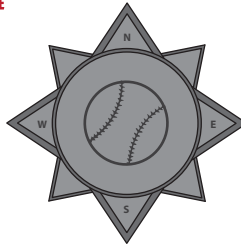


KICKING A SOCCER BALL

I know what you are thinking, kicking a soccer ball? That's pretty obvious, I've been kicking things all my life. What's so different about that? But to kick a soccer ball hard and accurately is a skill all of its own.

FLIP OVER FOR YOUR NEXT CHALLENGE



EARN THIS NUGGET

- Practice kicking a ball. Practice the techniques mentioned above.
- Practice kicking a ball against a wall, if you have a brick wall without windows on it. Practice stopping the ball with your foot or body when it comes back at you.
- You will earn your Nugget when your parents agree that you have a pretty mean kick and some nice ball control developing.

- First of all, there are a couple places on the foot that you can kick the ball. These are the flat areas: the flat top, the flat sides of the foot, never the toe. Kicking with the toe has little accuracy, damages the ball, and can break your toe. (I speak from experience.)
- For best results, lock the ankle when you kick. This means that the foot is pointed straight so the ankle cannot flex anymore. This is typically used when kicking with the top of the foot. When kicking with the side, point the toes up so the ankle locks the other way. Both of these will make your kick much more accurate and your foot will not flex.
- When you kick, follow through. That means that your kick follows the ball as it starts to travel. It doesn't simply stop moving at the point of contact.
- If you kick in the center of the ball, the ball will travel along the ground. A kick (and follow through) at the bottom of the ball and it will loft into the air. Your follow through should have your foot extending upwards just as the ball is traveling.
- As you get more confident, start to make a run up to the ball. The more momentum you have, the further it will go. Make sure you have your technique well worked out before you start trying to add speed and power, though.

