

# Rules for Playground Ball Games

## for 1st Grade Playground Monitors

These ball game rules are provided as a helpful reference for 1<sup>st</sup> grade parents volunteering as playground monitors. Please note that students may have learned rules that vary from what are listed below, and they may choose to change rules in a fun-spirited way. This is the nature of playground games.

We don't expect parent volunteers to teach these rules to the students or enforce rules of play. Indeed, your monitoring responsibilities will prevent you from doing so. However, you may want to familiarize yourself with these rules so that you are better able to assist 1<sup>st</sup> graders if they need help entering a game or resolving conflict related to one.

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**WALL BALL** (obtained from the Playworks website – see SIPAT-> Programs-> Playworks)

- The game begins when one player serves the ball by hitting the ball towards the wall.
- The ball must bounce one time on the ground before it reaches the wall.
- The receiving player must let the ball hit the wall and bounce once before returning it.
- The player then returns the ball by hitting it so that it reaches the wall after one bounce on the ground.
- Play continues until the ball:
  - Bounces on a line or outside the boundaries.
  - Hits the wall without bouncing off the ground.
  - Bounces twice before it is returned.
  - Is not allowed to bounce.
- When a player stops the play, s/he goes to the end of the line and a new player comes into the game.
- The remaining player is the server and begins the next game.

### **Variations:**

- For lower skilled players, allow them to catch and return the ball.
- After play has advanced past this basic game, players can add special rules. For example, instead of requiring one bounce before returning the ball, a player could allow returns before the ball bounces as well as on a single bounce.

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**POGO (obtained from [http://cosdesign.com/teacher\\_resources/PogoRules2.0.pdf](http://cosdesign.com/teacher_resources/PogoRules2.0.pdf))**

*This site reports that Pogo was invented by a bunch of elementary students in Davis. How cool is that?*

- Pogo is typically played by 1<sup>st</sup> graders as a two-player game, using only two squares. Some students may play it as a four-person game in a four-square court using all four squares.
- Players play against each other to try to become server. A server tries to remain in the game as the server for as long as possible and retains the serve until s/he gets out. Players waiting their turn to play line up to take the place of the person who gets out.
- The game begins when the server serves the ball by tossing it down in her own square so that it will first bounce once in her square before then bouncing in an opponent's square.
- To return the serve, all players must hit the ball with both hands held together firmly in a hold. Players have different holds, and there's no "right way" to do it. Any player who hits the ball with one hand—even if their hand is in a closed fist—is out. Exception: if the player has only one hand or one hand is injured. (Note – not sure if this two-handed return rule is used by CCE students.)

### The Play

- Players must hit the ball so that it bounces in their square once after they hit it, and then proceeds into another player's square.
  - They may let the ball bounce once in their square *before* they hit it, although this is not required.
  - A player may also hit the ball before it bounces in their square provided that *after* they hit it, it bounces once in their square before heading to an opponent's square.
- Players may step outside their squares—and even inside other players' squares—to hit or return balls.
- Outs → Once a player is out, another player waiting in line takes the "out" child's place. If the outgoing player was the server, her previous opponent becomes the new server. If the server remains in the game, she retains the serve. There are several ways to get out:
  - Double Bounce – the ball bounces twice in a player's square
  - Logo – the player hits the ball into another square before it first bounces in her own square. (Sometimes the children will change the rules and allow logos. I've heard players ask each other if they're allowing logos.)

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- Double hit – the player hits the ball twice, using any part of the body
- Overshoot – the player hits the ball correctly into their own square, but it fails to bounce into an opponent’s square
- Trap – the player gets the ball trapped between their hands and the ground so that the ball stops altogether
- Off the body – the player uses a part of their body other than one hand to hit the ball
- Swisher – the player fails to hit the ball
- One hander – the player hits the ball back using only one hand, not the required two hands. (I’m not sure this rule is followed at CCE – I’ve seen children play one-handed)
- Do-overs: Do-overs are plays that require the server to begin again, and restart the play with the same players in each square. In pogo, two events always require a do-over:
  1. *Liner*: If the ball apparently landed on a line, and the question arises about whose square the ball is in, the play is done over.
  2. *Interference*: If other players or people in line bump or accidentally interfere with the game, or make it difficult for a player to reach or hit the ball, “*interference*” is called, and the play is done over.