

Team Handball

Item #2983

What Are The Educational Applications Of This Activity?

Team handball was developed in Denmark around the turn of the century to keep soccer players in shape during the cold Scandinavian winters. Team handball was modified in the 1920s into its present form—a field sport which is played by 11 players on a team. This version first appeared as an Olympic sport in 1936. It was subsequently dropped from the Olympics only to be reinstated as a 7-person indoor event in 1972. Women's team handball was introduced as an Olympic sport in 1976.

Team handball combines the skills of running, jumping, catching, and throwing into a fast-moving, exciting game. Team handball most closely resembles basketball, having roughly the same number of players, utilizing dribbling, passing, pick & rolls, and fast breaks. Ice hockey, water polo, and indoor soccer are some other sports that resemble team handball.

How Can I Use This Activity With My Students?

The game is played between two teams with seven players on each side (six court players and one goalie). Team handball is played on a field slightly larger than a basketball court (20 meters by 40 meters). The object of the game is to throw a ball (sized 54-56cm for women, 58-60cm for men) into the opponent's 2m x 3m goal while defending your goal from attack. A regulation game consists of two 30-minute halves with a ten-minute intermission between halves. Players do not wear protective equipment and there are no time outs. The ball is moved by passing, dribbling, or hitting it with any part of the body above the knee. Only the goalkeeper is allowed to kick the ball. Running with the ball more than three steps or holding the ball longer than three seconds results in a penalty. A player is not allowed to pull or hit other players, punch the ball out of an opponent's hands, make contact with the ball below the knee, or dive on the floor for a rolling or a stationary ball.

Play starts with a coin toss. The winner passes the ball from the center court to a teammate and the game begins. Defending players are allowed to use their torsos to obstruct an opponent, but may not pull, hold, or trip another player. Attacking players must take their shots at the goal from outside the arc that surrounds the front part of the goal. Only the defending goalkeeper may be inside the arc. Opposing players are not permitted to enter this area at all. Free throws are awarded for minor violations of the rules and are taken from the spot of the violation or from a line a short distance outside the goal area. Penalty throws at the goal are awarded for more serious infractions and are made from the penalty mark just outside the circle and directly in front of the goal.

A throw is awarded when the ball goes out of bounds. Throw-ins are taken from the spot where the ball crossed the sideline or, if it crossed the endline, it is taken at the nearest corner. The player must have one foot on the ground to execute the throw and the opponents must stay three meters away.

How Do I Make This Developmentally Appropriate For My Students?

1. Grades 3-4

- Allow the children to explore how they move and manipulate objects.
- Practice should include the following loco-motor skills which are directly related to team handball: running, jumping, leaping, sliding, starting, stopping, changing direction, falling, landing, bouncing, pushing, catching, throwing, dynamic balance.
- Early success is important, so be sure to give specific praise and create activities that are progressive yet suitable for the ability level of the children.
- Make the activities fun.

2. Grades 5-6

- Activities should be designed to incorporate cardiovascular fitness, flexibility, muscular strength and endurance.
- Focus on the development of the following skills: power running, changing directions, controlled starting and stopping, falling and rolling to prevent injury, overarm throw, two-handed bounce pass, catching an object in flight from above or below the waist or from over the shoulder when on the move or dribbling the ball.
- Focus on teamwork and cooperation rather than competition.
- These grade levels should be introduced to the goal as a target, the meaning of floor markings, and they should use a ball that is appropriate for their size, age, and ability.
- When creating drills for the students to perform, plan to make them short, active drills that simulate game situations and keep all the children moving.
- Students should also be introduced to the concepts of offense and defense. Specifically, to find and use open space, how to lose a defensive player, how to receive a pass, and how to create a two-on-one situation.

3. Grades 7-8

- Drills and practices need to be cardiovascular in nature. Also, incorporate flexibility, muscular strength and endurance.
- Fundamental skills mentioned in the earlier grade sections should be reinforced and refined in an actual game situation.
- It is important to keep competitiveness to a minimum by stressing teamwork, cooperation, and sportsmanship.
- Students at this level should also be introduced to the mechanics of the skills and that the application of these mechanics will result in improved movement ability. Items to stress include assuming the ready position, absorbing the force of landing, executing an explosive transfer (attack position), follow through, and the smooth transfer of momentum.
- Review the concept of the goal as a target, the meaning of floor markings, and the use of a ball appropriate for student ability levels.
- Playing rules should be taught as each element of the game is introduced.

- g. Use short, active drills that simulate game situations and keep all of the students moving.
- h. Some offensive and defensive strategies that may be introduced at this level include one-on-one /two-on-two, that the ball carrier carries the ball until challenged, that the nonball carrier moves to open space to become available to receive a pass, person-to-person defensive strategies, zone concepts, that the defensive player maintains his position between the attacker and the goal.

4. Grades 9-10

- a. Activities are designed to incorporate cardiovascular endurance, muscular endurance, and strength and flexibility.
- b. Continue to build upon basic skills and strategies in a game situation. Tactics may be taught as an extension of skills.
- c. Individuals could be introduced to specific, specialized positions and take on greater team responsibilities.
- d. The mechanics of basic movement continue to be applied and practiced with increased speed and intensity.
- e. Use standard goals, balls and markings if the space is available.
- f. All of the game's rules should be enforced.
- g. Increase offensive and defensive strategies and introduce special-play situations.
- h. Introduce goalkeeping techniques.

5. Grades 11-12

- a. Continue to emphasize all fitness-related concepts introduced in earlier sections.
- b. Refine specialized positions.
- c. Continue to develop team unity and team tactics.
- d. Increase independence in individualized training and skill refinement.
- e. Advanced skills should be initiated where and when they are appropriate.

6. Modified rules for all levels

- a. Introduce "6 vs 6" (5 court players, 1 goalie).
- b. No player but the goalie is allowed in the goal area.
- c. The ball is played with hands and other body parts with the exception of the feet. Using feet results in a free throw for the other team from the point of the infraction.
- d. A player cannot dive for ball on the ground. The ball must be picked up, otherwise a free throw is awarded to the other team at the point of the infraction.
- e. The goalkeeper is allowed to use any body part to stop the ball in the goal area.

- f. The ball may be held for a maximum of three seconds. Four seconds mandates a free throw by the opposing team at the point of the infraction.
- g. Play begins with a "throw-on". The team winning a coin toss possesses the ball and throws from center court to a team member.
- h. After a goal is scored, a "throw-on" is awarded to the team scored upon at center court.
- i. The mode of travel consists of 3 steps, 1 bounce, 3 more steps. That is the farthest that a person may travel with the ball at one time, then a pass or shot must be taken.
- j. If an offensive player's shot hits the goalie, goal post or crossbar and comes out of the goal area, it is still in play.
- k. If the shot hits the wall behind the goalie, it is a goalie ball even if the ball deflects off the goalie first. If the ball deflects off any other defensive player and then hits the back wall, it becomes a corner throw-on for the offensive team.
- l. As in basketball, a defensive player may stand his ground to prevent an attack from breaking through, but he may not run into the attacking player.
- m. A player may not strike the ball away from another player's hands.
- n. A penalty shot is awarded if a player is hit illegally while he has a clear chance of scoring (as in basketball).

How Does This Product Relate To Current Educational Thinking?

Depending upon the developmental level of the group, use one or more of the following items when assessing student learning at the end of the unit.

1. Have students create their own modified rules that would improve the game according to their skill level.
2. Create a written test using the rules presented in this guide.
3. Authentically assess student learning and the game itself, by letting the students write about how they felt playing the game, what they learned that they did not know before they started the unit, how they would teach team handball (or a specific skill related to team handball) to a friend. They may even write an article for the school newspaper explaining what they did in class (specific to team handball).
4. Have teams work together to create their own offensive and defensive strategies.

References:

1. Britannica Sporting Record On-Line
2. Team Handball Rules by Manitoba Team Handball Federation, Inc.

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