

Slapball

A crash course for a full team game on a small field

About Slapball

Slapball is a game played like baseball, but without a bat. It was created for oddly shaped fields (such as the width of a street) and different numbers of players.

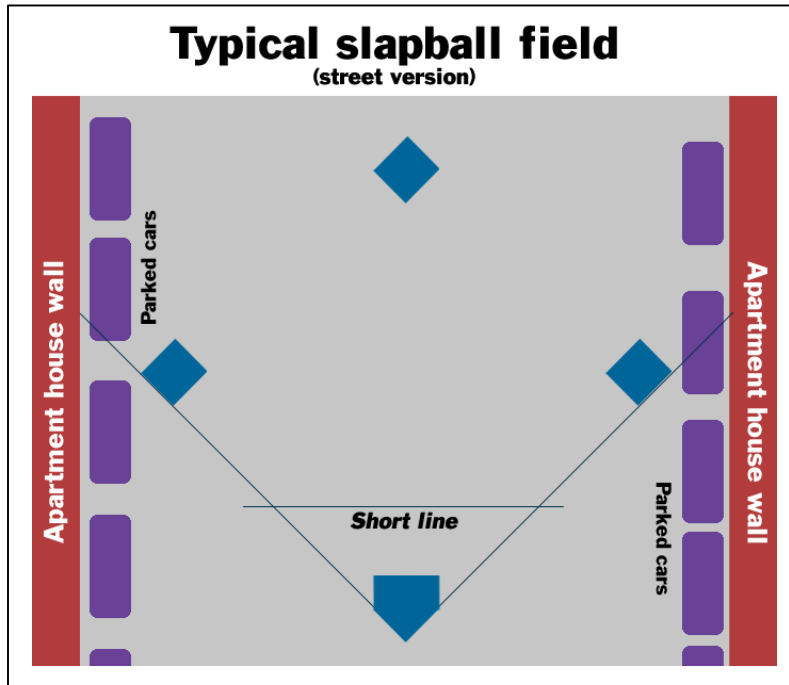
Game Essentials

Players: 3-8 per side

Materials needed:

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

Time to play: 45-90 minutes



The Slapball field

Slapball is played on asphalt or concrete. A school park with a baseball diamond and painted bases (usually for softball) is an ideal field for a game with full squads. Smaller fields, such as half of the diamond or an apartment complex courtyard, are ideal when 3 to 4 players are on a team. A slapball variation called *triangle* was commonly played in the streets of NYC in which there were only 3 bases: first, third, and home.

How to play

Determine the sides and the dimensions of the field. Decide whether to allow strikes, or limit players to one swing per at bat (strike/foul is an out). One or two swing limits are common. In a 2-swing game, a foul or miss on the second swing is an out.

The pitcher lobs a ball on a bounce to the batter who then slaps it with the palm of his/her hand (not a fist—this differentiates slapball from *punchball*). The ball must bounce in the infield, so there are no mammoth fly balls. A ball must cross a short line in order to be considered in play.

There are three outs per inning; you can decide to play 5, 7, or 9 inning games. Runners advance on hits and are tagged or forced out. In most cases, Little League Baseball rules are used, including no leads off the base.

Pitching is a key factor in slapball. Before the game, determine whether or not you allow the pitcher to “fluke” or curve the ball. When allowed, these types of spin make it much more difficult for the hitter.

The last word

Slapball is a great game that requires minimum equipment and a relatively small field. It's easy to organize during school recess periods or when the school day ends. 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/slapball/>