THE BASIC STEPS OF LEARNING TO JUGGLE

STEP 1. WORK OUT THE PATTERN

Imagine juggling inside a phone booth.
You release your throws from near your belly button
Throw up to the opposite top corner every time
Catch in the opposite hand and continually repeat the above

STEP 2. GET USED TO THROWING ONE BALL CONSISTENTLY

Start with only the one ball and throw the above pattern many times (eg. 50+ times).
Practice until you can do it consistently without moving your head around too much.

STEP 3. GET THE TIMING RIGHT WITH TWO BALLS

Start with one ball in each hand. It helps with the timing if you say the phrase “ONE, TWO, CATCH”. Throw from your right while saying “ONE”. When it peaks in the top left corner throw the second ball from your left hand to the top right hand corner saying “TWO”. Catch the first ball in your left hand at the same time. This second ball is then caught on the word “CATCH” in the right-hand. Get consistent with this step before moving on.

STEP 4. THROW ALL THREE BALLS WITHOUT CATCHING ANY

Start with two balls in your right hand this time and one in your left. Throw from your right, then your left and then throw the third ball from the right hand. Don’t try and catch any of the balls, just get used to getting rid of all of them in a steady rhythm.

STEP 5. LEARNING TO CATCH ALL THREE BALLS

The slower you can throw the more time you have to catch. Use the same general pattern as in Step 3 but this time you will need to use “ONE, TWO, THREE, CATCH” throwing from the opposite hand every time you say a number. NB. It is more important to get rid of the third ball than to catch the first two balls. Wait until you can consistently catch each ball (ie. three throws) the once before trying to juggle continuously.

STEP 6. JUGGLING CONTINUOUSLY

Take each next step progressively (ie. try and catch four throws before attempting five, etc). Once you can do five throws and catches consistently you can attempt to juggle continuously.

NOW GO FOR IT!

- Do not expect to learn the skills in five minutes – some people can but most people will take several days. Try practicing 10 minutes a day for at least three days to get the basic idea.
- The only way to get better is to:

  PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE
Juggling Tips by Mark Oates

- The basic pattern for juggling three balls is called a 'Cascade' pattern. Once you become proficient with this pattern you can begin to learn a huge variety of more complex juggling skills.

- ANYONE with a willingness to put the time in to practice can ultimately learn to juggle so long as they can catch a ball in either hand.

- The best balls to learn with are soft ones such as 'stress balls' or beanbags. Tennis balls are okay but they are slightly harder to learn with because they tend to bounce out of your hand when trying to catch them.

- Accept that dropping balls is a necessary part of juggling.

- Getting the 'timing' right is more important than 'catching' whilst learning.

- Go back a step or two if you are repeatedly having problems and work on your consistency of the basic pattern

- Remember that everyone learns at different rates

- Some people find it difficult to stop walking forwards whilst learning. Try standing in front of a wall or door and focus on throwing the balls back towards yourself.

- You should never get bored of juggling because there are hundreds of different patterns to learn and lots of different methods, such as using more than three balls, clubs, rings, knives, fire-clubs, etc.

Making Your Own Set of Juggling Balls

You can easily make your own 'stress balls' that are ideal for juggling. You will need 12 to 15 high quality party balloons, an empty soft drink bottle, a pair of scissors and three handfuls of rice.

1. Cut the neck of a soft-drink bottle off to create a funnel.
2. Feed a balloon onto the mouth of the soft-drink bottle/funnel.
3. Fill the funnel and balloon with rice until it is the right size (eg. approximately the size of a large plum). You will need to squash the rice into the balloon with your fingers.
4. Cut the end of the neck of the filled balloon off.
5. Take another balloon, with its neck already cut off, and stretch it over the filled balloon so that it covers the hole of the neck.
6. Cover with two or three more balloons, of different colours, that have also had their necks cut off.
7. For a fancy finish snip small neat holes in the final balloon and carefully stretch it over the others. This will give you a multicoloured look.

Further Information

If you would like to learn more about juggling then a really good resource is 'Juggleart'. This is a shop in Fitzroy (rear of 230 Brunswick St - first floor) that sells juggling products and offers good advice on anything to do with the subject, including lessons. Their website is: juggleart.com.au

BE WARNED:
Juggling can be addictive!