

Throwing and Catching

Throwing and catching are complementary skills, yet are quite different in terms of their movement focus. In catching or receiving, the body controls a ball or object, relying on the ability of the eyes to track the ball into the receiving part of the body. Throwing involves propelling a ball away from the body and is a target skill. These skills are difficult to practise in isolation from each other, and both require specific attention in practice activities.

Throwing and catching actions for small balls differ from those for large balls. Throwing and catching skills include: overarm throw, underarm throw and roll, as seen in cricket and softball games; and a variety of two-handed passes, like the chest, bounce, spiral pass that are prevalent in netball, basketball and rugby. (Developing FMS Manual, SportNZ)

Throwing and Catching - Activities (Under 5's)

For younger children when practising throwing use targets that are hard to miss – hoops, draw chalk markings on the ground, use buckets and bean bags. As children get more capable, adjust the distance for throwing or add in some movement – either the target or the thrower.

Targets - Put out targets so children can practise their throwing. Hang a hoop with some string or rope from a tree or door frame, so children can throw objects through it. Leave hoops on the ground for target practice.

Sock Toss - A fun laundry day game is to let your child practice tossing rolled socks into a laundry basket. Each time they get a sock into the basket, have them step back a step for their next shot.

Bean bag toss - Start by setting up a course - either with or without the help of the children. Use cushions or pillows as markers, and find some containers - waste paper baskets, buckets, empty shoe boxes etc - to be targets or "golf holes". Now the children take turns in tossing their beanbag around the course and into the targets as appropriate.



Snow ball clean up - Prior to the game ask children to scrunch up paper "snowballs". Make sure they are well taped into balls. Mark a dividing line between two groups of children using masking tape or a rope. Have a basket of "snowballs" set up at the side of each area. When the signal is given to start the game, children throw "snowballs" over the line. After approximately 30 seconds stop and see who has the least number of "snowballs" on their side. Swap teams and play again. To clean up the area encourage the children to throw the "snowballs" into baskets as a target.

Carnival Games - Set up a few skill games in your backyard. Invite some of your child's friends or neighbours over for a mini-carnival:

- **Ring the Bottles**- Cut the middles out of some old margarine tub lids for rings. Then set up some plastic bottles (full or empty) and let your child and her friends take turns trying to toss the ring over the top of the bottles.
- **Coin Toss** - Set out some plastic or paper plates, on the grass or floor. Have the children stand back a few feet and attempt to toss the coins onto the plates.
- **Teddy Bear Knock Out** - Set a stuffed animal on a stool and let the children throw a ball and try to knock him over.

