

CLICK!

BEYOND THE VALLEY OF THE KENDAMA



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SOME PRACTISE IDEAS

Where can you get new ideas to apply to your kendama play?
Here are some thoughts....

- Think outside the (toy) box!
- "What would a tennis player do with a kendama?"
- "What happens if I do this trick in the other direction?"
- "How would Humphrey Bogart do this?"
- "How does jazz relate to kendama play?"

- Pick two tricks at random. Now work out a transition between them. Then try the same thing for three tricks....
- Seen a trick that you think is "too hard for me"? Try it anyway. If/when it doesn't work, consider *in what way* it didn't work. Then try again paying attention to that element of the trick. Maybe that trick is still beyond you - okay, fair enough, but think about that element and how you can apply it to an easier trick, perhaps, or make an easier version of that element.
- Take a break. Have a few days off from kendama, and come back afresh.
- "What would happen if I tried this trick on a roundabout?"
- That song lyric you're listening to... can you apply it to kendama in any way at all?

- Pick an easy trick. Now find 10 different ways to do it. Any slight differences! Close one eye, without using your ring finger, leaning against a wall... anything, just do it! Right... now, which one of those 10 was the most interesting, and how can you develop on that?
- Have a drink of water.

- "How many different ways can I deliberately do this trick **wrongly**?" Try, and you're bound to find that at least one of them will make you think "Ah! But that means that I could....*[insert brilliant new idea here!]*"

- "What skills can I take from my other hobby of skateboarding/hockey/saxophone/dancing/mime/frisbee/hackysack/juggling/cloudspotting/geocaching/etc/etc/etc and how can I apply them to kendama?"
- "Why does everyone do this trick *like this*, and no-one does it *like that*?"

- "What's the weirdest/coolest/ugliest/stupidest place I can play kendama?"
- Where's Wally?
- What would Charles Dickens think of kendama?
- Can I turn this trick upside-down/backwards/inside-out/mirrored?
- What would an alien think a kendama is for?
- What does a kendama think?

Yes, yes, some of that lot is quite stupid, but you never know where the next great kendama idea is coming from. It's a whole clicking world, so have fun EXPLORING!

Hanging Pirouette

Hold the string so that the loaded kendama hangs down at a slight angle.

With a long, smooth action, lift the string up high and release upwards. (Think "lift", not "throw").



Hanging Grip



While the kendama is flying, quickly spin around 360° to your left (assuming you're right handed).

Try to make sure that your head is the last part of your body to start to move (so that you can keep your eyes on the kendama for as long as you can) and the first part of your body to complete the spin (so you can 'spot' the kendama as soon as possible).

Once your head has turned, focus on the ken, then catch it. Remember to *keep sinking your knees* during the catch.

Tips

- Try to remain as straight up as you can during the pirouette, to avoid losing your balance.
- I strongly recommend practising just the pirouette without the kendama in order to master this trick. Use your arms to generate spin.
- For the initial position, adjust your grip on the string so that the ball is lifted up by ~0.5cm on the spike. Counter-intuitively, this will help to prevent the ball coming off the spike during the throw.