



INTRODUCTION TO TEAM HANDBALL



PREFACE

In this document, you will find sections that describe the game and the rules of team handball as well as some specific teaching lessons for team handball adapted to the elementary school level (5th and 6th grade).

In order to develop team handball in Alberta it is necessary to introduce the basics at the elementary school level, thus when team handball is offered at higher levels (Elementary school, high school or college), the boys and girls will know what the sport is. In addition, physical education teachers will discover that team handball is a wonderful sport to teach in class because several kids are involved at the same time, illustrating perfectly several team concepts.

Have good teaching lessons,

WHAT IS TEAM HANDBALL?

What is team handball? Sometimes described as “indoor soccer with your hands” or “water-polo on a court”, the Olympic sport of team handball is a fast-paced game that combines elements of basketball, soccer and water polo, and is played on a court slightly larger than a basketball court (40m x 20m) with goals at each end. Two teams, each with six court players and a goalie, try to score by throwing the ball into the goal. A match consists of two 30-minute halves with a 10-minute halftime. Team handball is the 2nd most popular team sport in the world behind soccer. Played in more than 150 countries, by more than 8 millions of sportsmen and sportswomen, it is one of the most developed team sports for women. In countries such as Denmark, Germany, France, Spain and Norway, men’s and women’s professional leagues attract more media attention than the WNBA and the NBA.

Team handball is really an exciting game to watch; it is a fast game, where certain body contacts are allowed and where the duel between shooter and goalkeeper is very important. In term of the natural athletic skills, a team handball player needs to develop several skills, such as running, jumping, throwing, passing, catching and dribbling and so on. Team Handball can be played: indoors in gymnasium; outdoors on the grass, on paved area; or on a beach.

PLAYERS

A team consists of 14 players, 7 of whom may be on the field at one time. A team must have at least 5 players to begin a game, but the game may continue if a team is later reduced to fewer than 5 players on the court. Each team must use a goalkeeper at all times.

Substitutes may enter the game at any time and for an unlimited number of times. They don't need to notify the timekeeper, but the players they are replacing must be off the field before they enter. Substitutes must enter a game at the substitute line, which is near mid-court. A faulty substitution results in a two-minute suspension for the offending player and a free-throw for the opponents. The goalkeeper wears colors distinct from all other players on the court.

Teams use different offensive sets and have different names for positions, but one basic offensive set is to have three players—left backcourt, center, and right backcourt—just beyond the free-throw line, and three others—left wing, Pivot, and right wing—between the free-throw line and the goal-area line. *Wing players* tend to be smaller and quicker players who can shoot from difficult angles. *Pivots* that are often directly in front of the goal are larger and aggressive and can set picks and screens for the backcourt players. *Centers* are like quarterbacks, directing the offense. The other *backcourt players* tend to be taller, with the ability to jump and shoot over the defense from the backcourt.

SOME RULES

This is a simplified rules handout. In *italic*, you will find some suggestions to adapt the game to the elementary school level.

Objective: To score the most goals.

Number of Players: Seven players per side may be on the court at once. *Adapt the number of players on the court in function of the size of the gymnasium; we should favor a lower number of players in order to have a high scoring game.*

Length of Game: A game consists of two 30-minute halves, with a 10-minute intermission. The playing clock normally runs continuously but is on occasion stopped (see “Time”).

For Elementary School, during intramural activities, we suggest that the game should consist of two 15-minute halves, with 5-minute intermission. In class, game can be even shorter.

Scoring: A goal is scored when the entire ball crosses the goal line. If the game is tied at the end of regulation and a winner must be determined, teams play an overtime period: two halves of five minutes each. A coin toss determines who throws in.

If the score is still tied at the end of the first overtime, the teams play a second overtime period. If a tie exists at the end of the second overtime period, a penalty shoot-out occurs. Each team selects five shooters who alternate shooting from the penalty line. If a tie still exists at the end of each team’s five penalty shots, individual penalty shots continue until a winner is determined.

Sometimes rules can be adapted to favor the team concept or the use of technical skills, such as 2 points for a goal after a jump shot, 2 points for a goal after 5 passes, 2 points

for a goal made by a girl and so on.

Court: The court is 40 meters long and 20 meters wide (see figure 1). It has two goal areas and a playing area. The lines marking the boundaries on the sides of the field are called sidelines; the shorter boundary lines are called goal lines for the portion between the goal posts, and outer goal lines for the portions on either side of the goal.

Each goal is netted and is 3 meters wide and 2 meters high. The **goal area** is marked by a goal area line that fans in a semicircle 6 meters away from the goal post. The **free-throw line, or 9-meter line**, is a broken line fanning in a semicircle 9 meters from the goal post. The **7-meter line** is 1 meter long. It is parallel to, and 7 meters from, the rear edge of the goal line, and directly in front of the goal. The goalkeeper's restraining line (the **4-meter line**) is 15 centimeters long and 4 meters from the rear edge of the goal line, directly in front of the goal. The **center line** runs the width of the court at mid-court, dividing the court into equal halves.

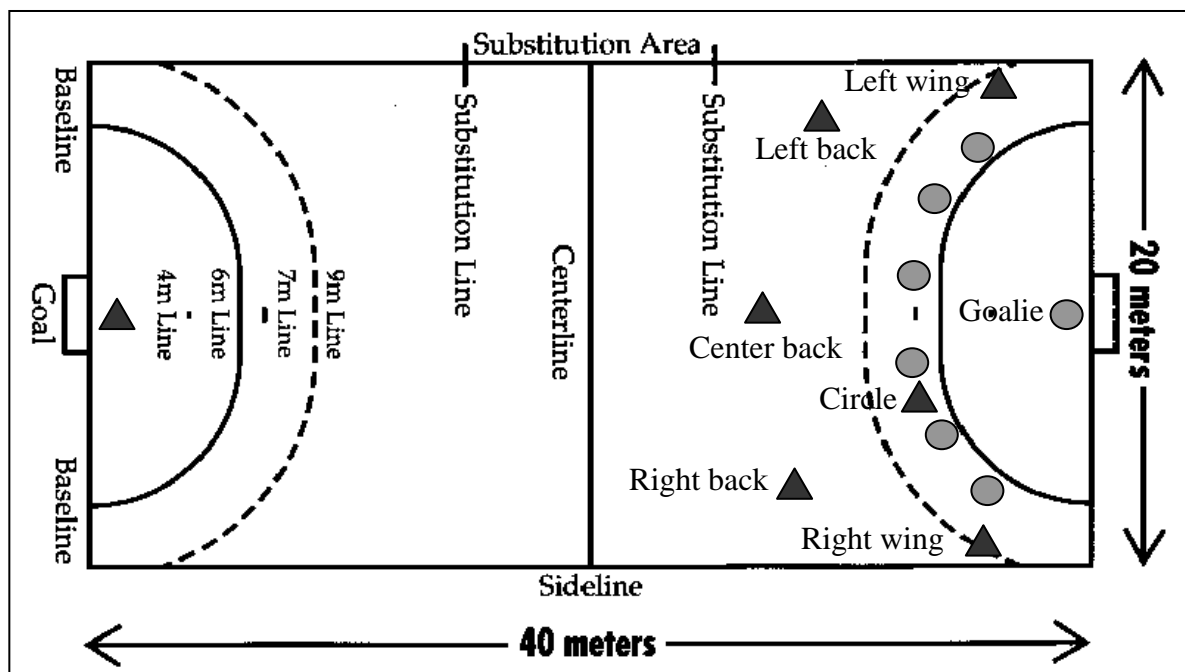


Figure 1: The playing court and the different position

For elementary school, you can use the size of a basketball court to play Team Handball, you can either draw a six-meter line with cones or tape or simply use the 3 points line in basketball for the delimitation of the six-meter zone. You should put the basketball board at their highest position to avoid any injuries

Time: The clock is always stopped when a referee disqualifies or excludes a player or calls a referee-throw (see “Throws”). Each team also may use a one-minute timeout per half. The clock may also be stopped for extraordinary incidents (spectators or objects on the court, damaged goal, and so on), consultations between the referees and the timekeeper or scorekeeper, injuries, and delays in executing a formal throw. In addition, the clock stops for warnings or suspensions, goalkeeper substitutions during a 7-meter throw, and a player’s not giving up the ball or throwing it away.

Advancing the Ball: Players may throw, catch, stop, push, or hit the ball, using their open or closed hands, arms, head, torso, thighs and knees. A player may hold a ball for a maximum of three seconds. A player may

- take a maximum of three steps with the ball;
- bounce the ball once and catch it while standing or running; and
- dribble the ball and then catch it.

If a player is holding the ball, he/she must dribble, pass, or shoot it within three seconds or after taking three steps. She may dribble it continuously an unlimited number of times, but once she has picked up her dribble she may not begin dribbling again unless another player touches the ball. She may take three steps, and then dribble, and then take three more steps; at this point she must pass or shoot the ball within three seconds.

Offensive players are not allowed to touch the ball with any part of the body below the knee (unless the ball has been thrown at the player by an opponent); dive for the ball (except for the goalkeeper); play the ball intentionally out of bounds (except for the goalkeeper, in blocking a shot); or “stall” without trying to score; this is “passive play”

and the defensive team is awarded a free-throw at the point where the ball was when play was interrupted.

Understand the steps and the dribble is very important at the elementary school age.

Approaching an Opponent: A player may use his arms and hands to try to gain possession of the ball, and he may use his torso to obstruct an opponent either with or without the ball. But he may not

- obstruct an opponent by using his arms, hands, or legs;
- pull or hit the ball with one or both hands out of the hands of an opponent;
- use his fist to hit the ball from an opponent;
- endanger an opponent with the ball, or endanger the goalkeeper; or
- hold, trip, run into, hit, or jump onto an opponent.

Less serious infractions merit first a warning and then a suspension (in which the offending player sits out two minutes). More serious infractions result in disqualification.

At an elementary level, please be strict, never allow pushing or holding, especially if the defender is not in front of the attacker, but please reward good defense (blocking, charging and so on). Defense and some contact are part of the game.

Goalkeeping: Only the goalkeeper may be in the goal area. A court player may not play the ball when it is stationary or rolling in the goal area. However, a court player may play the ball when it is in the air above the goal area if she is not in the goal area herself. A free throw is awarded to the opposing team when a court player enters the goal area in possession of the ball; a free throw is also awarded when a court player enters the goal area without the ball but gains an advantage in doing so.

A seven-meter throw is given when a defending court player enters the goal area and gains an advantage over a player with the ball. No throw is awarded if a player enters the goal area without the ball and gains no advantage. If a defending player intentionally plays the ball into his own goal area and the goalkeeper touches it, the opponents are

awarded a free-throw. If the goalkeeper doesn't touch it and the ball stops in the goal area or goes out of bounds, the opponents are awarded a free-throw.

The goalkeeper may

- touch the ball with any part of her body while inside the goal area;
- move with the ball inside the goal area, with no restrictions;
- leave the goal area without the ball, at which time she becomes subject to the rules applying to all players in the playing area; and
- leave the goal area with the ball and play it in the playing area, if she has not been able to control it.

A goalkeeper may not endanger an opponent; intentionally play the ball out over the goal line, after gaining control of the ball; leave the goal area while in control of the ball; or touch the ball outside the goal area after making a goalkeeper throw, unless another player has since touched the ball.

In addition, a goalkeeper cannot touch the ball in contact with the floor outside the goal area when he is inside the goal area; pick up the ball outside the goal area and bring it inside the goal area; touch the ball with any part of his body below his knee, if he's not in the act of defending goal; or cross the 4-meter line before the thrower has thrown the ball in taking a 7-meter throw.

Throws

The following throws may be made during a game.

Throw-Off

When: To begin a half and to resume play after a goal.

Where: From center court.

How: Each team is on its own side of the court (except after a goal). Opponents must be at least three meters from the thrower. The referee whistles; the thrower has three seconds to throw.

Throw-In

When: The ball has gone out of bounds.

Where: From where it went out, or from the intersection of the goal line and side line, if it went out over the outer portion of the goal line.

How: The referee doesn't whistle; a player on the team awarded the ball throws the ball in with one foot on the side line until the ball leaves his hand. He may not play the ball in to himself. Opponents must stand at least three meters away, though they may stand outside their goal line, even if it's less than three meters away.

Goalkeeper's Throw

When: The ball crosses the outer goal line.

Where: From the goal area.

How: The goalkeeper throws the ball over the goal-area line; the referee does not whistle. The goalkeeper may not touch the ball again until another player has touched it.

Free-Throw

When: For numerous violations, including goalkeeper infractions, court player infractions in the goal area, infractions when playing the ball, passive play, and infractions connected with other throws.

Where: Either where the infraction occurred, or, if the violation occurred between the nine-meter line and the goal-area line, then from the nearest point immediately outside the nine-meter line.

How: Without a whistle, the player takes the throw with opponents at least three meters away. Teammates may not be on the nine-meter line or between it and the goal line before the player takes the throw.

Seven-Meter Throw

When: A clear chance of scoring is destroyed by a defensive player's illegal action or a referee's inadvertent whistle, a goalkeeper enters his goal area with the ball, a court player enters his own goal area while playing defense, a player plays the ball to his goalkeeper in the goal area.

Where: At the seven-meter line.

How: A referee blows her whistle, and the player has three seconds to take a shot on goal from behind the seven-meter line. The player must not touch on or beyond the line before the ball leaves her hand. Just the goalkeeper and the thrower are initially involved; the ball is not played again until it has touched the goalkeeper or goal. All other players must be beyond the nine-meter line or three meters or farther away from the player when she takes the throw. The throw is retaken if a defensive player violates this positioning (unless the player scored a goal); the player may also throw again if the goalkeeper moves beyond the four-meter line before she releases the ball.

Penalties

A referee may warn, suspend, disqualify, or exclude a player. *Warnings* result from less serious infractions, such as were noted in "Approaching an Opponent". They also may result from violations occurring when a player is executing a formal throw and from unsportsmanlike conduct. The referee indicates a warning by holding up a yellow card.

Suspensions occur for repeated infractions, for faulty substitutions, and for failure to put the ball on the floor when the referee makes a decision. Suspensions last two minutes and are indicated by the referee's holding up her hand with two fingers extended. The team

may not replace the player during the suspension. A player can receive another two minutes suspension (4 minutes in total), if the player repeated immediately an infractions (keep arguing at the referee)

Disqualifications occur when a player not entitled to participate enters the court; there are serious infractions and repeated events of unsportsmanlike conduct; and when a player receives his third suspension. The team may not replace the disqualified player for two minutes. A referee indicates a disqualification by holding up a red card.

Exclusions result from an assault either on or outside the court, against another player, a referee, any other official, or anyone in the area. Spitting is regarded as assault. The referee indicates exclusion by crossing his arms in front of his face. The team may not replace the excluded player, although if the excluded player is a goalkeeper, another player may assume goalkeeper duties. But the team will play the remainder of the game short one player.

Equipment

The *ball* is spherical, made of leather or synthetic material, has an inflated rubber bladder, and has the following dimensions:

Men's—58 to 60 centimeters in circumference, weighing 425 to 475 grams

Women's—54 to 56 centimeters in circumference, weighing 325 to 400 grams

Officials

Two referees, with equal authority, are in charge of the game. A timekeeper and a scorekeeper assist the referees

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DRILLS

At the elementary school level, it is really important to play game, to keep the children active as much as possible and to have fun. At the same time as a physical education teacher it is really important to teach something to the boys and girls in the class, so at the end of the day, they become better and smarter team handball players. Each child should have the chance to play and play at different positions.

In this section you will find different games especially adapted to the progress of elementary school children and are related to the development of some technical and tactical skills.

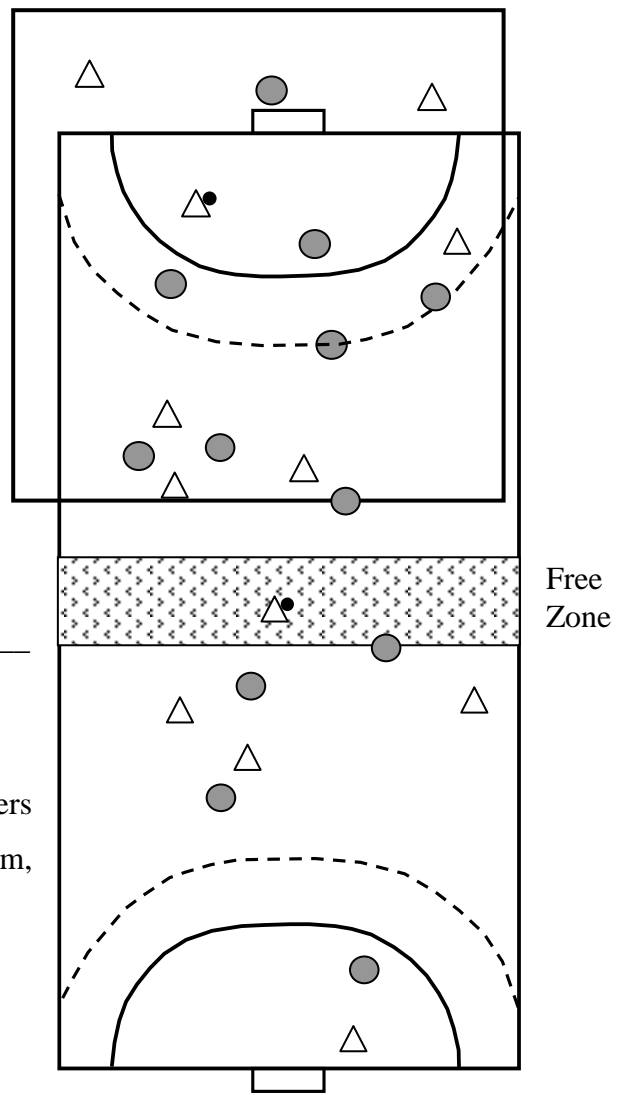
PASSING, CATCHING, DRIBBLING DRILLS

10-PASSES GAME: Two teams (number of players depends on the space available) try to do 10 passes in a row without being touched by members of the other team. When a player with possession of the ball is touched, the ball goes to the other team. If a team achieves 10 passes, 1 point is awarded.

Alternatives

- Everybody should do 1 pass
- You can or can't dribble
- Only bounce passes or jump passes

FREE ZONE: Two teams (number of players depends on the space available), each team,



respectively, attempts to bring the ball in the 6 meter zone on the opposite side. Once more the player with possession of the ball cannot be touched. A free zone exists in the middle of the court where a player cannot be touched by the other team, even if he/she has the ball.

Alternatives

- An extra point is awarded if every player on the team touches the ball.
- You can or can't dribble.
- Only bounce passes or jump passes are allowed.
- Decrease the size of the goal area or the free zone.

TOUCHDOWN: Same rules as the free zone but without a free zone.

Alternatives

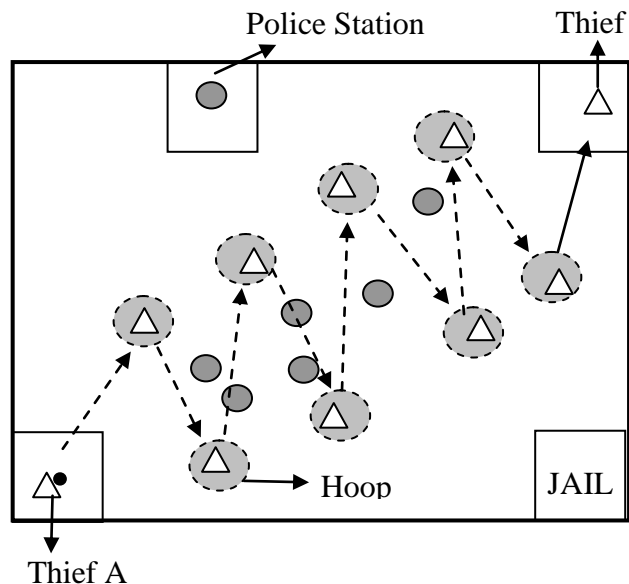
- You can play a version of touchdown, where no one can enter the 6-meter area and to score a point a player needs to place the ball in the 6-meter area with his feet outside the area. This way, the players are conscious of the 6-meter zone.
- All the players must pass the centerline for a touchdown to be good.

POLICE AND THEVES: All the balls start with a thief (A). The thieves (\triangle) try to get as many balls as possible by passing them to the other thieves until they end up with a thief (B). The thieves should stay in their hoop, if they are touched outside of their hoop by the members of police they have to go in jail.

The police (\bullet) try to intercept the balls and pass them to the police station.

Alternative

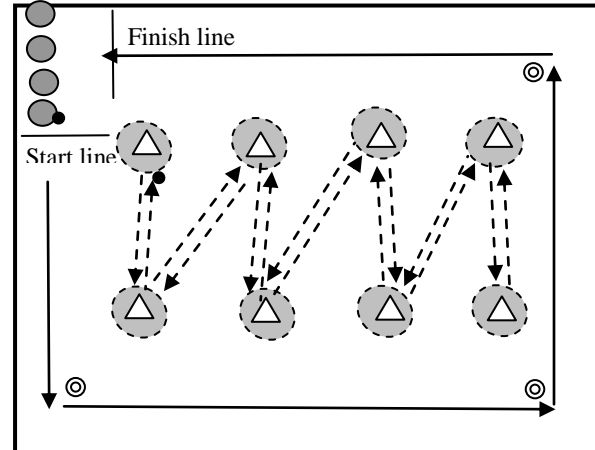
- No specific passes pattern



THE CHASE: One team (△) tries to pass the ball back and forth, at the same time one member of the other team (●) tries to complete a full lap around the cones (◎) dribbling the ball. The first team to complete the task gets one point.

Alternatives

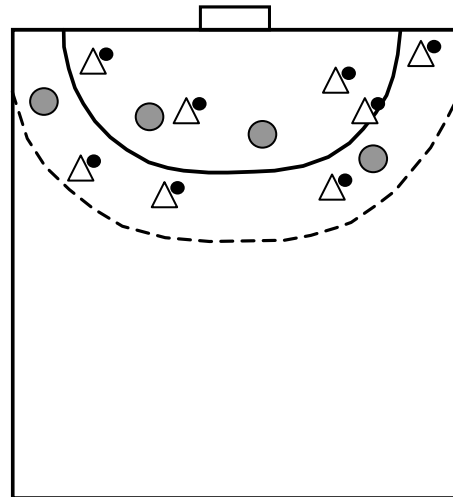
- Switch hands while dribbling
- Dribbling backwards
- Changing type of passes (jump, bounce)



STEAL THE BALL: Each member of one team (△) has a ball and dribbles. The other team (●) tries to steal all the balls from the first team. You count the time it takes them to do it. The team with the fastest time wins.

Alternatives

- Dribbling only with left hand
- Limit the space (half court, 9-meter zone or 6-meter zone)



PASS TAG: Two teams (number of players depends on the space available). Team (A) tries to touch all the players of team(B), using the ball. Team(A) can do it by passing the ball between teammates in order to get close to the opponent and touch them with the ball. No dribble is allowed. The fastest team wins.

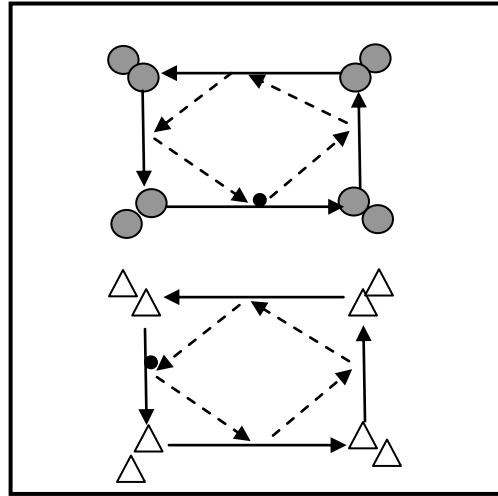
Alternatives

- Limit the space (half court, 9-meter zone or 6-meter zone)
- Play with 1, 2 or 3 balls

FOUR CORNERS: Two teams, at the same time, try to pass the ball as long as they can, without dropping it. Each player catches the ball in movement, passes to the next player and then goes behind the next column. The team that lasts the longest gets one point.

Alternatives

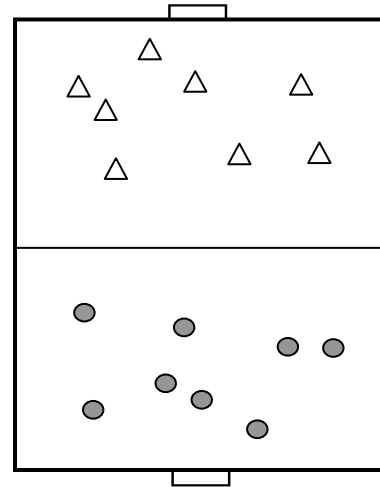
- Bounce pass or jump pass
- 2 balls
- Reverse the order every 10 passes



THROWING DRILLS

DODGE BALL ADAPTED TO TEAM HANDBALL:

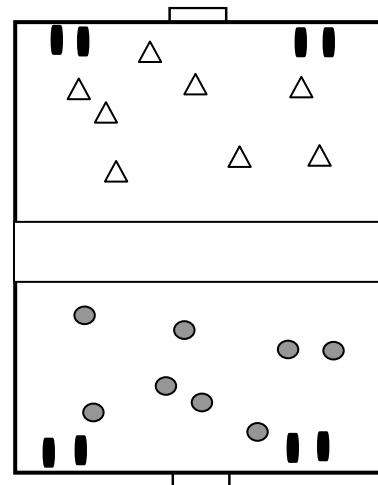
Every child knows the rules of dodge ball. If a child is touched by the ball, he/she is out of the game. The difference here is that you can revive the person touched by the ball by scoring a goal in the opponent's net. Following the level of play, you can add more balls and add a goalie.



BOWLING PIN: One team tries to knock down all the bowling pins of the other team. Each team has to stay in their zone.

Alternatives

- Add the dodge ball rules adapted to team handball to this game.



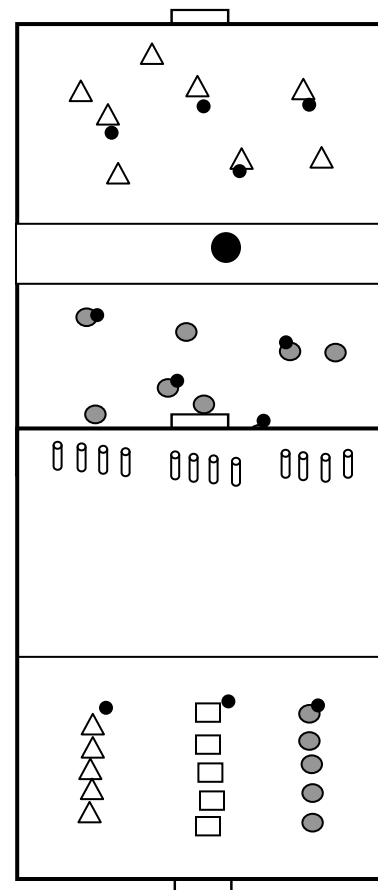
- One pass before each shot.

BOMB GAME: Each team tries to throw their balls on the medicine ball (the bomb) until it crosses the goal line of the other team or touches an opponent. Each team has to stay in their zone.

COWBOY SHOOT-OUT: Each team tries to throw their ball on the bowling pins. The player that throws the ball needs to run to get the ball back and give it to the next player. The first team that knocks them all down wins. This is a nice way to teach the jump shot. You can play with 2 to 6 teams depending on your equipment.

Alternatives

- Jump shot only
- Set shot only
- Use the four corners of a goal with cones in the goal.
- Shoot from one goal to the other



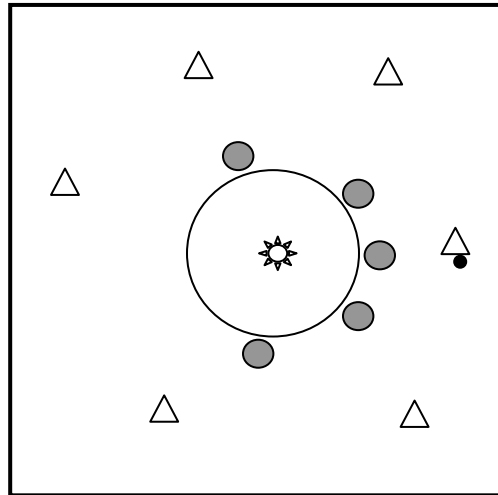
PENALTY SHOT SHOOT-OUT: Same rules as the cowboy shoot-out but with a goalie. Adapt the distance from the goalie in function of your level (9, 7 or 6 meters).

DEFENSIVE DRILLS

PROTECT THE CRYSTAL: 6 attackers try to pass the ball between each other and throw it on the crystal ball in the middle of the circle. 5 defenders protect the crystal ball as long as they can, but they cannot enter the circle. Introduce the concept of shifting, blocking, counting players and communication.

Alternative

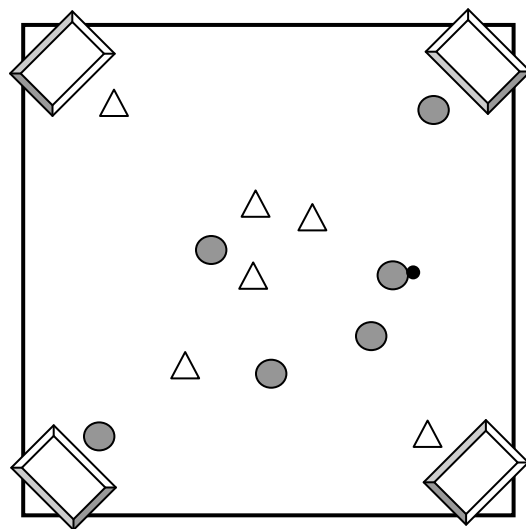
- Put one person in the middle, instead of a ball, only bounce passes to the person in the middle are allowed.



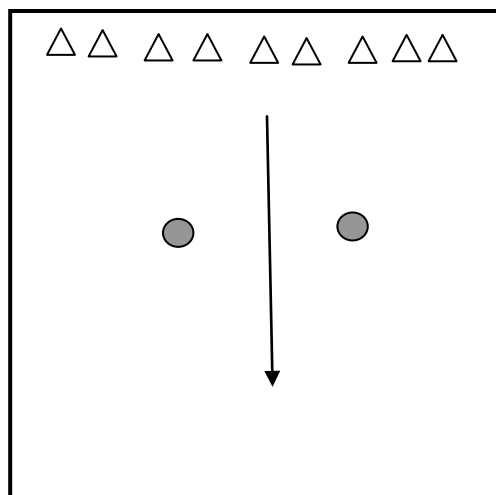
4 GOALS GAME: Put 1 goal in each corner. You can use mats or cones if you don't have 4 handball goals. Each team has two goals to defend (two in diagonal). Both teams try to defend their goals and score goals against the opposite team.

Alternatives

- No dribble
- 1, 2 or 3 balls
- At least 3 passes before scoring



CATERPILLAR TAG: Two players /tags/ in the middle, everybody else behind the goal line. After the whistle blows everybody tries to cross the entire court without being touched by the tags. If they are touched they have to grab the hand of the tag and try to get another person on



the next whistle. The tag that has the most persons wins.

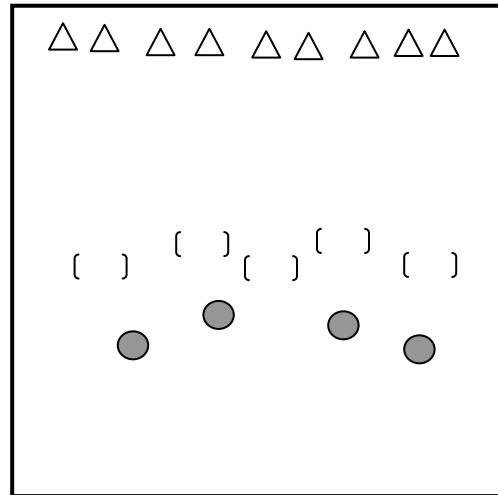
Alternative

- Dribble to cross

DOORMAN: 5 doors of 4 feet wide are delimited by cones in the middle of the court. 4 doormen act as defenders. The rest of the players are on the goal line. After the whistle everybody tries to cross to the other side by passing through a door. If a doorman is in front of the door they cannot pass through. No contact is allowed.

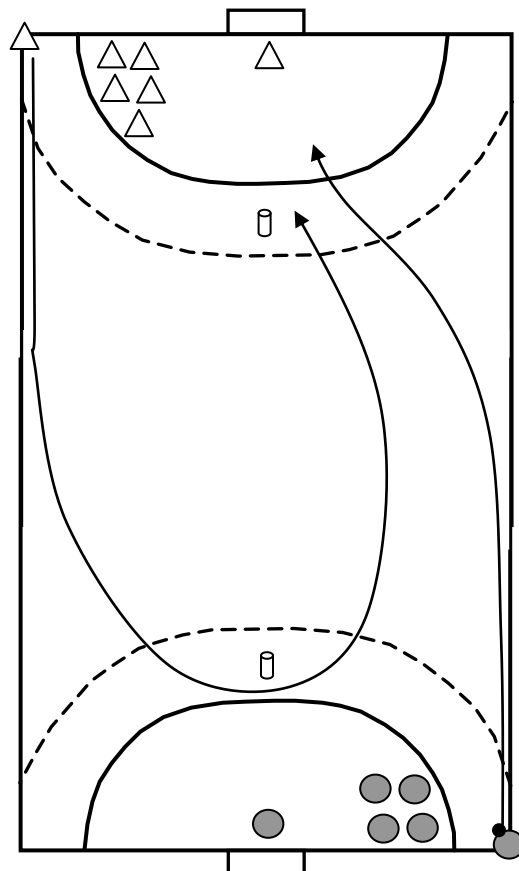
Alternative

- Dribble to cross



OFFENSIVE DRILLS

RELAY RACE: The Team Handball game is a fast game, you can use different sort of relay game to increase the skill and speed of your players. For example, this relay race, where the circles are the attackers (with one ball each) and the triangles are the defenders (no ball). Each player starts with one foot on the corner line. After the whistle, the attackers dribble on the other side and shoot against a goalie, if they score they can come back right away by turning around the cone near the 7-meter line and run to the cone on their side and touch it. If they don't score, they have to turn around the goal and run to their cone in their zone and touch it. At the same time, the defenders run after the attackers until they touch them. They have to turn around



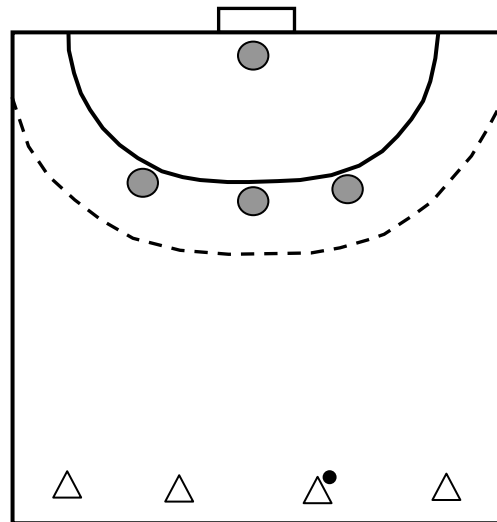
one cone and run to touch their cone in their zone, than another defender can relay him/her.

You count how many goals they score before they get touched and then the attackers become the defenders and vice-versa.

Alternatives

- At least one passer in the middle
 - Both teams attack and defend at the same time
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4 on 3 GAME: One team (4 players) starts in the middle of the court with one ball and one team (3 players + 1 goalie) starts on the 6-meter line. The triangle team tries to score a goal without being touched by the circle team. You give 1 point to the offense if they score and 1 point to the defense if they don't score. Moreover, if they don't score, the defenders become attackers and try to bring the ball in the middle of the goal without being touched by the other team. If they succeed, it is another point for them.



Alternatives

- 2 on 1
- 3 on 2
- 4 on 3
- 5 on 4
- 6 on 5

- No dribble
- Everybody should touch the ball in attack.

TRAINING PLAN FOR A CLASS

At the elementary school level, the classes are generally 50 minutes long. This doesn't allow a lot of time for complicated session. Moreover, you want to be sure that the children are active, learn and have fun. Our advice for a good plan is to keep it simple and fun. A maximum of 3 different games should be used in a session and this includes the final game, which should be a real game of team handball.

This is an example of a typical plan
 Course #1 of Team Handball for 5th and 6th Grade (50 minutes) DATE:
 Equipment: Pennies, balls and goals

Session Part	Description	Space Organization	Time
Welcome and explanation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Welcome children; - Presence; - Team division; - Explanation of the session and objectives 	Children sit in the gym	5 min
Warm-up and first game	10 PASSES GAME <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - use space - get open - team work - quick execution 	4 teams of 7 at the same time.	12 min
Second game	4 ON 3 GAME <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recognize who is open - Execution - Quality of passes and shooting 	Switch defensive players every minute.	13 min
TEAM HANDBALL GAME	TEAM HANDBALL GAME <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Game of 2 goals or 3 minutes 	4 teams of 7 players, 2 teams play, 2 teams watch	15 min

Comeback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bring back the equipment - Answer children's questions 		5 min
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CONCLUSION

We hope that this document will help you to understand what the rules of team handball are and help you with teaching team handball in your classes. We are sure that this game will please almost all your children and that all these little drills will make almost every child sweat and work hard and more importantly have fun.