

Punchball

Baseball where your fist is the bat

About Punchball

Punchball is a game based on baseball, but without the pitcher or the bat. It can be easily adapted to oddly shaped fields and different numbers of players. It is a game commonly enjoyed by boys and girls.

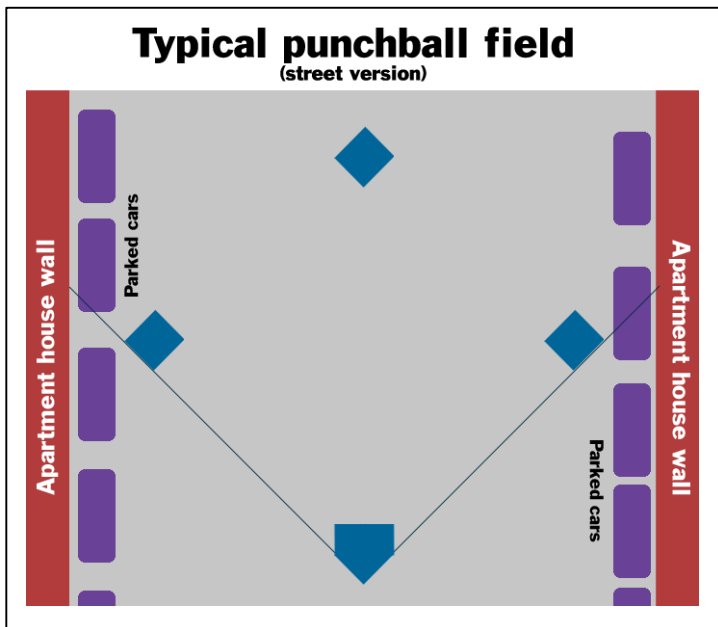
Game Essentials

Players: 2-12 per side (the more the merrier)

Materials needed:

- Bouncing rubber ball (spongeball is ideal)
- Field of play should have adequate fair territory and room for either 3 or 4 bases

Time to play: 30-60 minutes



The Punchball field

Punchball is typically played on asphalt, allowing for predictable bounces of a rubber ball. A concrete schoolyard with a painted softball diamond is ideal, especially with large teams. If there aren't many players on a team, fair territory can be restricted to the either side of second base. In an apartment complex, an open courtyard can be used, and a ball hit too far can be a foul or out. Historically, the intersection of lightly trafficked sidestreets was used (each corner becomes a base), though such intersections are hard to find nowadays.

How to play

Choose teams and the dimensions of the field. Decide how many strikes make an out (1 or more), and whether all swings and foul tips are considered strikes. Unlike real baseball, a foul ball counts as the final strike, unless you decide otherwise. There are three outs per inning; you can decide to play 5, 7, or 9 inning games. In most cases, Little League Baseball rules are used, including no leads off bases.

In punchball, a fist is used as a bat. Hit the ball with the palm-side of the fist in a swinging motion. Very young children can hold the ball in one hand, like a tee, and swing at it with the other. Other techniques range from hitting the ball on a bounce (gently toss it upwards, let it bounce, then hit it), to more advanced techniques like tossing the ball high and hitting an overhand shot (like a tennis serve). There's really no wrong way to hit—as long as the ball comes off your fist!

Some unique variations in punchball are "pegging" and "homing." "Pegging"—throwing a ball at an advancing runner for an out—is allowed at your discretion (pegging can get ugly). "Homing" the ball—throwing it towards home plate, even though there's no catcher—is often used, especially when there are fewer players: if the ball reaches home before a runner reaches a base, the runner returns to the original base (if a fielder decides to cover home plate, "homing it" is disallowed).

The last word

Punchball is a great game that needs little equipment and can be squeezed into a school recess period. Quickly choose fair sides, get the game going and be prepared to run around.

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