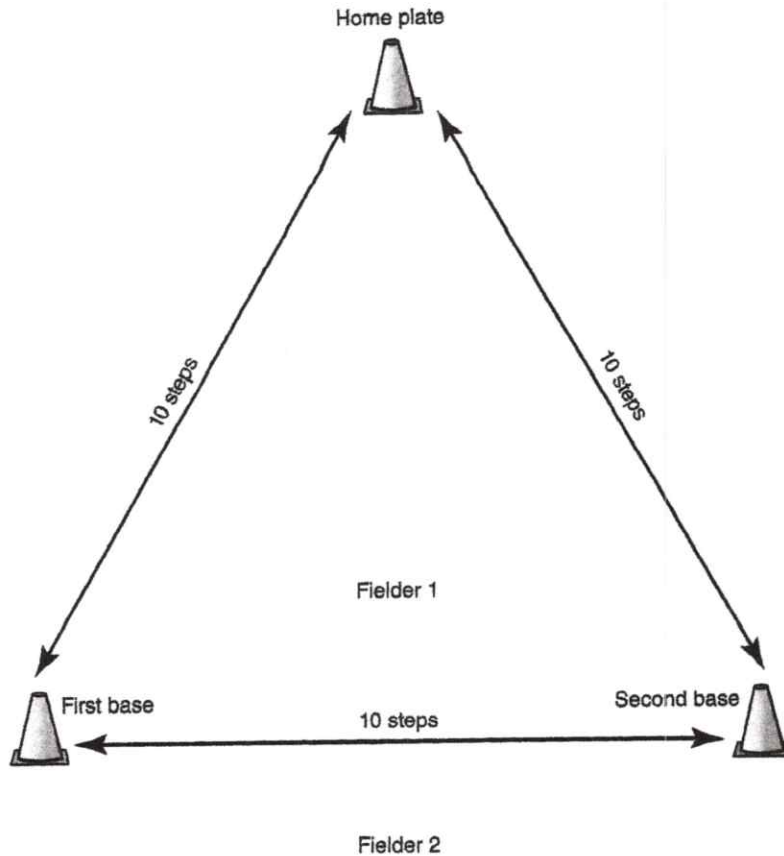
- Place the two cones (first and second bases) about 5 steps apart and about 10 steps from home plate.
- Place two soccer balls at home base.
- One kicker stands at home, and the other two players stand in the field—one in the infield (before the cones) and the other in the outfield (behind the cones).

How to Play

- The kicker kicks the ball off the ground and then runs around the two bases and back home. If the kicker is successful, she earns one run, waits for everyone to get set, and goes again.
- The two fielders trap the ball (no use of hands) and kick the ball to arrive at home base before the kicker returns. If the outfielders are successful, the kicker is out. When the kicker is out she goes into the outfield, the outfielder comes into the infield, and the infielder becomes the new kicker.

Variation

Soccer Baseball With Dribble: Have two balls at the home base. The kicker kicks one ball into the outfield and then dribbles the second ball around the bases.



Questions for Understanding

- How does reducing or increasing the space between the cones make the game easier or more difficult?
- How can you change your body position before the kick to control where the ball will go?

FREESTYLE DISCS

Objective

To explore different ways to catch, spin, and do other tricks with the disc

Specific Skill Focus

Catching, kicking, and throwing (soccer, basketball, disc, football)

Equipment

One disc per player or pair of players

Setup

A player or a pair of players stand in an open area with one disc.

How to Play

Players explore how many different ways they can catch, spin, or do other tricks with the disc. For example, players might toss the disc up behind their backs and catch it in front of their bodies, or toss it up from under one leg and catch it with the same hand underneath the other leg.

Questions for Understanding

- How can you change your grip on the disc to control its movements?
- How can you use the wind to affect your disc's flight?

For some great ideas for challenges you can do inside, do an Internet search for "Frisbee freestyle video."

STEPPER-BOARD CATCH

Objective

To catch a stuffed animal in as many different ways as possible

Specific Skill Focus

Catching and jumping (football, baseball)

Equipment

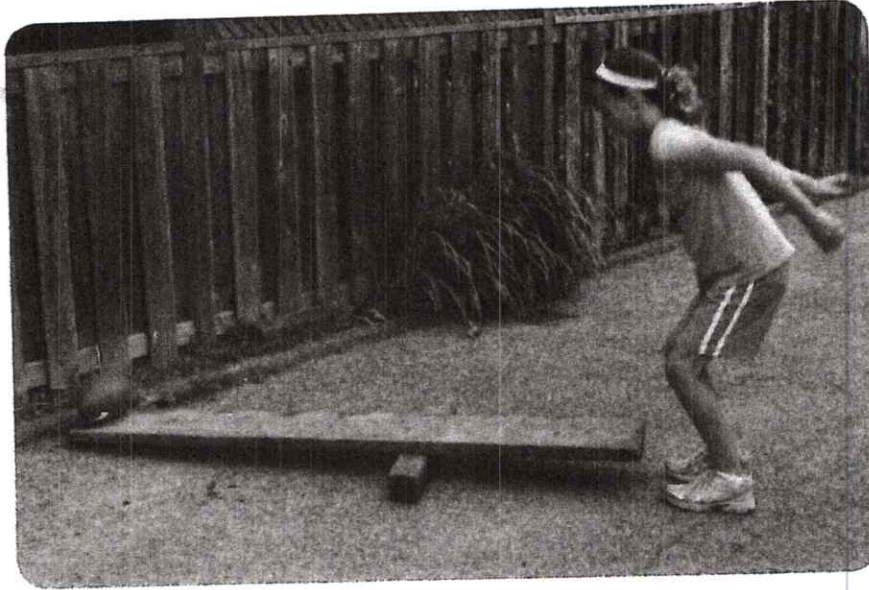
One stepper board and one stuffed animal per player

Setup

- Place a small piece (one foot in length or more) of 2 × 4 board on the floor, with the wide part on the floor.
- Place a half-step-length of 1 × 4 board crossways on top of the 2 × 4 (with the small piece of 2 × 4 acting as a fulcrum); put the stuffed animal on the far end of the 1 × 4 board.

How to Play

- The player stomps on the 1 × 4, which flips the stuffed animal into the air.
- The player catches the stuffed animal.
- Count how many different ways the animal can be caught: one hand, two hands, one hand with one clap before catching the animal, one hand with two claps, by one of the feet, and so on.



Catching items launched from a stepper board.

Questions for Understanding

- What is the best way to get the animal high into the air and still make it easy to catch?
- How does the animal's flight change when you place it at different distances from the end of the 1 × 4?
- How does the animal's flight change when you place the 1 × 4 over the 2 × 4 at different places?