



How to...



FUN FACT

In 1972, two friends created the modern game of hacky sack in an Oregon basement.

Play a game of hacky sack

Find out the basics to enjoy this fun and popular activity.

If you've noticed groups of kids standing in a circle kicking around a small bag, they're probably playing a game of footbag, commonly known as hacky sack. The game was popular in the 1990s, and it's returned this year in a big way. "The reason footbag has gained so much traction is it's getting people off their screens and kicking together. There's a feeling of freedom and fun," says Greyson Herdman, owner of the World Footbag Company, which has been selling hacky sacks since 1983. Here's how you can get started.

Get a footbag

All you need to play the sport is a footbag—a small, hand-stitched leather or crocheted bag filled with sand, recycled rubber, or plastic pellets. Hacky sacks come in a variety of colors and styles (like those pictured in the photo above), and many players like to collect them. When you play, it's a good idea to wear a pair of lightweight sneakers. Many players prefer skate sneakers because their flat sides are ideal for kicking.

Start practicing

The goal of the game is to try to keep the hacky sack from falling to the ground without touching it with

your hands. There are many things you can do to keep the bag in the air. First, toss the bag into the air and try catching it on your chest, neck, head, and back. Then practice kicking it up from the top of your knees. Next, try launching it off the top of your toe, alternating legs. Finally, position your foot so the inside is a flat surface like a racket. Drop the bag onto it so you can kick it back up and catch it on your chest.

Join a circle

Once you've got the hang of footbag, grab some friends and form a "circle" where you take turns kicking the bag to one another. The ultimate goal in a circle is called a "hack," when everyone in the group kicks or catches the sack at least once before it hits the ground. Bring your footbag with you in your pocket wherever you go so you can practice solo or pick up a game with other players.

Up your game

Once you're comfortable keeping the footbag in the air with basic kicks, you can try more advanced kicks, such as the helicopter and rainbow. You can also enter formal hacky sack competitions where players aim to set a record for how long they keep the sack in the air.



Hack the sack!

Bounce battle



Another popular group game is roundnet, which is commonly known as spikeball.

Four players, in two teams of two, stand on opposite sides of what looks like a tiny, ankle-high trampoline. The game begins when a player starts a point by serving the ball down onto the net so it ricochets back up at their opponents. The returning team has up to three hits to return the ball back onto the net. Once the ball is in play, players can run, hit, and defend in any direction they choose around the net.

The rally continues until a team can't return the ball onto the net within their three touches. Games are typically played to a predetermined score of 11, 15, or 21 points.