

Juggling

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Benefits of juggling:

- Aerobic exercise
- Enhances focus and concentration and tracking
- Great for stress relief
- Improves hand-eye coordination, reflexes and peripheral vision
- Studies have shown that juggling can increase the brain's grey matter. However, like most things when you stop the grey matter decreases again. So keep those balls up!
- Um, it's cool!

How to Juggle:

Picture a large "X" or a box in front of you that reaches up to the top of your hands when you have them outstretched over your head.

Using one ball/scarf, hold in right hand, bring hand to upper left corner of X and drop the ball/scarf, catch with left hand by waist. Now, using left hand, bring to upper right hand corner of X and drop to catch with the right hand.

Next, try two balls/scarves.

You want to do what I call Cross, Cross, Catch, Catch. Once you get in the rhythm you can add the third ball/scarf.

Cues:

- Keep your elbows at your side
- Toss balls to just above eye level, don't let your eyes follow the ball/scarf.
- Throw the next ball/scarf when the first one reaches it's highest level

How to make your own juggling balls:

Go to local tennis clubs and get old balls.

- Use an exacto knife to cut a small 'X' in the ball. The hole should only be big enough to put a funnel in.
- Fill 2/3 of the ball with DRY sand.
- Cover hole with duct tape – make sure to keep it smooth.
- Take 2 balloons and cut the necks off.
- Place one balloon on ball starting by covering hole, then put the other balloon on going in the opposite direction.
- Voila! You have yourself a homemade juggling ball!

Spinning Plates:

This is harder than it looks to get the plates going, however once the plates are going it's easy to do the tricks.

How to spin plates:

- Put the non-pointed side of dowel in the center of your palm
- Keeping forearm level with the floor, turn wrist in a slow large circle. This will get the plate to come away from the stick. Make sure to keep the stick upright, not at an angle.
- Once the plate is away from the stick start making faster, smaller circles. Keep this up until the plate is flat on top of the stick.
- Now, stop spinning your wrist and the stick should slide to the center of the plate.

The faster the plate is spinning the easier to do the tricks. To keep the plate spinning you hit/kiss the side of the plate in the direction of the spin like you would to spin a basketball on your finger.

Tricks:

- Toss and catch to yourself
- Toss and catch to a friend
- Toss, turn your stick over and catch on the other side
- Go around back
- Transfer to finger, or to another stick, and back
- Try spinning more than one plate at a time
- Go under leg
- Create your own trick

REMEMBER: With all circus arts, there is no limit. Always build upon what you have learned. Be creative and have fun!