

Kick the Can

One man's trash is another kid's treasure

About Kick the Can

Kick the Can is a simple game closely related to hide and seek; however, one doesn't actually have to tag people to catch them. Variations have been played throughout the United States in urban, suburban, and rural settings. It is a great example of an essential element of streetplay: taking a common item from the environment and turning it into a game.

Game Essentials

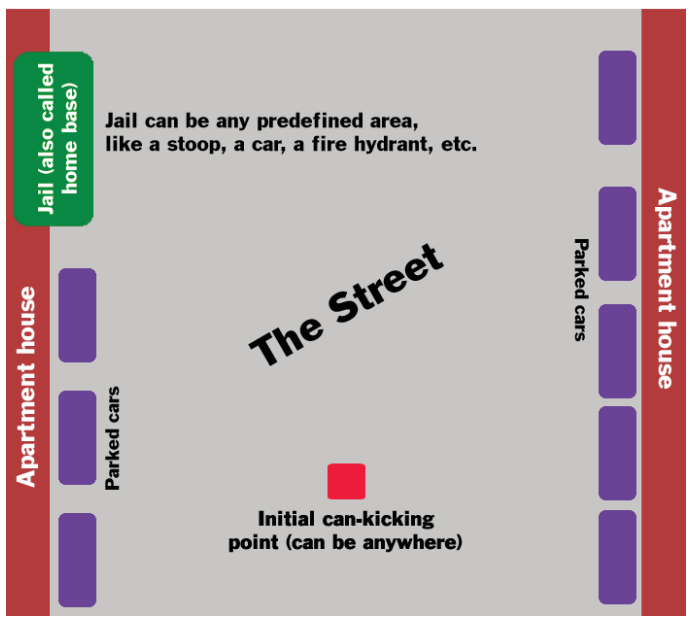
Players: 4-12 people

Materials needed:

- A can (empty or filled with stones)
- Chalk to mark the home area
- Enough room to kick a can and not break something and enough hiding places.

Time to play: 30 minutes—several hours

Typical Kick the Can field



The Kick the Can field

Kick the Can be played on asphalt, concrete, dirt or grass. It's important thing to have some clear areas and some good hiding spots. A central base, usually about 6 feet in diameter, is chosen and marked. This is referred to as the "home base" or "jail."

How to play

Someone is chosen to be "it." Someone else gets the right to kick the can. After the kicker kicks the can, all the kids scatter and hide. The person who is "it" retrieves the can, counts up to some agreed-upon number (20, 50, or 100), runs back to the jail, and yells, "freeze."

"It" then goes out to find the players. If "it" sees someone, s/he goes back to jail, picks up the can, taps three times and calls out, "I see Joey behind the blue car" (assuming, of course, that the person is named Joey). If Joey is indeed behind the blue

car, he must come out and now stay in the jail area. If the person is *not* Joey (let's say it's Jane), she doesn't need to come out. When all the players have been seen and caught, a new person is chosen to be "it," usually the first person who had been caught. If Joey was behind the blue car and moved to avoid being called out, he is still considered to be caught (honesty is an important part of this game).

Caught players may be freed from the jail if one of the other players not yet caught rushes to the jail and either (1) tags the players to set them free, or (2) kicks the can before "it" can return to the jail and call out the can-kicker's name. Once again, when the can is kicked, "it" runs, picks it up, counts to a specified number, and goes out searching for the other players.

The last word

Kick the Can is an active version of hide and seek. Instead of seeking out a specific spot and hiding until found, players may continuously move around and try to evade "it," or to free the other players. The can may be filled with stones or marbles to make a louder sound when kicked.

This Streetplay Rule Sheet is available at: <http://www.streetplay.com/rulesheets/kickthecan/>