

Juggling for Fun:

Equipment: Any balls will do. However, try to acquire a set of juggling bean bags. These are small and do not roll when they are dropped on the floor.

1. With one ball, toss ball underhand above head to other hand.
Suggest the following two phrases – height of the ball and rhythm
2. Determine your throwing hand and catching hand.
Using the same procedure as in #1, throw ball to other hand. After catching the ball, transfer ball to throwing hand and repeat.
Change throwing hand and catching hand. This will be a bit awkward at first, because most will use their dominate hand as the throwing hand first.
3. Now get a partner and stand approximately 5-8 feet apart.
With one ball, underhand toss the ball to your partner, having the ball aimed at your partner's waist. Emphasize the ball must be at the waist, or the next activity will not work.
4. Have each partner have a ball and repeat the above activity, with both throwing each ball at the same time. Emphasize they must get the ball to their partner before trying the catch the ball coming towards them.
5. Have each partner get another ball. Now both should have two balls. Each throws a ball underhand to the other, with this time transferring the ball in the opposite hand to the throwing hand before catching the ball coming to them.
You will find the students may have more difficulty with this than they think they should.
6. Now return to being alone, with two balls.
7. With a ball in each hand, have the students toss a ball into the air and catch it with the same hand. Repeat with the other hand. Suggest the students establish a rhythm and a consistent height of the ball(about a foot above their head).
8. Now it is time to combine #1 and #7. Remembering the phrase "height of the ball and rhythm", have the students toss first one and then the other ball into the air, catching each with the opposite hand. The second ball should be tossed when the first ball is at it's peak. A phrase which may help is "right-left-catch-catch". This phrase helps the student to talk the "rhythm" of the activity.
9. Have the students place both balls in one hand. This activity is designed to help the student understand how to move the ball from the heal of the hand to the fingers after releasing the first ball. The concept is the same as the previous activity, but this time the student is using just one hand. After the first ball is tossed into the air, the second ball needs to be rolled from the heal of the hand to the fingers before it can be tossed. The second ball is released as the first ball reaches it's peak. After catching the first ball, it needs to be maneuvered to the heal of the hand to allow the fingers to catch the second ball. A common result is that the second ball will be tossed forward because the student did not curl his/her fingers to toss the ball upward.
10. Now we are ready to add a third ball. The first ball to be tossed should be one of the balls in the hand with two. Suggest the students use the phrase "right-left-right, catch-catch-catch. Have

the student do one cycle before moving on to continuous juggling. Please remind the students of the “rhythm and height of the ball” phrase.

I consider this a wonderful activity for hand-eye coordination. Thus, I do not mention “juggling” until the last activity with three balls.

If any questions please do not hesitate to ask or email me at dmasters@vbschools.net