

THE PLAYGROUND FIXES(TM) PRESENTS

THE FOUR SQUARE FIX(TM)

LEARN IT INSIDE. PLAY IT OUTSIDE.

A projected whole-class game built for Grades 2-4 that teaches students to run Four Square fairly, safely, and independently.



ONE SCREEN | FOUR CLASS
CREWS | EIGHT RULES

FIX THE SYSTEM. NOT THE KIDS.

WHY THIS EXISTS

RULES ARE NOT LEARNED BECAUSE WE READ THEM.

Students usually hear playground rules once, then encounter the confusing parts during recess: early hits, second bounces, line calls, rotation, and disagreement. The Four Square Fix moves those moments into the classroom first.

THE TRANSFER PROMISE

Students watch a slow, readable play, freeze at the exact moment an argument would begin, make the call together, see the consequence, replay mistakes, and lock the rule. The final screen becomes the outdoor setup card.

WATCH IT	A real play unfolds.
FREEZE IT	The disputed moment stops.
CALL IT	Everyone signals. One random crew decides.
REPLAY IT	The class sees what the choice does to the game.
LOCK IT	The correct rule becomes permanent.
TAKE IT OUTSIDE	Students play the same version on the yard.

60-SECOND SETUP

MAKE FOUR CREWS. KEEP EVERYONE INVOLVED.

Point to four seating areas. Assign Cyan, Gold, Green, and Coral. Students stay where they are; no devices or accounts are required.

CYAN CREW	GOLD CREW	GREEN CREW	CORAL CREW
Signals every call	Signals every call	Signals every call	Signals every call

WHAT STUDENTS DO

When the screen freezes, every student shows 1, 2, or 3 with their fingers. The randomly selected Call Crew gets five seconds to agree and make the official choice. This prevents one dominant student from controlling every decision while keeping the whole room active.

WHAT THE TEACHER DOES

Launch the file, point out the four crews, and click Start. During calls, click an answer or press keys 1-3. If a choice breaks the game, use Replay the Moment. The class must watch again and repair the call before the rule can be locked.

RECOMMENDED TIMING

Guided run: 10-15 minutes. Outdoor transfer: immediately afterward or at the next recess/PE period. Revisit the game when inconsistent playground rules begin creating conflict.

SAY LESS. LET THE GAME TEACH.

OPEN	"We are learning one version of Four Square so we can run the game ourselves outside."
CREWS	"Everyone makes every call. The selected crew makes the official choice."
FREEZE	"Show your answer with your fingers. Call Crew, you have five seconds."
POOR CALL	"That choice broke the game. Watch the moment again and repair it."
RULE LOCK	Read the rule once. Ask students to show the matching physical action.
FINISH	"We know the setup, rotation, boundaries, and repair language. Take it outside."

OPTIONAL PHYSICAL LOCKS

After each rule locks, have the whole class perform a two-second matching action: point to four court spots and one waiting line, mime drop-bounce-underhand, show one bounce with one finger, make one hand hit, point to any painted line, rotate one position, or show Rock-Paper-Scissors hands. These micro-rehearsals strengthen transfer without turning the activity into a lecture.

ONE SIMPLE VERSION. BUILT FOR GRADES 2-4.

1

FOUR PLAY. OTHERS LINE UP.

One player stands in each square. Everyone else waits beside Square 1.

2

DROP. BOUNCE. SERVE.

Square 4 drops the ball, lets it bounce once, then hits underhand.

3

LET IT BOUNCE FIRST.

The receiving player lets the ball bounce once before returning it.

4

ONE BOUNCE MAX.

A second bounce puts that square out.

5

HIT. DON'T HOLD.

Use one hand hit. No catching, carrying, or throwing.

6

ANY LINE OR OUTSIDE IS OUT.

If the ball lands on paint or outside, the hitter is out.

7

OUT? LINE UP. ROTATE UP.

The outgoing player joins the end. Lower squares move up.

8

DISAGREE? ROCK-PAPER-SCISSORS.

Play once. The winner's call stands. Rotate if needed and start the next rally.

RULE FOUNDATION

Core play follows Playworks Foursquare, a game listed for Grades 1-2: four players plus one line, Square 4 serving, a drop-bounce serve, one bounce, no early return, no catch or hold, lines and outside out, and rotation. One-round Rock-Paper-Scissors follows the playground conflict protocol recommended by Recess Lab and Playworks.

Sources: playworks.org/game-library/foursquare/ | recesslab.org/resources/make-rock-paper-scissors-habit/ (accessed August 30, 2026)

OUTDOOR TRANSFER

THE CLASS SHOULD BE ABLE TO START WITHOUT YOU.

Equipment: one playground ball and a painted, chalked, or taped four-square court.

SETUP

Put one player in each numbered square. Square 4 serves. Put one waiting line beside Square 1, safely away from active play.

ROTATION

When a player is out, that player joins the end of the waiting line. Players in lower squares move up to fill the empty square. The first waiting player enters Square 1.

REPAIR LANGUAGE

Teach students these exact phrases: "Line or outside - hitter out." "Second bounce - your square is out." "Two calls - one Rock-Paper-Scissors." "Winner's call stands. Next rally."



SUCCESS IS NOT A PERFECT GAME. SUCCESS IS A GAME STUDENTS CAN REPAIR AND CONTINUE WITHOUT AN ADULT SOLVING EVERY DISAGREEMENT.