

How to Play Boxball

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Boxball is a game played between two players hitting a ball back and forth between separate, but adjoining squares. The goal of this game is to prevent the ball from bouncing twice in your square before sending it back to the opponent. Boxball can be played outside, or inside of a gymnasium. To take part in boxball, you will need to prepare a court, play the game with an opponent, and practice regularly for improvement.^[1]

Things You'll Need

- ☐ A ball
- ☐ Tape (for the court)
- ☐ An opponent

Part 1

Part 1 of 3: Preparing for the Game



1 Choose a location. This game can be played outside or inside. If played outside, you will need to find a location with asphalt or concrete. Boxball is typically played on the sidewalk, but it is okay to play on an asphalt court as long as there is enough room. If played inside, only play in a designated area in a gymnasium.^[2]

- Do not play boxball inside of your home, or inside of any location that is not meant for sports. Playing inside could lead to items being broken or damaged by the bouncing ball.
- Don't play on grass. The ball will not bounce well.



2 Find an opponent. Luckily, you do not have to find an opponent that is already skilled in the game. Boxball is a fairly easy game to learn. You can play with a friend, family member, or schoolmate. Just make sure the other person is willing to play.[3]

- You may want to choose your opponent based off of your experience level. You can play with another beginner if you're also trying to learn, or you can play with a more advanced player to better your game.



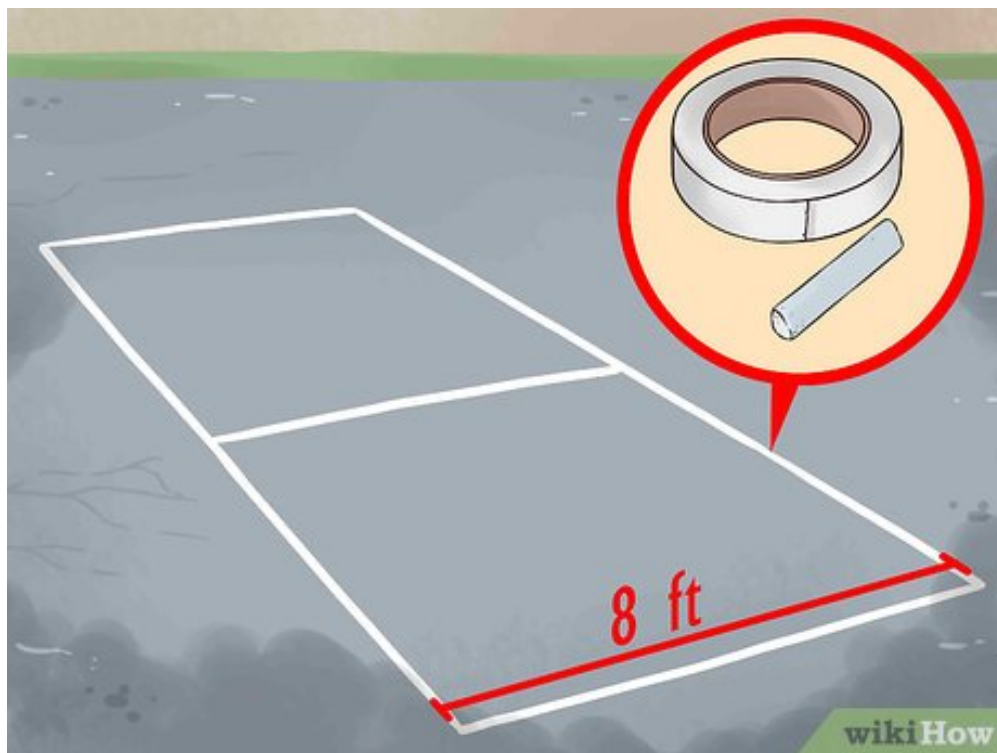
3 Wear athletic clothing. You can wear any type of comfortable clothing to play. Stretchy clothing made for exercise is ideal. Wear athletic shoes with gripping soles, especially if you are playing on an indoor court.[4]

- You can also wear knee pads, elbow pads, hip protectors, and wrist protectors for added protection.



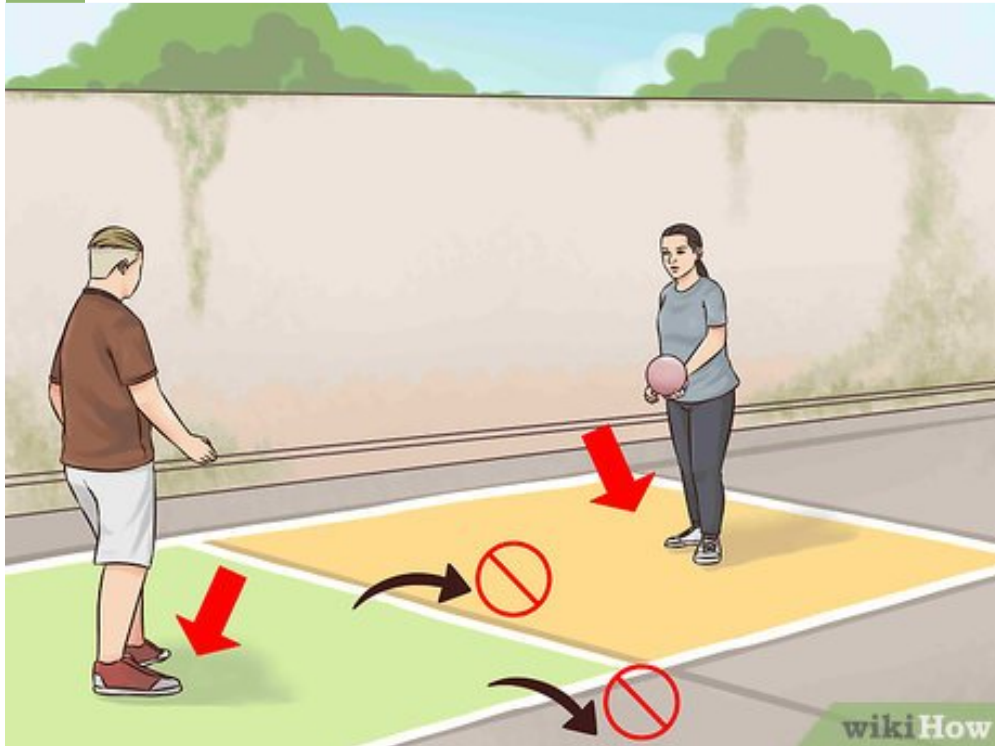
4 Get a ball. The most ideal ball for this game is an 8.5 inch inflatable rubber ball. These balls are typical in schoolyards, and they are commonly referred to as “kickballs.” If you do not have this type of ball, you can play with any type of ball that bounces. A larger ball, however, is preferred.[5]

- A spaldeen ball was originally used in the game. It is a smooth, pink, rubber ball that is similar to a kickball.[6]
- A basketball can be a good alternative, but make sure it is not too hard. It may hurt your hand when throwing it back and forth.
- You can also play with a tennis or ping pong ball, but the small size might make playing difficult.



5 Make a court. If playing outside, there is a possibility that you do not have to make a court yourself. Boxball was originally played on two sidewalk squares. You will just need to find two, spacious and adjoining sidewalk squares. If you aren't in an area with sidewalk squares, you can make a court yourself. To make a court, you will need to use tape to create squares. Make the squares 8 feet wide, but you may want to make them smaller if you are a beginner.^[7]

- Use one inch masking tape.
- Chalk can also be used to draw squares.



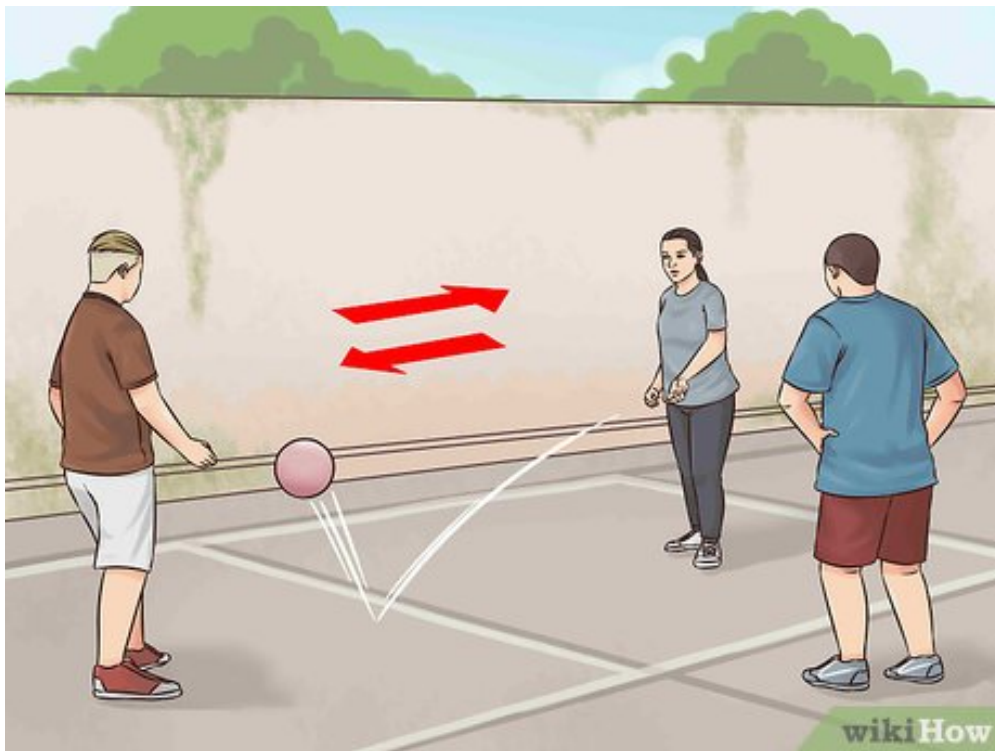
1 Choose a square. To begin, each player will need to choose a square. It is best to start standing in the middle of the square. Once you are in one of the two squares, stand facing your opponent. The line between the two squares is the boundary. Do not cross this boundary at any point in the game.^[8]

- Do not step outside of any of the lines of your square at any point in the game.



2 Agree on the rules. Boxball can be played using one or both hands to hit the ball. Either choice is okay, but you need to make a decision with your opponent. You might want to start by playing with both hands if you are a new player.^[9]

- You are allowed to use a reverse shot if you play with only one hand. A reverse shot is when you can use the back of your hand to hit the ball back.



3 Volley to choose who serves first. To volley, one player hits the ball into player two's square. Player two hits back and forth until one person fails to return the ball, or steps outside of his or her own court. The winner of the volley gets to serve the ball.^[10]

- The serve can be maintained by the winner of the volley, or it can be rotated every five points.
- A serve is made any time a hit has been missed, or when a player goes out of bounds.



4 Defend your square. Hit the ball with an open palm back and forth to your opponent. Return the ball before it hits the ground, or when it bounces only once. A point is gained when the opponent misses a shot, or volley, goes out of bounds, or hits the ball outside of the opponent's square.^[11]

- You have also lost the volley if you try to return the ball after it has bounced twice.



5 Play until someone reaches twenty-one points. Continue slapping the ball back and forth with your opponent until someone reaches twenty-one points. You gain one point when your opponent loses a volley. You must beat the opponent by two points to win.^[12]

- The score could go beyond twenty-one in order for someone to win by two or more points.

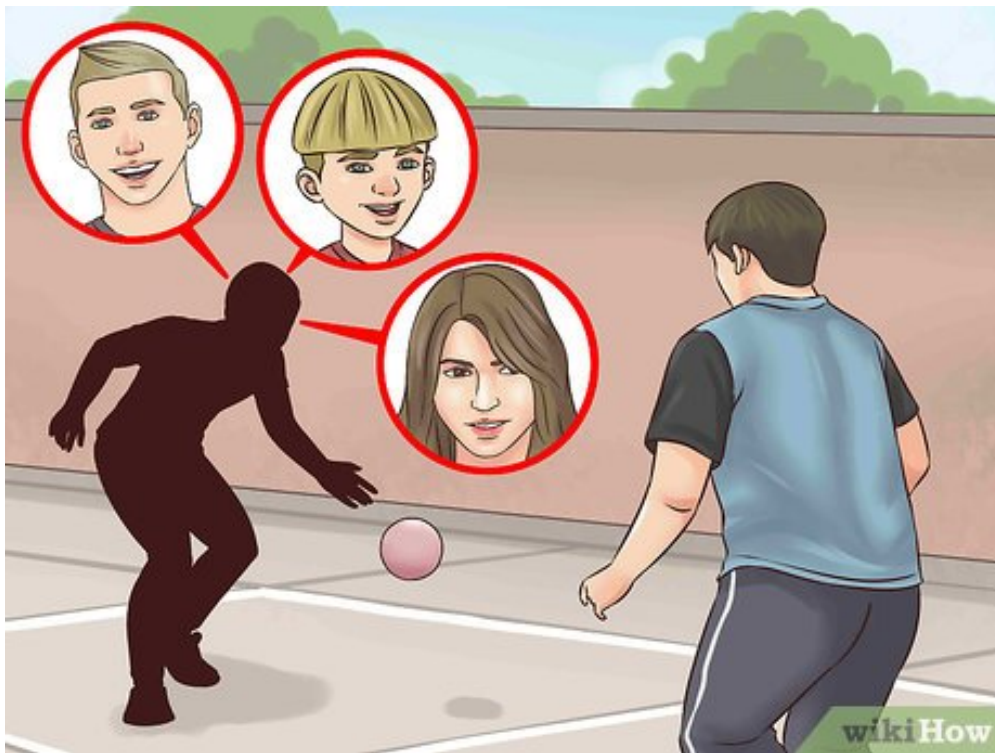
Part
3

Part 3 of 3: Improving Your Game



1 Train regularly. The main way to improve at boxball is to play regularly. Try playing a couple of times a week. If you can't find anyone to play with, you can practice hitting the ball back and forth by throwing the ball up against a wall.^[13]

- Do not throw the ball up against any wall without permission. The wall needs to be sturdy, like brick, on the outside of a building.



2 Play with a variety of opponents. Play with as many people as possible, so you gain experience with a variety of opponents. For improvement, you might want to play with someone who is slightly more advanced at the game than you are. Playing with someone who is much more or less advanced can lead to frustration instead of conscious improvement.

- It can be an occasional confidence booster to play with someone who is new to the game. Playing with a beginner will show you how far you've come, and you will be helping someone improve his or her game.



3 Form a team. You can agree with one person to practice on a regular basis. Find multiple people to play with for more challenge and variety. Boxball is only played with two people, but you can have several games going on at a time. Switch opponents after each game in order to play multiple games with several opponents within a practice session.^[14]

- You need an even number of people if you want to have multiple games going on at a time. This will give each person a partner during every game.



4 Play similar games. Boxball has been called an outdoor game of ping pong, and a very small version of tennis. Boxball is also comparable to four square. Four square is a similar game, but it is played with four people. The rules and materials are not the same in these games, but playing these games will help develop skills needed to excel at boxball.^[15]

- Tennis requires rackets. Ping pong requires paddles. Four square is played with the same ball as boxball, and you only use your hands.



Tips

- Boxball is a fast-paced game. Make sure you maintain concentration throughout the game.
- When you win, you are now Ace. You serve at the beginning of the next game.



Warnings

- Don't throw the ball at your opponent's face.
- Be mindful of your surroundings if you play outside. Do not get too close to the street.

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