

SAFETY HANDOUT

HOW TO GET YOURSELF IN, UP AND OUT

GET IN FROM THE RIGHT SIDE

Handles always facing down, put your hands between the two straps from the inside, like Superman grab the handles and shimmy your way in. Once on properly, you will wear the Knockerball like a backpack. Avoid putting it on upside down!

GET UP BY TURNING OVER

If you're stuck like a turtle on a shell, don't try to get up on two feet. Turtles don't do that. It's really hard. Use your legs to roll over on to your stomach and then either squat or use a knee to help you get up.

GET OUT ONE ARM, THEN THE OTHER

To get out simply fall onto your stomach. Then you use one arm to release the strap from one shoulder. Then do the other arm. Much easier than trying to come out two arms at a time.

SAFETY MEASURES TO HAVE FUN AND AVOID INJURY

BE THE BALL. NOT ABOVE IT.

If you don't have more than 8 inches of space above your head or feel you're a little too close to the top, switch out with another player or find another Knockerball that is a better fit for you. **Not having enough space above the head and playing inappropriately can lead to serious head injury.**

DON'T GET IN UPSIDE DOWN

New players may enter the Knockerball from the wrong direction. Make sure to listen to your supervisor and enter the ball from the correct side. Usually if you are upside down your head will be closer to the top or even sticking out. If you're not sure, ask your coordinator or referee.

STRETCH!

While you're waiting stretch out your neck, legs, shoulders and core stomach and back muscles. You might find yourself a little bit sore since you're experiencing a physical activity your body isn't used to.

DON'T PLAY AGGRESSIVELY

Guys have a natural tendency to be more aggressive and they also weigh more. Be conscious of this and do not hit someone hard who is smaller than you.

DON'T HIT OTHERS WHILE THEY'RE DOWN

It's just not cool to keep hitting someone who is trying to get up.

WATCH THE BOARDS

It's ok to hit someone against the boards if playing indoors, but, like hockey don't get too violent, and don't hit from behind into the boards either. While you're protected you're not wearing kneepads or have ankle support so you could bang them against the glass. A loosely fitted Knockerball could make your head vulnerable too.

TUCK AND ROLL YOUR HEAD IF YOU FLIP

If you roll over an extra measure is to tuck your head in like you would in a summersault. You can also lift up the ball a little which you may do naturally as you fall.

TAKE REST BREAKS

For people who are not used to carrying 15-20 extra pounds and running for half an hour it can be quite tiring. If you feel tired, come off to the side and get some air.

ENSURE STRAPS ARE NOT LOOSE

Once in a while a strap may come undone because it wasn't fastened as tightly as it could be. If that happens just come to the side to get it adjusted by your coordinator. Be aware of people coming at you if you stay on the field of play.

PULL OFF TO THE SIDE IF BALL GETS DEFLATED

Once in a while a Knockerball may puncture. It won't burst but you may notice that you're becoming a little soft and you just don't have that kind of bounce you once had. Just pull off to the side if that is the case and get it replaced, patched or reinflated.

SWING YOUR LEGS IF STUCK UPSIDE DOWN

If you manage to get stuck sway your legs back and forth or wait until the referee or someone comes and knocks you upright. You can also swing your legs back and forth to get upright again.

WATCH THE KICKS

Just like soccer, you might get some bruises on your shins or knees if you're not wearing pads so be careful not to kick too hard or wear protective pads. Most useful if playing on hard court.

HOW KNOCKERBALL COORDINATORS, REFEREES, AND SUPERVISORS SHOULD REDUCE INJURY RISK

To ensure Knockerball stays fun for all your participants ensure your coordinators and referees are adhering to these safety measures.

1. Game supervisors and coordinators should **distribute a safety handout and/or provide safety instructions to all participants** before any play and a safety handout should be distributed to the customer and players upon booking and/or at the field.
2. Players and coordinators should always ensure participants in the Knockerball "ballers" have the bubble fully covering at least **8 inches above their head**, to allow for roll overs and head protection. Usually tightening the straps will allow for more protection above the head. Players with their heads flat with the top, near the top or above the top should NOT be allowed to play and should be fitted properly, or in another Knockerball.
3. **Players should NOT run full speed** and should only bump into players with with light to moderate speed, while approaching from a limited distance.
4. **Players should NOT bend down when bumping another player** – what is known as "spearing". Players should use the sides of the bubble for impact with other players, not the top. Collisions top to top of bubbles can result in serious head and face injury in the event a player is not wearing the Knockerball correctly, the size of the player is not suitable for has not been inflated appropriately.
5. **Referees should limit the distance on direct rushes** between ballers to reduce force and impact on players and the equipment. We recommend no more than 15 feet between players in a direct rush or simply not allowing them, even though it is fan favorite entertainment. Referees should not encourage any full speed collisions.
6. Referees should be diligent and responsive to aggressive players. **Referees should warn and penalize all players fo playing aggressively or spearing.** This activity is what can lead to the most severe injury. When spearing, players bend down to charge and the top of the Knockerball is first to impact another baller vs the side of the Knockerball, exposing heads. If adhering to items 1, 3 and 4 the risk of injury is reduced. However two players spearing simultaneously risk trauma to the head, neck and face.

Additional precautions:

- Players should be healthy enough for vigorous physical activity. It's more tiring than it looks!
- Players should wear appropriate footwear. Flip flops are not appropriate
- Remove jewelry and eyeglasses unless absolutely necessary. Eyeglass straps are highly recommended
- Always use under proper adult supervision
- Always properly inflate the Knockerball before use
- Always properly adjust and wear the shoulder straps
- Only use knockerball on grass, astroturf, or gym floors. If playing on grass, check for sharp objects that may damage your Knockerball such as rocks of any shape, sticks and other debris
- Not for use by pregnant women or persons with any medical condition such as asthma, claustrophobia, heart conditions, seizures or neck or back problems
- Do not have more than one person inside a Knockerball
- Do not use while under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- Do not use on pavement or cement surfaces, near streets or roads with automobile or pedestrian traffic
- Do not use in water or anywhere near any bodies of water, including pools, lakes, ocean, or ponds
- Do not attempt any stunts, including but not limited to jumps from an elevated area. Never attempt to roll down any hill or grade while inside the a Knockerball. Dangerous stunts may result in unnecessary injury