



Sports – Soccer



Soccer is the most popular sport in the world and has the highest participation of all youth sports in the US! The sport of soccer has many great benefits. Players get a lot of exercise, they develop coordination and reaction skills, and it is a sport filled with teamwork and strategy. The Active@Home™ Soccer cards will help teach a number of the basic skills that a successful soccer player needs to have. Have fun and get active!

Soccer is a great game because you can play it just about anywhere, the rules are simple, and you can practice anytime with just a ball. In soccer, players can use everything but their hands and arms to try and score a goal by knocking the ball into the net. A goal keeper, who can use their hands to stop a ball, guards the net to try and prevent a goal. In the following Dribbling, Passing, Shooting, and Receiving cards, you will learn the basic skills that you will need to play the game of soccer. Learning these skills, and practicing them often, will give you what you need to succeed in PE class or in a game. For each of the skills listed, start slowly and concentrate on proper form. After practicing the skill several times you will be able to go faster and make fewer mistakes. Remember, no athlete becomes great without a lot of practice!

Tips and Reminders:

1. When practicing the following skills, only wear athletic shoes. Do not practice in sandals or bare feet.
2. These activities should be practiced outdoors. Indoor practice is not recommended unless it is in a proper facility.
3. Always stretch before you start. If you feel sharp pains in your muscles or joints, take a break from that activity. If the pain continues, you should stop immediately.

Dribbling

Dribbling is the ability to keep the ball close to your feet while running. It is the most basic and important soccer skill. Good players use the dribble to get around defenders to create a shot or pass to an open teammate.



Inside Foot Dribble

- 1.** Stand with the ball in front of your feet.
- 2.** Using the **inside** of your right foot, nudge the ball forward. You should make contact with the ball near the inside of your big toe or arch of your shoe.
- 3.** Follow the ball and immediately repeat this using your left foot. Alternate feet so that you are continuously pushing the ball forward.
- 4.** Start by walking and when you can easily control the ball begin to move faster.

Outside Foot Dribble

- 1.** Stand with the ball in front of your feet.
- 2.** Using the **outside** of your right foot, nudge the ball forward. You should make contact with the ball on the outside front of your shoe.
- 3.** Follow the ball and immediately repeat this using your left foot. Alternate feet so that you are continuously pushing the ball forward. Unlike dribbling with the inside foot, you will need to shuffle side-to-side to keep in the proper position.
- 4.** Start by walking and when you can easily control the ball begin to move faster.

***Tip!* Remember, dribbling is about controlling the ball. The ball should remain close to you as you dribble. For more control, kick the middle of the ball while walking and at the lower half while jogging or running.**

Short Pass

A short pass is the most common and easiest pass to make. It is the most accurate pass and a must for any soccer player to master.



How to Make a Short Pass:

- 1.** Stand with the ball 2 feet in front of you, with your entire body facing forward.
- 2.** Step with your left foot just to the left of the ball, pointing your toe forward.
- 3.** Swing your right foot forward with toe pointing to the right, so the inside arch of your shoe kicks the lower half of the ball. Keep your toe pointing to the right as your right foot follows through.
- 4.** Repeat with your left foot as the kicking foot.

Practicing Short Passes:

- 1.** Find a practice partner or choose an object that you can safely hit with the ball (like a tree trunk or fence post.) Make sure your partner or the target is no more than 10 feet away.
- 2.** Kick a Short Pass as shown above to your target, fast enough to reach your target but not so hard that a teammate couldn't control it.
- 3.** Softly hit your target 10 times (5 right foot and 5 left foot) using the Short Pass.

Tip! A good short pass stays close to the ground and keeps a consistent speed so it is easy for a teammate to control. Passes must be fast enough to avoid a defender but at a speed your teammate can control.

Long Pass

Long passes cover greater distances, are not used as commonly as short passes and are ideal for creating a chance to score a goal. The long pass is when a player kicks the ball into the air over their opponents' heads and to their teammate.



How to Make a Long Pass:

- 1.** Stand with the ball 4 feet in front of you, your entire body facing forward.
- 2.** Take a small step with your right foot and then step with your left foot behind and to the left of the ball, pointing your left toe forward.
- 3.** Swing your right foot forward with toe pointing at the ground just to the right of the ball, so that the top and inside of your shoe kicks the lower half of the ball. Swing your right leg forward and across your body as it follows through. Repeat using left foot.

Practicing a Long Pass:

- 1.** Find a partner or an object you can safely kick towards. Make sure it is about 20 feet away.
- 2.** Kick a Long Pass as shown, getting the ball 4-6 feet in the air.
- 3.** Land your ball very close to your partner or target 6 times (3 right foot and 3 left foot) using the Long Pass.

Tip! Because long passes require more power and travel farther than a short pass, they are more difficult to master. Keep focused on using proper form and keeping your eye on the ball as you develop a feel for the distance of your passes.

Receiving

Once a pass has been made, the ball must now be received. Receiving is important because it will allow the receiving player to either shoot or make another pass quickly, before the defense can react.



Using Your Foot to Receive

1. Stand about 6 feet in front of your partner or a wall you can safely bounce the ball off of.
2. Roll or bounce the ball off the wall so that it rolls or bounces back to you. If you have a partner, have them roll or bounce the ball to you. Keep the ball low to the ground.
3. Extend your foot to meet the upper half ball with the inside arch of your foot.

Using Your Leg to Receive

4. As the ball makes contact, cradle it by moving your foot back with the ball. Try to keep the ball as close to you as possible after it hits your foot so you are ready to make a pass or a shot.

Challenge: Receive the ball 10 times (5 with right foot and 5 with left foot)

Harder Challenge: Practice receiving a pass that is higher off the ground as shown above (between your knee and your waist). Repeat the steps above but use your inner leg to receive the pass instead of your foot.

Tip! To slow the speed of the ball and control it, your feet and legs should “cushion” the ball by moving slightly away from the ball at impact.

Receiving



Using Upper Body

1. Toss the ball straight up in front of your body, gently toss it off a wall, or have a partner bounce it to you, chest high.

2. Lean back, push out your chest, and keep your head back while watching the ball. Keep your arms at your sides.

3. As the ball makes contact with your chest, breathe out and pull your chest back to cushion the ball.

4. Take a small step back to let the ball return to the ground. Try to have the ball land as close to your feet as possible.

5. Use either foot to receive and control the ball as it hits the ground.

Challenge: Receive the ball 10 times with your chest.

Tip! A great way to practice your receiving skills is to 'juggle'. Juggling is softly kicking the ball to yourself in the air as many times as you can without letting it hit the ground. See how many times you can do it without letting the ball hit the ground!

Shooting

In soccer, a shot is a ball kicked by a player at the opponent's net in an attempt to score a goal. Because there is a goalkeeper trying to stop any shot from going into the net, accuracy is very important.



1. Stand with the ball 4 feet in front of you.

2. Take a small step with your right foot and then a larger step with your left foot so that it is just to the left of the ball with you toe pointing forward. This is referred to as 'stepping into' your shot.

3. Swing your right foot forward, contacting the ball with the top, inside part of your foot (right above your big toe). Your toe will be pointing down as you kick the lower half of the ball.

4. Follow through as you make contact with the ball. The force of your kick will swing your leg across your body.

5. Repeat these steps for both left and right-footed kicks.

Challenge: Using a goal or a wall as your target take 10 shots from 10 feet away. Aim your shot at a very small area and focus on accuracy. As you begin to consistently hit your target, begin to move further away.