

## How to Play Hacky Sack

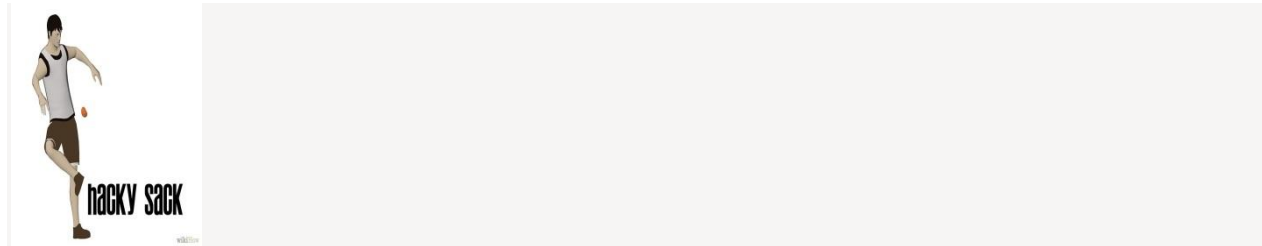
Footbag, more commonly known as Hacky Sack (a name trademarked by Wham-O!) is a sport that can be played individually or with a group of people by kicking a bag with your feet. In addition to the feet, pretty much any other part of the body can be used except for the hands or arms – just like in soccer.

The co-operative kicking sport has ancient origins from China, Thailand, Native America and nearly every country. Hacky Sack or Footbag, as we know it today, is a modern American sport invented in 1972, by John Stalberger and Mike Marshall of Oregon City, Oregon. Marshall had created a hand-made bean bag, that he was kicking around. Stalberger was recovering from knee surgery and was looking for a fun way to exercise his knees. Together, they called the new game "Hackin' the Sack." The two decided to collaborate and market their new game under the trademark of "Hacky Sack®".

Following the invention of Hacky Sack (aka [Footbag](#)), different varieties of the sport have evolved including "Footbag Net" where players volley a Hacky Sack over a 5-foot-high net and "Freestyle Footbag" where players stand in a circle and do tricks with the Hacky Sack while passing it around the circle.

The sport of footbag continued to slowly grow in popularity through the 80's and in the 90's, it was recognizable throughout most of North America. Millions of people, young and old, athletes and "couch potatoes", had kicked it around at least once.

Today, we kickers prize footbag as a **highly athletic and cooperative dance form** and **a complete aerobic workout**, comparable to a martial art. Since the early 80's a small but growing group of sack enthusiasts have also developed a lively society of *competitive footbag*. The [World Footbag Association \(WFA\)](#), located in Steamboat Springs, Colorado, has been actively promoting competitive footbag for 15 years through a circuit of tournaments around the US and Canada. Competitive footbag consists of "*footbag net*", "*freestyle*", "*footbag golf*" and "*consecutives*" (speed and endurance) events.. If you haven't witnessed professional footbag play, check it out! The high level of athleticism and skill as well as the constant improvement among the top players makes this a special treat



Understand the game. The ultimate goal for group “sacking it up” is to keep the bag in the air for as long as possible. In a group, if every person kicks the bag at least once then the group has completed a “round” or a “hack.” When every person kicks the bag at least two times around, they have completed a “double helix” and so on. The objectives are different if you're by yourself. Individual freestyle sack has evolved to a very complex sport with a myriad of kicks and stalls strung together to form tricks.

**Practice the 3 basic kicks – inside (left and right), outside (left and right) and toe kick.**

- Inside kick: Gently drop the sack in front of you. Use the inside of the foot, almost directly in the center of your shoe where the arch of your foot is, to kick the bag directly straight up. Angle your ankle so that the inside of the foot is parallel to the ceiling. This will ensure that the bag will go directly up and not off to the side. It helps to bend the other standing leg as well. After one kick, catch the sack in your hand. Repeat dropping, kicking, and catching until you are consistently kicking the bag straight up. Next, try kicking the bag using alternating feet and no hands. See how many you can do in a row!



- Outside kick: Gently drop the sack with your arm outstretched to the side, and use the middle of the outside of the foot to kick the bag. This is harder to do, but remember the tips above – angle your ankle to keep the outside of the foot parallel to the ceiling, and bend the standing leg.



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- Toe kick: Gently drop the sack in front of you, but at a greater distance than the inside kick. Use the toes to kick the bag straight up in the air. This kick is similar to the one commonly used to juggle a soccer ball.



**Practice the 3 basic foot stalls – inside (left and right), outside (left and right) and toe.**

- Inside stall: Drop the sack in front of you. Using the inside of the foot, in the middle of the shoe, catch the sack with the foot by gently lowering the foot a couple of inches (a few centimeters) in a cradling motion. This will help absorb the impact of the bag on the foot and keep it from bouncing off the side. Imagine catching the bag as you would a raw egg or water balloon.



- Outside stall: Drop the bag to the outside and cradle the bag by lowering the foot a couple of inches.

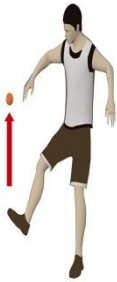


- Toe stall: Drop the bag to the front and again, cradle the bag by lowering the foot a couple of inches.

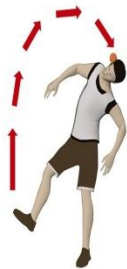




wikihow **Combine kicks and stalls.** Try doing patterns, such as outside left, inside left, inside right, outside right, or whatever you want to make up. This will help you learn to control where you want the bag to go.



wikihow **Keep your feet low; it may seem hard at first, but your skill will undoubtedly increase if you can kick low sacks.** Also, this helps with kicking too hard, or having kicks go off in random places; the knee is a pivot, and it will not go perfectly straight up.



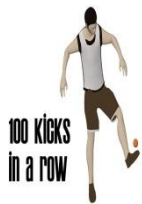
wikihow **Get used to ending up with a sack in weird places.** In order to keep a hack going, you may need to stall it on your back, chest, neck, face, knee, or even between your chin and neck. The important thing here is to keep it going.



wikiHow **Stay relaxed while kicking.** This will undoubtedly increase the length of your kicking sessions and cause less strain on your muscles.



wikiHow **Practice regularly.** Like most motor skill activities it is better to practice for a few minutes or a half-hour each day than to practice for hours at a time every once in a while.



wikiHow **Set goals for yourself, such as 100 inside kicks in a row, or 20 rainbow kicks (left outside above your head to a right outside kick), or 20 toe stalls.**