

Castle Ball - developing target throwing and team building

Castleball is an active Invasion game, two teams throwing at their opponent's target. It's dodgeball without the human targets. Instead, teams work together to build structures out of hula hoops and attempt to make the other team's structure fall. With cooperation, strategy and skill, teams defend and attack castles built of Hula Hoops. This game seamlessly incorporates NPES 1, 2, 3, 4, 5!

In this handout, there is a plethora of Castleball variations that challenge teamwork and collaboration appropriate for grades 3 and up. I hope that it will add to your curriculum and perhaps inspire you to adapt other games to meet your students' growing needs and challenge them in new ways.

Activity : **Basic Game of Castleball**

Directions How to Play Castleball - From Playworks - Game of the Week - Playworks -Castleball <https://www.playworks.org/resource/game-of-the-week-castle-ball/>

Group Size: Large group (10 or more)

Age Group: Grades 3+

Length of Activity: 10 minutes or more

Developmental Goal: To practice working together as a team while playing both offense and defense.

Equipment: Dodgeballs, Hula Hoops, optional: Cones,

Before You Start:

- Split the group into two teams.
- Identify the play area (large enough for players to run) so that everyone understands the boundaries.
- Tell players that Castle Ball is like building a "house of cards" out of four to six hula hoops or cones. The structure will stand on its own but will fall when a ball strikes any part of it.
- Begin by showing the players how to build a castle. Teams can place one hula hoop on the floor and use four hula hoops to form the sides, adding another one on the top.
- Allow players to practice building castles until they can do it themselves.

- Define safe throws, penalties for hitting players' face, unsafe play.

Set Up - Use clear boundaries for play—a large rectangle that is split in the middle, such as a basketball court or gym.

How To Play:

- Play begins with both teams have built one (or more depending on number of players and hula hoops) castles on their side of the play area.
- Soft foam dodgeballs—approximately one ball per five players or as available—are used to attempt to knock down the other team's castle while protecting your own.
- One point is awarded each time a castle is knocked down, even if a player bumps into his/her own castle.
- Castles that are knocked down should be set up as quickly as possible so players can continue playing. The other team may not throw at a castle while it is being built.
- The game is separated by a center line, which players cannot cross to retrieve a ball.
- Players should be encouraged to pass the ball to teammates to surprise the defenders or to make sure everyone gets to throw the ball.
- In defending the castle, players should be alert, on the balls of their feet, and cooperate with their teammates to form strategies that will best defend their “castles”.
- Once all castles are knocked down a new round is started.

Variations:

- If many hula hoops are available and teams are large, have each team maintain 2-3 castles. (aka - Castle Kingdom)
- Add additional balls, or variety of balls (I use yarn balls with younger kids, then progress to dodgeballs or soft bouncy balls like PG Softs. I sometimes mix type and size of balls)
- See variations described in this handout

Alternative Name of the Game: Sandcastle - Hmmm, I wonder what we could come up for this one?

Game Variations -

Activity : **The Great Pumpkin** (aka-Castleball with an aerobic twist)

Set Up: Divide into 2 teams - Candy Corns vs. Tootsie rolls. (I have created teams for you if you want to use them -below) .Each team builds a Castle (Great Pumpkin) with 6 Hula Hoops, soft balls lined up on center line, players on their side of court. Each team's objective is to knock over their opponent's Castle AND steal all of the candies in the corners.

If it is knocked down, the team that knocked it down sends their 2 runners (Trick or Treaters) to get the treats (bean bags placed in opponent's' court back corners. There should be 3-4 bean bags/objects in each corner.) Runners can only take one treat at a time and return it (by running it back) to their corners. Meanwhile, the team with the 'downed Pumpkin' tries to rebuild it before the runners get all of their bean bags. No balls are to be thrown at this time. If they get Pumpkin rebuilt first, then the game resumes and no point scored. If the runners get all of the treats first, that team gains a point. Bean bags and balls are replaced and a new round begins.

If any class gets amped and too competitive, I exchange a few players mixing the teams up each round.

Safety is of utmost importance in this game. Balls are thrown at the Castle, NOT at people. If they hit a person accidentally in the body or legs and the force is not out of control then nothing happens. If it hits someone in the head or the force is too great for range, then they are out for one minute. If it is repeated by the same person or is purposely too aggressive, that person sits out.

Activity : **Ice Castle** (a fun winter twist to play with Castleball rules)

Play as usual, except substitute large cones with tennis balls on top of the cones placed in each corner of the court. Once the Castle is knocked down, throwing continues only at the pillars (cones) while the team attempts to rebuild their castle. If they rebuild and the pillars are still standing with balls on them, the game continues-no score. If the attacking team knocks off the balls from both pillars, then they score. This requires teams to organize themselves, shifting positions and being fluid to jump in and cooperate where needed.

Activity : **Santa's Workshop** (Cooperation is vital to success in this one!)

This version is played similar to the Great Pumpkin. I set small soft toys (stuffed animals, yarn balls, bean bags, anything would work)on the sides center line. Each team chooses 2 reindeer and 2 elves that when an opponent's castle is knocked down, then they travel via scooter (reindeer pushing the elf seated on each scooter) to pick up

the toys. The team has how ever long it takes the elves to collect the toys (taking one at a time and returning to their side) to rebuild the castle. If castle is constructed before all toys are stolen, no score, if toys are all collected before castle is constructed, then the team wins.

Activity : **Eiffel Towers** (Castleball for younger kids - suggested for learning the game with grades 2-3) Use Milk crates instead of Hula Hoops, 3 stacked on top of each other. This makes putting them up simpler with less frustration as they are learning the game. I usually give a time limit for rebuilding or give the other team a task to do to compete for time.

Activity : **Castle Kingdom** - (this version doesn't require as much collaboration among players, but it's fun and can last an entire class period if they are good at guarding and blocking) Play with 2-3 Castles per side. Once one is down they cannot rebuild it. No one scores until all castles on a side are down.

Additional Resources -

Game of the Week - Playworks -Castleball

<https://www.playworks.org/resource/game-of-the-week-castle-ball/>

Building a Hoop Hut / aka Castle and basic rules of the game.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J5VrXdSc7y0>



