

Dodgeball Switch

Group Size: 5-30 (12 recommended minimum)

Age Group: 4th-5th grades

Length of Activity: 10-30 minutes

Developmental Goal: Motor skills, ability to rotate and take turns with other students.

Skills Practiced: Strategy, throwing, hand/eye coordination and physical agility.

Equipment Needed: Hula hoops/cones and dodgeballs.

Set Up: A very large square made with 4 hula hoops, with a fifth hula hoop in the middle.

Before You Start:

- Make sure the kids remember the basic rules of Switch.
- Review safety rules: how to throw a dodgeball and where it is acceptable to aim.

How to Play:

- Begin with one player in each hula hoop. The player in the middle has a dodgeball.
- The player in the middle (the Thrower) yells “Switch!” All other players have 10 seconds to find a new hula hoop to occupy.
- The Thrower has 3 steps (or however many is appropriate the size of your square) to take in any direction, before throwing the ball at one of the other players (the Runners).
 - If the Thrower misses the Runner, then the Thrower returns to the end of the line and all Runners remain in the game. The first player in line becomes the new Thrower.
 - If the Thrower hits a Runner, then the Thrower takes that Runner’s place in any available hula hoop. The Runner returns to the end of the line. The first player in line becomes the new Thrower.
- After this is successful, add one more Thrower to the center hula hoop. Each Thrower has his/her own dodgeball. No matter what the result of the play, there will be two players “out” and two new Throwers.
- Keep adding to the number of players allowed in each of the five hula hoops.

Notes:

- In my experience, the best number of players to have in the game at any one time is 12, with 4 Throwers in the center, and 2 Runners in each corner. With 4 new players coming in every play, it has a fast rotation and very little down time.
- This game is best played on grass, to avoid balls rolling far away on missed throws. If you play on blacktop, be prepared to have a system for retrieving the balls.
- A good lead-up to this game is Double Switch (or triple, or quadruple, etc.), which is just Switch with more than one student on each cone/hula hoop.

Variation(s):

- For younger children, you can play Kickball Switch, on the Kickball diamond (the bases for corners and the pitcher’s mound for the center). They use a kickball instead of a dodgeball, and they have to directly tag the player with the ball instead of pegging. This game is useful to help your kids understand how bases keep them safe, and that they are not allowed to peg with the ball.

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