

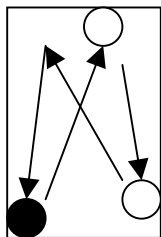
JUGGLING INSTRUCTIONS

STEP ONE (Out with the Old) no balls needed!

For some reason, it seems to be ingrained in the human psyche that juggling is meant to be done in a circle and a good many of us are actually pretty darn good at getting two balls going in this pattern. The first step in juggling is to erase this pattern in your mind.

STEP TWO (In with the New) no balls needed!

Now that we've shown you how not to juggle, the next step is to get a good idea of the proper pattern (the cascade) and the best analogy of the perfect cascade pattern can be best explained as the *jugglers box*.



Your stance should be with your elbows at or near your sides with your hands straight out from your elbows. Always try to keep your hands at or near this level. Don't reach up to catch.

The box's 2 bottom corners are where your hands are and the 2 top corners are straight up from your hands about four inches above your head. Now, visualize the box and visualize 2 balls in one hand and 1 in the other. From the hand that has 2 balls, launch one diagonally across the box. When that ball hits the other corner you are back to where you started and you launch the single ball from the hand that had 2 and so on.

There are only two throws – one from your left and one from your right and as long as you throw each ball when the previous ball hits the opposite corner of the box, you will find that the cascade pattern is surprisingly easy to control. What about the catches?

If your throws are reasonably good, the catches will happen on their own. Juggling is about: (1) a good throw, (2) good timing, (3) good catches. Take some time and just try to visualize the juggler's box in front of you and your hands maneuvering the balls through the cascade pattern.

TIP – Get a friend to stand in front of you, and using three balls, get your friend to move the balls through the box in front of you.

STEP THREE (Let the Games Begin)

Take one ball and assume the stance. Throw the ball up and diagonally across your jugglers box so that it peaks around the opposite corner and then lands in your other hand. Now do the exact same thing the other way. These are the only two throws that you need to know to learn the cascade pattern. Concentrate on making perfect throws (You have all the time in the world to do this, by the way) and the catch will be simple. Your hands should not be reaching up to make the catch.

TIP – Ideally, the ball should be caught at the corners of the jugglers box and then your hand sweeps inwards and releases the balls from your naval area.

STEP FOUR (Timing is Essential)

Continue to practice exactly as you were in step 3, *except* now when the ball reaches its peak, clap your hands together. Concentrate on clapping exactly when the ball reaches its peak and don't just try to sneak in a clap while the ball is airborne.

STEP FIVE (Breaking Down the Barriers)

First, see step 1 and resist the omnipresent temptation to pass the balls from hand to hand around in a circle. Take one ball in each hand, and, *starting with your weaker hand*, throw the first ball just as you've been practicing and when that ball reaches the opposite corner of your juggler's box (or the peak), throw the other ball the other way. Don't worry about catching them yet; let's get the throws and the timing right. Your throws should be just as they were in previous steps and you should be throwing the second ball when the first ball peaks.

Say to yourself "Throw - - Throw", and the balls will reply "Thud - - Thud". At this point, we would like to point out that most people tend to throw the balls forward after the first throw. This is because your subconscious is telling you that in order to avoid ballistic collisions, it is best to throw not only under the airborne ball, but forward as well. Try to envision your juggler's box as 2-dimensional, and, more to the point, just don't throw forward.

TIP – if you have trouble throwing and/or walking forward, practice with a wall in front of you.

STEP SIX (Have no Fear)

This step is no different from the previous except that you will try to catch the balls. If you have practiced step 5 enough, this shouldn't be too difficult. Say to yourself "Throw - - Throw - - Catch" (Just say "catch" when the second ball lands.). Smile, you're almost there.

STEP SEVEN (Seize the Opportunity)

All that the third ball does is allow you to make the pattern continuous. There are no changes in your throws, your catches or your timing. Start with two balls in your weaker hand. Throw one ball from your weaker hand; when that ball peaks, throw the single ball from your good hand; when that ball peaks, throw the single from your weaker hand—say "Throw—Throw—Throw—Throw ... That's it. You have entered the world of gravity defiance!

TIP – If you have problem launching the third ball, try doing just the throws as you did the step 5 and work on getting your throws and timing right.

STEP EIGHT (Strive for Perfection)

Also known as consolidating the pattern, this is where juggling really gets fun! Set goals for yourself. Try to get 20 throws and catches without dropping...50, 100, and 200. Once you feel that you can juggle almost infinitely, try to change the shape of your pattern. Juggle wide, juggle small, and juggle high.

TIP – When juggling high your hands will be moving slower and conversely, when juggling small your hands will be moving faster. Try walking around while juggling. Somewhere in the middle of all these metamorphoses, you will attain your own comfortable smooth cascade.

STEP NINE (Share your Gift with Others)

Using your newfound skills and mountains of smiles and positive encouragement, you too can be a guru of gravity.

STEP TEN (Where Persistence Doesn't Play)

Having trouble? If you can do Step 3, you have proven to yourself that you can juggle, as three ball juggling is simply a series of those throws. If you get to a certain step, or you are trying to do a new trick and you try and try but you just can't seem to get it together, put down your balls and go to bed. That's right – go to bed! There is only so much that anyone can absorb on a given day. Luckily for us jugglers, the mind is incredibly powerful and never stops working. In fact, mechanical patterns such as juggling are a subject that the mind just loves to toy around with during REM sleep. So, just sleep on it and you may just wake up to find your problem solved. This is what jugglers refer to as Quantum Leap. Have fun!
