

how to juggle three balls

how to juggle (the three ball cascade)

These step by step rules will begin with simple one ball exercises, through to two balls, and finally to the three ball cascade. The longer and better you practise the essential throwing and catching movement with one ball the easier you will progress to two and then three. People who try two or three balls before they learn the basics, will as with any new skill tend to develop bad habits and a loss of confidence. Try to remember to keep an open mind, relax, and don't worry about making mistakes. Only by making mistakes do we learn. In the early stages practise for no more than ten to fifteen minutes at a time with at least an hour between sessions.

one ball

Stand straight and comfortably balanced with one ball only in your dominant hand. Tuck your elbows into your waist and gently throw the ball to your other hand, peaking at your eye-line. Throw it back and forth from hand to hand. Throw at waist height, catch at waist height, and get the ball moving in a sideways figure-eight pattern, catching on the outside and throwing on the inside, in a kind of scooping motion. This is the essential pattern that your brain and body must learn. If the ball goes too far forward stand close to a wall so it stays close. When you have practised this so you can do it almost with your eyes closed, clap your hands once between throwing and catching. When you can do this, practise clapping twice. You can try other things like touching your nose or clapping behind your head, twice between throwing and catching, before moving to two balls.

two balls

With a ball in each hand throw first one and then the other as the first peaks. If you're throwing properly in a figure-eight pattern the balls will not collide. At first don't worry about catching the balls. Do not pass the balls (schoolgirls often learn circular juggling, which is based on alternate throwing and passing, so if you tend to pass because of this you'll need to re-train your brain to throw and catch instead, or the three ball cascade will elude you forever). Learn to catch the first ball before you try catching both. Say aloud as you progress 'throw throw drop drop', then 'throw throw catch drop' and finally 'throw throw catch catch'. Practise starting with your dominant hand and then starting with the other hand, and then alternating. You must practice this until it feels comfortable and is reasonably reliable until you move to three balls.

three balls

Hold two balls in the hand you wish to start with (hand 1), and one ball in the other hand (hand 2). Do as you practised with two balls, but after catching the first ball in hand 2 throw the third ball from hand 1. Hand 1 catches the second ball a split second after throwing the third ball. Apart from that split second between throwing and catching there is only ever one ball in the air. Your verbal command now becomes 'throw throw throw throw throw etc'. This is the Three Ball Cascade.