

## *Recommended Backyard Games*

1. Juggling—a)juggle the ball with all parts of your body (left and right sides). Try not to have more than 5 consecutive juggles with the same body part (i.e. feet, things, head etc.); b) juggle with a friend or friends in a similar fashion to the basketball game “HORSE”, the player who drops the ball gets a letter; c) play 1 touch or 2 touch juggling with your friends earning letters for drops.
2. 1 vs1---a) only use one foot—the ball cannot touch your other foot; b) have a goal (or a cone) which you can score upon from all sides; c) same as b), but have the same goal for both players; d) have two goals for each player, one on an end line and one on a sideline; e) have three goals for each player, one on an end line and one on each sideline.
3. Wall soccer---Just kick a ball against a wall using both your left foot and right foot. Place hard shots against the wall (with accuracy and force). Trying doing this three touch, then two touch, then one touch. Helps with trapping/receiving, positioning, striking of a ball with both feet, foot speed, being on toes, and concentration. Also will improve your passing/shooting accuracy because of the high number of touches you will get on the ball and the high number of balls you play against the ball. Vary your shots—high, low, left, right, inside foot, outside foot, instep etc. and make yourself work at a high pace to get your body behind the ball before it rolls past you. Get closer to the wall to improve foot quickness and move further away to increase lateral quickness.
4. Own the Ball!—just you competing for possession of one ball (through shielding) with one other person. If you lose possession do whatever you have to do get the ball back as quickly as possible. Correct shielding technique = body sideways, arm providing protection, ball on outside foot, knees bent, turning as defender attacks, using feel to understand where defender is going.
5. Any 2 vs. 2 and 2 vs. 1 drills or games will be extremely useful. The entire game can be broken down into 2 vs. 2 or 2 vs. 1 situations. The more skilled you are at these, the more success you will have in the larger game. Playing combination passes is key!
6. Paired Tag---Pair players up, each pair has 2 balls. One players starts and is given a 2 second lead to get away from his/her partner. The chaser (“it”) dribbles after the first player and tries to tag him/her with his/her hand. If tagged, the roles reverse and the player who was previously “it” has two seconds to get away before their partner tries to tag them. Players must always dribble their soccer ball during this activity.
7. Marbles---Players are in pairs, each with a ball. One player plays out his ball and the partner passes his own ball in an attempt to strike the ball his partner played out. Players should keep track of how many times they hit their partner’s ball. This game should be fast paced because players take turns at trying to hit each other’s ball without ever stopping. If player 2 misses player 1’s ball, then player 1 immediately runs to her own ball and tries to hit player 2’s ball (player 2 does not get to touch his ball after missing player 1’s ball). After player 1 has a chance, then player 2 immediately tries to hit player 1’s ball right back. etc. etc. This game is continuous and players should keep score. Hint: If 2 balls are very close to each other a player should kick their ball hard at the other ball so when they hit it, it is more difficult for the other to hit their ball back.
8. Soccer Tennis---With a partner set up two grids about 10 yards X 10 yards that are separated by a net (or a line, couple of bags, string tied to bags—something serving as a net). Just like in tennis, players play the ball (with their feet in this game) into the other’s grid and the ball must bounce once in that grid. If the receiving player(s) allows the ball to drop twice, the server earns a point. Receiving players can play volleys. Limit your touch count to two or three touch.
9. SLAM---Get a partner or partners and play against a wall or turn over a bench and use one touch to kick the ball against the wall. Turns alternate between partners. Players earn a letter if the ball goes over the bench or goes wide of the bench/wall until they spell “SLAM”. Once they spell “SLAM” they are out of the game.