

Athletics:

Throwing – Master Blaster

This game helps young people to focus on throwing with force and accuracy.

What you need

- Indoor or outdoor area appropriate to the size of the group and activity.
- A range of lightweight balls – as many as possible for each team (e.g. tennis balls).
- Target balls; for example, a large fit ball (Swiss ball), basketball or goalball – one per team.
- Use marker cones and existing lines or use throw down marker lines.

How to play

- Divide the group into two (or more) equal teams (depending on space).
- Teams line up behind their throw line.
- Mark goal lines at an appropriate distance from each team's throw line (say 5-10 metres).
- Target balls are placed 2–3 metres from the throw line.
- All team members have 1-3 tennis balls (or equivalent); teams score by being the first to knock their target ball across the goal line by hitting it with their throwing balls.
- Both target balls are reset after each goal.
- Players stay behind the throw line.
- Play to an agreed score or for a specific time.
- Players must use an underarm throw - no overarm throws.

Think about

- Tactics! Should everyone throw at the same time or one at a time? What if the team runs out of balls?



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Use the *STEP* model to modify this game:

Space

- The distance to the goal line can be varied; and the target goal line can be different for different teams in order to balance the game between players of different abilities.
- The distance to from the throwing line to the target ball can also be changed.

Task

- As accuracy improves, athletes can begin to use other ways of throwing the ball; for example, overarm (not suitable for the 'Ball Blast' game, however).

Equipment

- A lightweight target ball moves easily when hit; a heavier ball (like a goalball) prolongs the game.
- Very light balloon balls that deflect unpredictably can also provide a challenge.
- Some young people can use a ball-sending ramp to deliver the balls.

People

- If the target balls are still in play when all the balls have been thrown, some players can be collectors and return balls to team-mates who go again.

Safety

- No-one enters the playing area while balls are being thrown.
- Be aware of loose balls; ball collectors can help keep the area clear.
- Balls must always be thrown or rolled underarm.

How to improve

- Ask athletes to think about their positioning when they throw; are they stable?

Integrity

Whatever modifications are used, maintain the integrity of the game. Avoid modifying a game to the point where it no longer resembles the original.

Links

For more information about primary and secondary school athletics activities see

<https://www.englandathletics.org/>

Extension game - Ball Blast

- Divide into two teams of 3 or more players.
- Teams face each other at either end of the playing area (for example, 10-12 metres); mark a line (using tape or marker cones) 3 metres in front of each team's throwing line – this is their goal line.
- Teams score by knocking the target ball across their opponents' goal line.
- Players must stay behind the throw line.
- Play to an agreed number of goals or to a time limit.