



Backyard Activities

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Purpose: Often, you will find that you are alone or with one or two of your friends in the backyard or at the playground. The following activities are challenging soccer activities that will, not only keep you and your friends busy, but will help you improve your skills and your decision making.

Kicking

Trash Can Kicking: Lay a clean, plastic trash can on its side in the back yard. Place a ball 2-3 yards away from the opening of the trash can. Practice kicking stationary balls into the trash can. This can save you from chasing your soccer ball. You can also kick the ball into the side netting of a big soccer goal. The ball will bounce back at you. Work on the technique of kicking (shooting and passing):

- Approach the ball from a slight angle.
- Practice approaches at different speeds (the faster the more power)
- Vary the size of your last step (power step) into the kick (the larger the more power)
- Use the outside of your foot, inside of your foot and the laces (instep)
- Lock your foot when kicking the ball
- Always keep your eyes on the ball when striking it
- Strike the ball on different parts of the ball:
 - lower half will send the ball up
 - midline (equator) will send the ball level to the ground
 - upper half will drive the ball down

Marbles: Put a ball (or cone or soda can) in the middle of the yard. Kick your ball and try to hit the stationary ball. Vary the distance. Have fun competing with your friend or your mom or dad.