

Catch cricket

A game for two people

No equipment is needed except a suitably-sized ball—preferably a cricket ball, but a tennis ball would do.

The aim of the game is to accumulate a high score between both players.

Players start by standing a comfortable distance apart and throw the ball to each other, counting each successful catch. If the ball is dropped this is a “wicket” and a mental note is made of the score at that point, such as “23 for 1”—meaning 23 catches for one wicket. The players continue throwing and catching, counting again from 1. When the next wicket falls the count is added to the previous count such that, for example, if the ball is dropped again at 49 the score becomes “72 for 2”. The game continues until the 10th ball is dropped, in which case the “innings” is complete and the final score is “all out for 239”, or whatever was the total.

If during the game the catch count reaches 50, one player takes a big step backward; if the count reaches 100 both players step backward. Whenever a wicket falls without a catch being taken, one player takes a small step forward.

If the players wish to continue with the game the score for the first innings becomes the target to beat during the second innings.

If the second-innings total passes that of the first innings before all wickets are lost then the second innings beats the first by so many wickets. For example, if the second innings reaches 240 for only 7 wickets then the second has won by 3 wickets.

If the second-innings total falls short of the first total then the scores are subtracted and the first innings wins by the resulting number of catches. For example, if the second innings reaches only 230 then this is subtracted from the earlier score of 239, meaning that the first innings has won by 9 catches.

Of course if the second innings matches the first then the result is a tie.

When two players are playing together they can continue trying to beat their previous highest score, but if more players are available they can form teams of two players each and play alternate innings, trying to beat the other team’s score. Teams should play an agreed number of innings or should agree to carry on until break time is over.

If the second team’s first innings total beats the first team’s score for the loss of no wicket then both players of the second team take two steps backward before their next innings.