

Kickball for All Ages

by Discount School Supply

Kickball is a classic playground game that is fun, easy to learn, and can be enjoyed by children from preschool ages and up. It's an active game that combines kicking a ball as in soccer and following rules similar to baseball. No wonder kickball is sometimes called soccer-baseball. This guide will highlight how to play developmentally appropriate versions of the game with preschoolers and school-age children.

Here's What You Get!

- 3 - 8½" Rubber Playground Balls
- 1 Ball Pump
- 3 Bases and 1 Home Plate
- 10 Colored Cones

Here's How to Use It!

- Use Cones to designate the boundaries of the kickball playing field
- Inflate the Playground Balls with the Ball Pump
- Use Bases as first, second, and third bases (as in a baseball diamond)
- Use the Home Plate to complete the diamond
- Place a Cone to designate the area of the pitcher's mound

If enough space and supervision is provided, set up 3 different kickball playing fields. Use cones as first, second, and third bases and the bases in the kit for the pitcher's mound and home plate. This allows more children to participate in active play. No more standing around and waiting for a turn. The gross motor skills of running, kicking and catching are promoted, as well as eye-hand and eye-foot coordination...and let's not forget about the benefits of playing together cooperatively and teamwork!

Preschool Kickball (3 - 5 year olds)

There are no outs or fouls in this preschool friendly game, just a lot of kicking and running.

Set Up:

- Playing field - grass, dirt, asphalt or cement
- Place bases and home plate in the same general arrangement as you would a baseball diamond, but make the base paths much closer to each other (i.e., 20 feet apart)
- 2 or more adults/play leaders

Let's Get Started:

1. Gather children and have them watch and listen as directions of how to play are demonstrated.
2. An adult/play leader places the ball on home plate.
3. One child stands or approaches and kicks the ball as hard as he/she can.
4. The child runs around the bases and returns to home plate.
5. The game continues until every child has had a turn or "runs out of breath."
6. Every child is a winner when they cross home plate! Be assured that they will want to kick the ball and run the bases again and again. This is play with a purpose and lots of vigorous physical activity!

Furthermore:

- As children become more skillful, the adult/play leader can roll the ball to the child at home plate and the child stands and kicks the ball that is rolled at them.

School Age Kickball (6 -8 year olds)

Most children at this age can understand the rules of playing an organized sport, with teams and keeping score.

Set Up:

1. Playing field -- grass, dirt or a hard surface -- the best location to play the game is on a hard surface.
2. Use cones to designate boundaries of the kickball playing field.
3. Place bases and home plate in the same general arrangement as you would a baseball diamond, making 40 - 50 foot base paths.

4. Place a cone to designate the area of the pitcher's mound, placing it 30-35 feet from home plate.
5. 2 adults/play leaders, one to pitch and one to umpire behind home plate.

Let's Get Started:

1. Children listen and watch as the directions of how to play are given and demonstrated.
2. Divide children into two teams -- one team is the kickers while the other is the outfielders.
3. The kickers line up behind home plate. Line up the kickers by alphabetical order of their first names.
4. The outfielders stand near the bases.
5. The pitcher is at the pitcher's mound.
6. The pitcher holds the ball in one hand and rolls it with a little bit of speed toward home plate.
7. The kicker kicks the ball into the outfield and runs to first base - or second, third and home if they can make it without being tagged out.
8. The outfielders catch the ball and try to tag the runner while carrying the ball.
9. If the kicker crosses home plate, he or she scores a point for their team.
10. If one of the outfielders catches the ball before it hits the ground, that's an out.
11. If the ball rolls over home plate and the kicker misses or doesn't kick, that's a strike.
12. Just as in baseball, a kick may be fair or foul (umpire's call). Three strikes equal an out. Four fouls equal an out. Three outs to an inning and that means the next team is "at bat" (or up to kick) and the kickers become the outfielders.
13. If you have the time, play a full nine innings, as in baseball, or the number of innings or points (whoever reaches 20 first) the group has agreed to in advance...or until the bell rings indicating that recess is over.

Furthermore:

- Adjust or modify the rules depending on the location or ages of the children participating. Kickball can be played all year long -- even on a snow covered field.