

Diamond Sports Study Guide

Kickball & Wiffleball

Freshman Physical Education

History:

Where did Wiffleball Originate?

In 1953, David N. Mullany was watching his 12-year-old son and some friends playing a baseball-like game with a perforated plastic golf ball and a broomstick in their Fairfield, CT, backyard. The boys were trying to sneak pitches past each other by throwing curveballs and sliders, but to no avail.

Mullany, who had been a semipro hurler himself, knew all too well what thousands of Little Leaguers have had to painfully learn: nothing shreds a tender adolescent arm quite as effectively as throwing breaking balls. Mullany set about trying to save the boys' shoulders and elbows by creating a ball that would curve and bend on its own. His original medium was an unexpected one: a hard plastic ball that served as packaging for Coty perfume. After having the boys experiment with various designs, Mullany hit on the Wiffle Ball we now know and love.

Where did kickball originate?

Kickball, originally called "Kick Baseball", but may also be known as base soccer, soccer-base or soccer-baseball. It is essentially baseball using a playground ball instead of a baseball and bat. Kickball is currently a playground, recreational and competitive league game primarily played in North America. It is also a favorite game of youth in South Korea where it is known as balyagu (foot-baseball) and is a staple of PE classes within elementary schools.

Kickball was invented around 1917 by Nicholas C Seuss, Supervisor of Cincinnati Park Playgrounds, in Cincinnati, Ohio, USA. Starting around 1920 kickball was used by physical education teachers to teach children the basics of baseball. Around this time, the ball that was used was a soccer or volley ball. It was played by around ten children on a team and the field included a neutral zone that could not be entered until the ball was kicked from the home area

Object of the game:

- To score more runs than the other team.
- A player scores a run when they safely touch first, second, third, and home before their team makes three outs.

Safety Considerations

- No throwing the bats. (wiffleball)
- No sliding into the bases.
- All members of the batting team must be standing against the bleachers when their team is up to bat
- Fielders may not cross the pitcher before contact is made
- Fielders may not "peg" their opponent

Key Vocabulary

- Ball- a pitch thrown outside the strike zone
- Base Hit- a play in which the batter hits the ball into fair territory and gets at least to first base
- Base- one of four "safe havens" to be reached in turn by a runner
- Bases Loaded- situation in which a runner is waiting on each of three bases
- Bat- instrument made of aluminum or wood that is used to hit the ball while batting
- Batter- player whose job is to hit the ball with a bat
- Batter's Box- an area around home plate marked by white lines in which a batter must stand
- Bunt- light hit made by letting the ball hit the bat without swinging it
- Catcher- player who squats behind home plate and catches pitches the batter doesn't hit
- Change Up- a slow pitch thrown with the same arm action as a fastball, intended to deceive the batter
- Curve Ball- a pitch that moves unexpectedly in the air because of spin put on the ball by the pitcher

- Double Play- a defensive play in which two base runners are out from two quick throws
- Double- a hit from which the batter reaches second base
- Fair Territory- area of the field from home base out to the bottom of the home run fence and between the foul lines
- Fastball- a pitch that is thrown as fast as possible
- Fly Ball- batted ball that goes high in the air
- Force Out- A fielder tags the base the runner was advancing towards because the batter became a base runner, before the base runner had to try to advance.
- Force Out- Player holding the ball tags the base when runner is forced to run to that base
- Foul Ball- batted ball that goes outside the foul lines
- Foul Line- lines extending from home plate through 1st and 3rd bases to the outfield fence
- Foul Territory- all parts of the playing field outside the foul lines
- Grand Slam- a home run hit with a runner on every base, by which 4 runs are scored
- Ground Ball- a batted ball that rolls or bounces in the infield
- Home Plate- the fourth base to which a runner runs, over which a pitcher pitches and a batter bats
- Home Run- a ball hit out of the playing field in fair territory, scoring a run for the batter and any base runners
- Infield Fly Rule- A fair, fly ball that can be caught by an infielder with runners on first and second, or with bases loaded, with less than two outs. The batter is automatically out.
- Infield- area inside the square formed by the four bases
- Infielder- player who fields in the infield, including first, second and third basemen and shortstop
- Inning- a period of play in which each team bats until 3 batters are out
- Line Drive- a ball hit hard and low in the air
- Out- to be dismissed, or to have one's turn ended
- Outfield- area between the infield and the home run fence
- Pitcher's Mound- a raised section in the middle of the diamond on which pitchers stand when pitching
- Play- a move or maneuver in a sport or game
- Ready Position- Legs are shoulder width apart, knees are slightly bent, and hands are open and close to the ground.
- Run- a score earned when a base runner safely gets to home plate
- Shortstop- fielder whose position is between second and third bases
- Steal- to run a base between pitches without the batter hitting the ball
- Strike Out- to be out for having three strikes called
- Strike Zone- to be out for having three strikes called
- Strike- a strike is called if a batter swings at a pitch and misses, or if the pitch passes through the strike zone without being hit
- Tag- to get a runner out by touching them with the ball or with the glove holding the ball
- Tagging Up- If a fly ball is caught, a base runner must tag the base she was on before advancing to the next base.
- Triple Play- a defensive play in which three base runners are tagged out with three quick throws
- Triple- a hit from which the batter reaches third base
- Walk- free pass to first base given to a batter after a pitcher throws four balls outside the strike zone

Fielding Positions

- First Baseman: Possesses good catching skills and stands a few steps to the right and behind first base.
- Second Baseman: Is agile with good hands and stands five steps to the left of and five steps behind second base.
- Third Baseman: Has a strong throwing arm and stands a few steps to the left and behind third base.
- Short Stop: Is a good fielder and possesses a strong throwing arm. Stand between second and third base a few steps behind the base line.
- Outfielders: Have good running speed along with the ability to track and catch fly balls

Rules and Regulations

Pitching, Catching and Fielding

- Balls must be pitched by hand. All pitches need to be underhand.
- Proper field position is: All fielders besides the catcher must start play and remain behind the 1st -3rd base diagonal until the ball is kicked.
- The pitcher must start the act of pitching within the pitching mound.
- The catcher must field behind the kicker, within or directly behind the kicking box, and may not cross home plate nor be positioned forward of the kicker before the ball is kicked.

Kicking (kickball only)

- All kicks must be made by foot or leg, below the knee. Any ball touched by the foot or leg below the knee is a kick.
- All kicks must occur
 - at or behind home plate
 - within the kicking box

Running and Scoring

- Runners must stay within the baseline. Any runner outside the baseline is out.
- Runners are free to change course to avoid interference with a fielder making a play.
- When attempting to avoid a ball tag, runners may move no more than four feet out of their established path.
- Neither leading off base, nor stealing a base is allowed.
- Hitting a runner's neck or head with the ball is not allowed, except when the runner is sliding.
- A tag-up is a requirement to retouch or stay on a base until a kicked then caught ball is first touched by a fielder.
- A runner may advance only one base beyond the base the runner is on or running toward when the ball travels into foul territory.
- If any fielder attempts to make an out prior to returning the ball to the pitcher, runners may commence base running.
- Running past another runner is not allowed.
- A run scores when a runner touches home plate before the third out is made

Strikes

- A count of three (3) strikes is an out.
- A strike is:
 - a pitch that is not kicked and is not called a ball, that enters any part of the strike zone
 - an attempt kick missed by the kicker inside or outside the strike zone.
 - Foul ball

Balls

- A count of four (4) balls advances the kicker to first base.
- A ball is:
 - a pitch outside of the strike zone
 - a pitched ball that does not touch the ground at least twice or roll before reaching the kicking box.
 - a pitched ball that exceeds one foot in height at the plate.

Fairs and Fouls

- A count of four (4) fouls is an out.
- A foul ball is:
 - a ball landing in foul territory
 - a ball touched in foul territory
 - a ball landing in fair territory, but touching foul territory on its own at any time before reaching first or third base
 - a kick made on or above the knee
 - a ball kicked outside the kicking box.
- A fair ball is:
 - a ball landing and remaining in fair territory
 - a ball landing in fair territory then traveling into foul territory beyond the 1st -3rd base diagonal.

Outs

- A count of three (3) outs by a team completes the teams half of the inning
- An out is:

- A count of three (3) strikes or four fouls
- Any kicked ball (fair or foul) that is caught by a fielder
- A ball tag on a base to which a runner is forced to run, before the runner arrives at the base
- A runner touched by the ball or who touched the ball at any time while not on a base while the ball is in play
- A kicker intentionally hits the ball with their hand or arm
- A ball tag of a runner on base
- A runner off base when the ball is kicked
- A runner that passes another runner
- A runner outside the base line
- A runner who misses a base
- Hits the ceiling of the gym (if ball hits the cables or backboards, it is considered a foul ball)
- No pegging allowed

Ball in Play

- Once the pitcher has the ball in control and retains possession on the mounds, the play ends.

Basic Rules:

Batting

- The batting team gets three-outs/or one rotation of the batting order.
- Each batter gets only three pitches in which to hit the ball.
- The batting team will provide the pitcher. These players still get their turn at bat.
- A batting order must be followed; batting out of turn is an out.
- Pitches are slow pitch underhand.
- The batter is out if the pitcher (on their team) touches the ball.
- All hits are playable; there is no out of bounds.
- The batter is out if the bat is thrown more than four bat lengths from home plate.
- There are no walks.
- Automatic homeruns are awarded anytime the ball hits above the white wall. Batter still runs the bases.
- Base runners must always run to the next base on a hit ball.
- Runners are allowed to overrun first base and home plate.
- No bunting, lead-offs, or stealing bases.
- Runners on base cannot run until the ball is hit.
- Base runners are out if they get hit by a batted ball.

Defense

- Fielders should stand near each base, but not on it until they are making a play at the base.
- A fielder will stand near the pitcher for the defensive team.
- The defensive team must provide their own catcher.
- Fielders can tag the runners out and force a runner out at the next base.
- Any ball caught off the ceiling before it hits the ground is an out.
- Any ball that hits the wall, must be thrown to a base or tag a runner out.
- Fielders should not interfere with the base runners while they are running.

Strategies

Offensive

- Base runners pay attention to where the ball is hit and advance to the next base accordingly.
- Base runners advance half way on a fly ball and return safely to the base before tagging up.
- Learn to hit for power and placement of the hit to where the defense is not.

Defensive

- Be in the ready position and know what you are going to do with the ball if it is hit towards you.
- Defend bases appropriately.
- Communicate with other outfielders when going after the ball