

Learning to Juggle

You're alone. You can't find anyone in the neighborhood to join you to "kick the ball around." It's just you and your best friend - the BALL. So, what's one easy thing to do that's going to make you a better player???

JUGGLE!

First, picking up the ball without using your hands is the biggest challenge to new jugglers. Put your foot on the ball. "Pull" the ball quickly towards you - using the sole of your foot. The ball is round and your foot follows the shape of the ball until you get to the toe. Your toes need to go under the ball to the ground and lift the ball up in the air (pictured below). This sounds easy but it is very tough. It has to be done in a very fast motion. This needs to be practiced hundreds of times before it becomes second nature.

If you are frustrated and you are still keen on juggling, just pick it up and bounce it! When the ball is about two feet off the ground, lightly tap it straight up. Try not to hit the ball too hard or controlling it will become more difficult. Light, soft taps - two or three feet straight up above your foot is best. You may need to curl your toes a bit to keep the ball close to you. Start with your strong foot. Two or three is OK. Now shoot for four. You're on your way. Advanced players do it for time - not touches - and this improves your ball control and overall "touch."

Enjoy Your Soccer!
— Glenn Cristofori
Mass Youth Soccer Development Coach

