

# Four Square

Grades 2-6

## INTRODUCTION

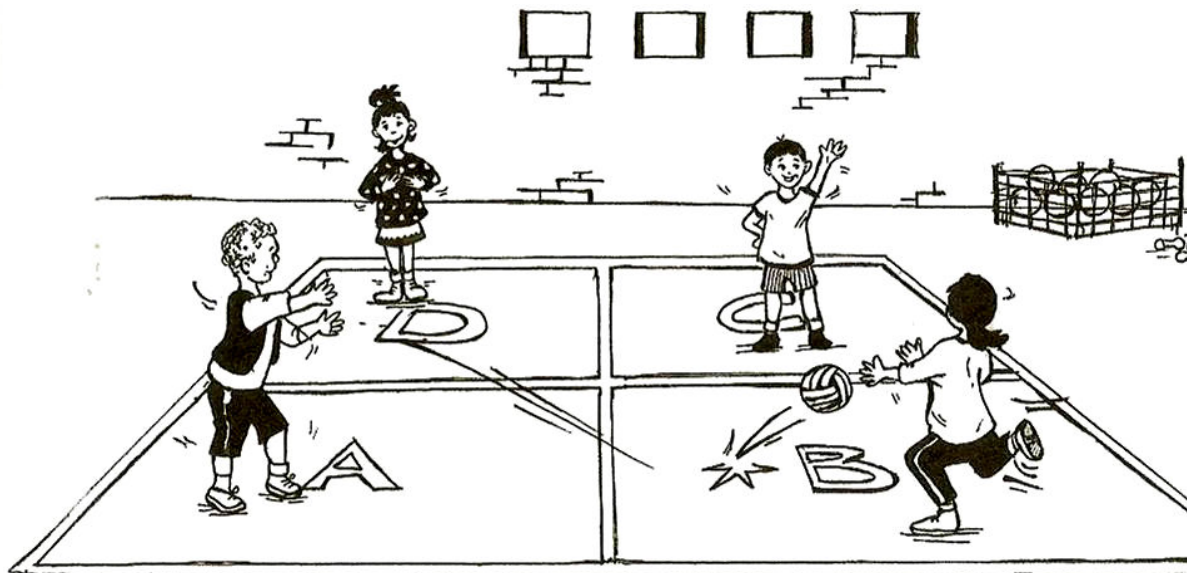
This popular playground game develops striking skills and hand-eye coordination.

## NUMBER OF PLAYERS

Four or more players to a court

## EQUIPMENT

One playground ball for each court; for the Four Square game variations, refer to the specific game descriptions below for any equipment needed.



## HOW TO PLAY

The court (a six-yard square) consists of four equal squares, which each square labeled A, B, C, and D. The server's square (A) has a service line marked diagonally across the square.

Each of the four players is assigned a square. The player in square A begins play as the server. The object of the game for the remaining players is to displace the player in square A, and to stay there for as long as possible. The server, standing in back corner of his square, begins by dropping the ball and hitting it with an open hand into one of the other squares. The receiver can allow the ball to either not bounce or bounce only once before hitting it into another square. A player who misses, commits a foul, or fails to return the ball must move to square D, and the other players move up. If playing with more than four players, the player responsible for the error goes to the end of the challenge line and the first player in the challenge line moves to square D.

The five ways of committing a foul are:

1. Catching or carrying the ball.
2. Hitting a ball with a fist.
3. Hitting a ball out of bounds or landing it on a boundary line.
4. Allowing the ball to touch any body part except the hands.
5. Stepping into another square to play the ball.

## VARIATIONS

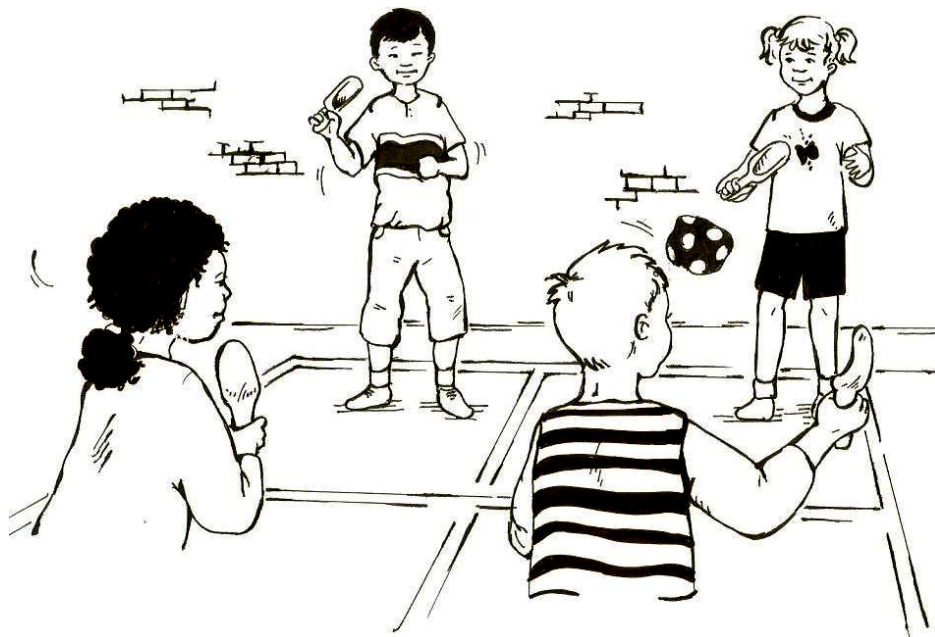
There are many different variations to the traditional game of Four Square. Some of these include:

# Around the World Four Square \_\_\_\_\_

This variation has the same rules of regular Four Square with one exception—the players must hit the ball in a certain direction. If the server begins by serving the ball to the right, then it must continue going around square-to-square in that direction. However, the server can call out “Left” and change the direction once the ball lands in his or her square. Play continues in this fashion until someone commits an error.

# Beanbag Four Square \_\_\_\_\_

This variation is played like regular Four Square, except plastic scoops and a beanbag replace the use of a playground ball. Because this game requires catching a thrown beanbag (underhanded) with a scoop, the one-bounce rule does not apply. Fouls include (1) throwing the beanbag with an overhand motion, (2) throwing the beanbag out of bounds, (3) landing the beanbag out of bounds, (4) having the beanbag fall out of the scoop, (5) and touching the beanbag with anything other than the scoop.



# Battle Four Square

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Regulation Four Square rules apply in this game—unless, the server calls out “Battle” right before serving. When this happens, the server can hit the ball to anyone but the player receiving the ball must always hit it right back to the server. This continues until a player commits a foul or the server calls out “Battle Over.” On this signal, the game resumes with regulation Four Square rules.

# Catch Four Square

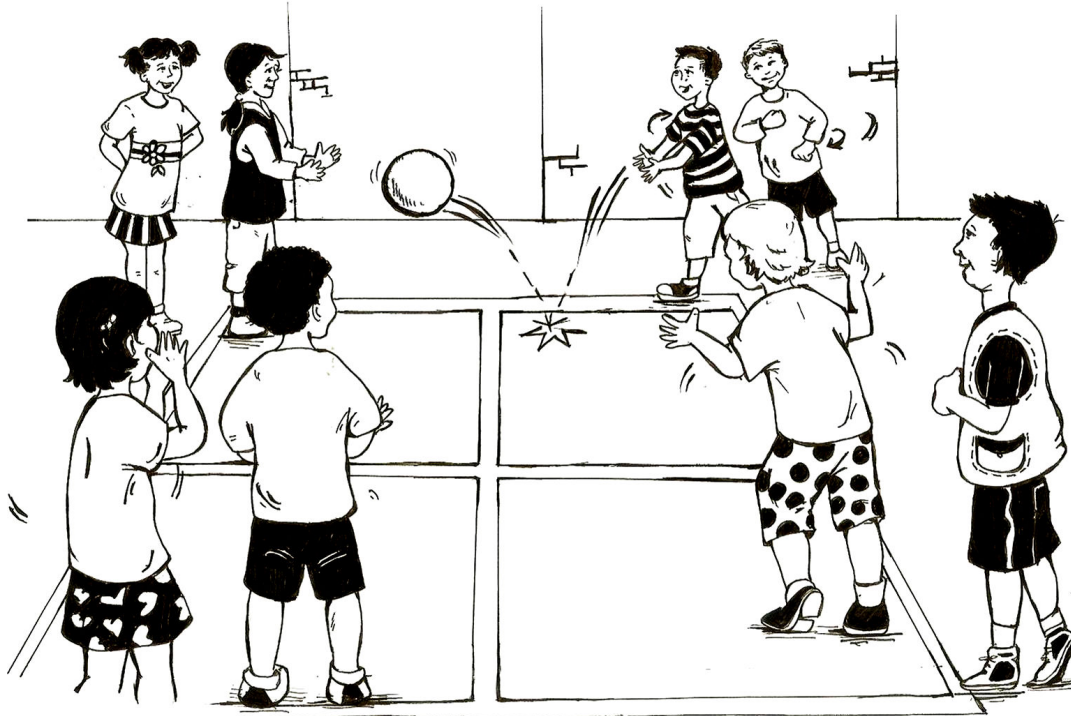
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Regular Four Square rules apply, except players catch the ball instead of striking it. Players receiving a ball must let it bounce before catching it, and all throws must be made in an under-hand motion. This is a particularly good game to play with the younger and/or less skilled students.

# Doubles Four Square

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This variation calls for eight participants. Have each student pair up with partner. Each pair is assigned a square with one player standing inside the square and the other waiting outside the square. Regulation Four Square rules are followed except partners will be switching in and out of their square throughout the game. As soon as the player standing inside the square hits the ball, he or she quickly moves out allowing the other player (who has been waiting outside the square) to step in. A foul by the partner inside the square results in both players moving to square D.



# Team Four Square

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With chalk, mark a court that is about twice the size of regular Four Square. Place an equal number of players (2-4 players) in each square. Unlike Doubles Four Square (see description on page 22), all teammates stay inside their squares without alternating turns. The rules and fouls are the same as in regular Four Square.

# Paddle Four Square

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This variation is played like regular Four Square, except paddles and a tennis ball replace the use of a playground ball. Instead of striking the ball with the hands, players use paddles. Fouls include (1) touching the tennis ball with anything other than the paddle, (2) allowing the ball to land inside one's square, (3) landing the ball on a boundary line, (4) hitting the ball out of bounds.

