

Disc Skills, Games and Activities

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Key Skills

Catching

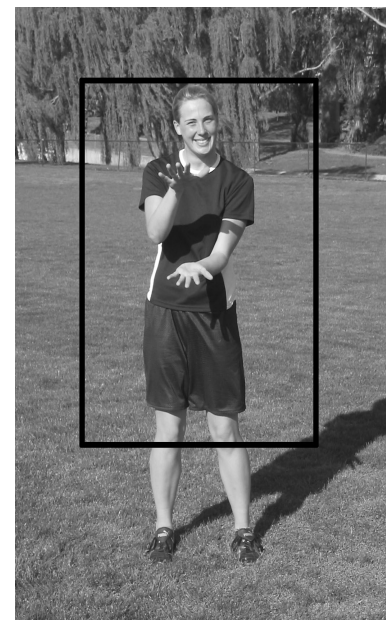
- The catcher should be facing the thrower straight on.
- Hands should start roughly a foot apart, palms facing each other.
- Elbows should be in front of the body.
- As the disc arrives the catcher should bring their hands together to trap the disc.
- If the disc arrives in the catching zone, it should be caught with a crocodile catch. The catching zone is the area from above the knees to just above head height, bounded by the arm span of the catcher.



Above: a good crocodile catch



Right: the catching zone



Throwing a Backhand

The basic grip for a backhand is shown below.



You can remember these 5 points by remembering the acronym of **GSWAP**.

Grip - are they holding the disc correctly?

Stance - are they standing correctly?

Wrist - are they flicking their wrist?

Angle of the disc - is it angled down?

Point - are they pointing at their target after they have thrown?

Simple skill breakdown of the backhand (for right handed throwers)	
Before throwing	• Hold the disc in the correct grip. • Turn your body so that you are side on to the target, with your right shoulder nearest to them.
During the throw	• The outer edge of the disc should be angled down towards the ground when you throw. • You must cock and flick your wrist to make the disc spin
After throwing	• Once you have thrown the disc, your arm should be pointing at the target.

Throwing a Forehand

The basic grip for a forehand is shown below.



You can remember these 5 points by remembering the acronym of **GSWAP**.

Grip - are they holding the disc correctly?

Stance - are they standing correctly?

Wrist - are they flicking their wrist?

Angle of the disc - is it angled down?

Point - are they pointing at their target after they have thrown?

The most common error is the disc turning over in flight (not staying flat).

The solution is to heavily emphasise Angle - the outer edge of the disc should be angled down before and during the throw.

Simple skill breakdown of the forehand (for right handed throwers)

Before throwing	• Hold the disc in the correct grip. • With your right foot, take a small step out to the side. Shift your weight to the right foot.
During the throw	• The outer edge of the disc should be angled down towards the ground when you throw. This is achieved by dropping the wrist angle. • You must cock and flick your wrist to make the disc spin
After throwing	• Once you have thrown the disc, your arm should be pointing at the target.

Throwing a Hammer

The hammer uses the same grip as the forehand. It is useful for throwing over defenders. It is usually riskier than a forehand or backhand.

Simple skill breakdown of the hammer

Before throwing	- Hold the disc in the correct grip. Turn it upside down at a 45 degree angle above your head. - With your right foot, take a small step forward. Keep your weight evenly balanced on both feet.
During the throw	- You must cock and flick your wrist to make the disc spin - Aim to release the disc so that it travels upwards and to the left of the intended target.
After throwing	Once you have thrown the disc, your arm and wrist should be pointing up in the air.

Pivoting

In ultimate, the thrower must keep one foot in contact with the same point on the ground. This is the pivot foot.

They can move their non-pivot foot, which can help them throw around a defender.

A right-handed thrower will usually pivot on their left foot.

The thrower should have most of their weight over their non-pivot foot.

To learn how to pivot as a thrower, the player should practise pivoting left and right.

Forcing

On defence, a team can use the tactic of forcing to pressure the offence's throws.

Using the tactic of forcing backhand, the marker allows backhand throws from the thrower, but prevents forehands.

Meanwhile all the teammates of the marker stand to the backhand side of the players they are guarding. This is the side the throws are likely to go to.

Likewise in a forehand force, the marker only allows forehands, while their teammates position themselves on the side of their opponents where the throws will come from.

Games and Activities

Throwing in Pairs

For: Beginner – Intermediate - Advanced	Groups of 2
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What you need

- Two lines of cones, with lines 8 metres apart
- One disc for every two students

What to do

- Demonstrate throw
- Have one student at each cone, facing a partner in the opposite line

Scoring

- After practising throws, challenge the pairs to complete as many throws as possible in 30 seconds

Safety

- Position pairs about 6 metres apart
- Players should call out "HEADS!" as a warning if a player is likely to be hit by a disc

Coaching

- Ensure players use the crocodile catch when possible
- Analyse and correct players' throws using the 5 points of GSWAP

Change it

- The receiver has to keep one foot on the ground at the cone for a catch to count
- Partners swap ends after each throw (more active)
- Adjust the distance between throwers according to ability

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Ultimate

For: Beginner – Intermediate - Advanced	2 teams of 7
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What you need

- A rectangular field with two end zones (see diagram in the rules).
- Vary the field size according to the number of players and level of ability
- One disc per field
- Marker cones to define the playing area and end zones
- Bibs for each team

Scoring

- A team scores one goal when it completes a pass to a player in the endzone it is attacking
- The first team to 15 goals wins or play to a timecap

Playing

- Players can't run with the disc - instead they pass between teammates to move it up the field
- If a pass is intercepted, knocked to the ground or dropped, the other team gets possession
- No contact allowed
- See *Simple Rules of Junior Ultimate* and *WFDF Rules of Ultimate* for more

Coaching

- Start playing the game and introduce new game rules as the game goes on
- Use the whistle to freeze play and resolve rules issues. Students can freeze play too, by calling out "freeze", as they learn how to self-

referee. This can progress until the teacher is only a spectator.

Ask the players

- If you want to catch the disc, how can you deceive your defender, and get "open"?
- What rules can be added to improve the game?
- Which throws work the best?

Change it

- Play in a smaller area to increase the development of passing and catching skills.
- Introduce zones for defensive and offensive players.
- Only change possession when the disc is intercepted with a successful catch.
- Allow 2 uncompleted passes before possession changes.
- For a faster game, reduce the time allowed to hold the disc to 5 seconds

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Indoor Ultimate

For: Beginner – Intermediate - Advanced	2 teams of 5
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Indoor Ultimate is a variation on Ultimate.

The differences are:

- It is played on a basketball court
- Endzones are only 2.5 metres deep (or a netball semicircle can be used)
- 5 players per side
- The stall count is 7 seconds
- Play is continuous – after a goal is scored, the scoring team taps the disc on the ground and immediately plays on, attempting to score at the other endzone
- Substitutes can be made at anytime, by tagging a teammate on the sideline
- Game is played to 10 minutes

Thrower Marker

For: Intermediate - Advanced	Groups of 3
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What you need

- 1 disc

Scoring

- 1 point to the thrower for completing a pass
- 1 point to the defender if they block a pass

Playing

- One player is a defender, marking the thrower from 1 metre away.
- The thrower attempts to throw to a stationary teammate 10 metres away, while pivoting legally.
- After the throw, the marker defends the new thrower

Coaching

- Use players as role models to highlight good pivoting and faking skills.
- Encourage forehands on one side and backhands on the other
- See *Key Skill: Pivoting*

Ask the players

- How can you throw wider?
- How can you deceive the marker into moving out of the way?

Change it

- The defender practices counting the stall count

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Captain Disc

For: Beginner - Intermediate	Teams of 4
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What you need

- 2 cones per team
- 1 disc per team

Scoring

- The winning team is the first team to have all players back in the line

Playing

- Line up in groups of six, with a disc placed 5 metres in front of the line, and the players all facing it.
- The players need to be well-spaced, at least arms length apart.
- On "go!", the leftmost player runs out and picks up the disc, throwing it to each teammate in turn, who throws it back
- When the last player catches the disc, they run out the front to become the captain
- If a player has to retrieve a disc, they must return to their place before throwing the return pass.

Safety

- Space teams apart so they do not throw into each other's space

Ask the players

- What is the easiest pass to catch?

Change it

- Throw only forehands

Frisbee Defender

For: Beginner - Intermediate	Groups of 3
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What you need

- 3 cones per team
- 1 disc per team

Scoring

- The throwers score 1 point for completing a pass where neither leaves their cone.
- The defender scores a point for knocking down a pass.

Playing

- Two teammates stand at cones 8 metres apart.
- The "frisbee defender" stands at a cone halfway in between, and has to keep one foot at their cone

Ask the players

- How do you make the disc curve around the defender to your receiver?

Change it

- Move the cones further apart
- Add 2 defenders who the throwers throw between

Distance Competition

For: Beginner	Groups of 4
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What you need

- One disc per player
- One cone per player

Scoring

- The furthest throw wins

Playing

- The cones are set up in a line
- Each player stands behind their cone facing the throwing space
- When the instruction is given, players throw as far as possible

Safety

- Players cannot collect their disc until every player has thrown, and permission is given to collect their disc

Coaching

- Encourage players to point their arm on their follow-through

Ask the players

- How do you make the disc fly flat?

Change it

- Throws are measured from where they land, not where they stop
- Forehand throws only
- Place hoops on the ground as targets in the throwing space

Disc Golf

For: Beginner – Intermediate - Advanced	Any number of players
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What you need

- One disc per player
- A large space with some poles or trees, such as a park

Scoring

- Each throw taken is 1 stroke
- The player with the fewest stroke wins

Playing

- As in golf, a course with "holes" is established.
- Trees, lightpoles or cones can be used as targets, or mandatory obstacles to throw to one side of.
- Players move around the course attempting to reach the target in the least number of throws.

Safety

- The player furthest from the target takes their shot first, while the other players wait
- Players should call out "HEADS!" as a warning if a player is likely to be hit

Coaching

- Encourage players to choose what the upcoming "holes" are

Ask the players

- How do you curve a throw around a tree?
- Which way does the disc roll when it hits the ground?

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Change it

- Play with one disc for 2 players, with players alternating throws, working as a team

Flutter Guts

For: Intermediate - Advanced	2 teams of 2-4 players
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What you need

- One disc

Scoring

- A team scores 1 point if they catch the disc one-handed

Playing

- The two teams face each other in parallel lines 3 metres apart
- Teams take turns softly serving the disc to the other team
- Serves are allowed if they are soft, catchable and above waist height
- Multiple taps and bobbles among teammates are allowed and encouraged
- Only one hand can be used at a time

Coaching

- Players can hold the back of their own shirt with one hand if they instinctively keep using two hands
- Good serves will let the teams focus on the catching skills

Ask the players

- How do you throw the disc so it flips over in the air instead of spinning?

Change it

- The serving team can knock the disc down once the receiving team have touched it three times.

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Two on Two

For: Intermediate - Advanced	2 teams of 2 players
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What you need

- 1 disc
- Field space at least 10m by 20m

Scoring

- A completed pass between 2 teammates is 1 point
- A block or intercept is 1 point
- The first team to 5 points wins

Playing

- 1 player is the thrower who cannot move other than pivoting
- Their teammate starts 10m away and runs anywhere, seeking a pass
- The defence attempt to block or intercept the pass
- If a pass is completed, that team gets another chance to set up then try to score
- If a pass is incomplete, offence and defence switch roles

Safety

- Space games of Two on Two well apart from each other

Coaching

- Players can get "open" for a pass by running hard in one direction then changing direction to lose their defender
- The thrower should wait until their teammate is open before throwing

Ask the players

- How do you lose your defender or fake them out?

Change it

- The marker counts a 5 second stall count on the thrower

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Cone Guts

For: Beginner - Intermediate - Advanced	2 teams of 3-10 players
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What you need

- 2 parallel lines of cones spaced 8 metres apart
- One soft, rubbery disc for every 2 players

Scoring

- A player scores a point for their team by catching a disc on the full or hitting a cone on the opponent's line with a throw
- Players announce a score by raising their hand and calling "catch" or "hit"
- The first team to 15 points wins

Playing

- Players slide or throw the discs at their opponent's line of cones
- Legal throws can only be made when standing behind a player's own cone
- Discs can be retrieved from anywhere

Safety

- With many discs being thrown simultaneously, the risk of injury is high with normal discs. Soft rubbery discs are highly recommended.

Ask the players

- How do you make your throws more accurate?

Change it

- Move the lines closer or further apart

Double Box

For: Intermediate - Advanced	2 teams of 4-6 players
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What you need

- 1 disc
- 8 cones

Scoring

- The same as ultimate.

Playing

- This is a miniature game of ultimate, but faster paced.
- There are two small endzones, 5m by 5m boxes, separated by about 20m.
- One team starts with the disc in their box and is attacking the opponent's box.
- Each time a team scores, they immediately are attacking the other box.

Change it

- Make the boxes smaller or larger.
- Only allow one player in the box per team.

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Schtick

For: Beginner - Intermediate - Advanced	2 teams of 3-15 players
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What you need

- 8 cones to mark out two boxes (3m by 3m), 20m apart
- 8 cones to mark out a halfway line in between the two boxes
- 2 discs

Scoring

- A team scores a goal by dropping a disc into the box they are attacking

Playing

- Each team attempts to gain possession of the discs and score goals in the box they are attacking
- Players can advance the disc either by throwing it or running with it
- In the attacking half, if a player is tagged by the opposition while holding the disc, they immediately have to lose possession by dropping the disc.
- In the defending half, any disc on the ground or held by your team is in the possession of your team
- Players are free to move anywhere at anytime except into the squares, and can attack or defend as they wish
- There is no contact allowed
- Schtick is self-refereed like ultimate

Ask the players

- How can you safely move the disc near the box without being tagged?
- Is it better to have both discs in your team's possession or just one?

- Do you need more players on offence or on defence?

Change it

- Add a third disc
- Move the boxes closer or further apart