

Week 1 - Balance

Agility, balance, and coordination are valuable in almost all sports. Developing these ABCs, is an important part of physical literacy, and can be achieved through involvement in a variety of sports and programs.

Practicing balance can be incorporated into daily activities.

For example, when your child is playing at home or watching TV have them try these static and dynamic balance techniques:

- Balancing on one foot
- Walking on tiptoes or heels
- Try balancing on three body parts, four body parts, one hand and two feet, one hand and one foot
- Walking along a line
- Walking up and down steps
- Balancing a soft toy (e.g. a bean bag) on their head

TIPS

- ❖ Stand nice and tall
- ❖ Encourage eyes focusing ahead
- ❖ Focus on an object that isn't moving
- ❖ Pick a place on the line to focus on
- ❖ Encourage arms held out to the side (Airplane arms)

Try interactive games to practice balancing:

- ✓ Encourage your child to follow you in a line and walking in different ways such as slow, fast, marching, arms out, and hands on head.
- ✓ Explore different ways of balancing soft toys (soft bean bags, a small stuffed animal) on different parts on the body (e.g. on the head, shoulders, nose, ears, elbows)
- ✓ Explore with your child different ways of moving/walking around equipment at the playground for example, over/under, around/between, on/off, slow/fast



Week 2 - Running

Locomotor skills strengthen the muscles of the body and help develop balance and agility. Children need play that uses their big muscles to fully develop the brain and the whole body. A whole-body locomotor skill like running strengthens the muscles and heart, and develops balance, coordination and agility.

Practice running can be incorporated into different activities

For example, when your child is outside for play time have them explore running in various ways:

- Run slowly or run quickly when outside playing
- Run on the spot
- Run in a circle
- Run on the spot making yourself really big/really small
- Run and touch four objects in the yard

Tips

- Remind your child to have swinging L's (arm position) while running
- Remind them to have the elbows brush the body
- Encourage them to keep their heads up and eyes forward (laser beam eyes)
- Encourage them to slow down when changing directions
- Practice kicking the heels up behind the body while running (target the backside)



Try interactive games to practice running

- ✓ Create a small relay race where you set up a few of your child's toys at one end of the yard and have them start at the opposite side, run and pick up a toy, and then run the toy back to your side.
- ✓ Play follow the leader by having your child be your "shadow" standing behind you. The leader accelerates and decelerates, and the shadow tries to keep a constant distance behind the leader.

Week 3 -Underhand rolling

The opportunity to learn basic movement skills allows children to play games alone or with friends. If children are skillful, they are more likely to remain active. Practicing sending and receiving skills like underhand rolling helps develop muscle and eye coordination.

Practicing underhand rolling can be incorporated into different activities

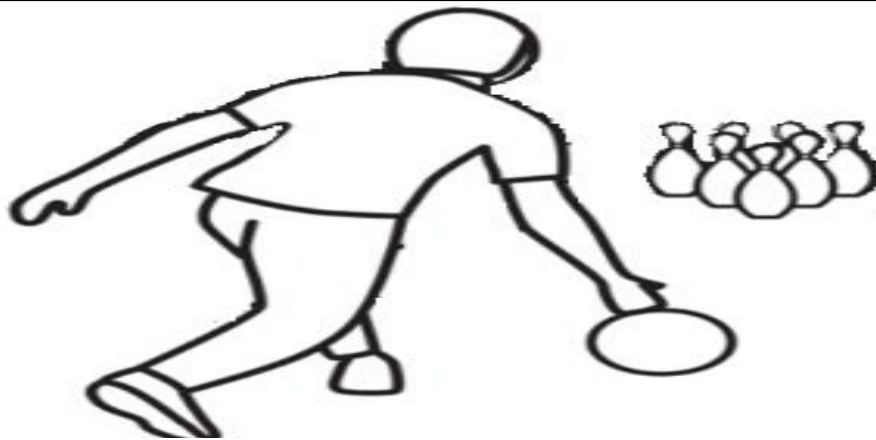
- Rolling a ball to knock over different objects
- Rolling a ball to a target
- Rolling a ball to you and receiving a ball
- Look for objects around the house that can be used to explore underhand rolling

Tips

- Begin with large balls and decrease size with practice
- Start with sitting then kneeling then standing while rolling the ball
- Bend knees and trunk, take a step into it (long and low)
- Encourage your child to watch the target
- To reduce the bouncing of the ball, pretend it is a delicate egg; practice with hard-boiled eggs (gently, softly, don't break the egg)

Try interactive games to practice underhand rolling

- ✓ Go bowling (can use empty plastic water bottles at home as bowling pins)
- ✓ Place a ball at the opposite end of where the child is standing and have your child roll his/her ball to knock out the other ball at the opposite end
- ✓ Bocce (place a small toy at the opposite end of where your child is standing and take turns rolling your ball closest to the object (toy))
- ✓ Roll the ball with your child and then change places or take a step back. See how far you can roll and receive the ball



Week 4 -Jumping and hopping

The opportunity to learn basic movement skills allows children to play games with other kids. If children are skillful, they are more likely to remain active. Locomotor skills (learning to move the whole-body), strengthens the muscles and helps develop balance and agility.

Practicing jumping and hopping can be incorporated into different activities

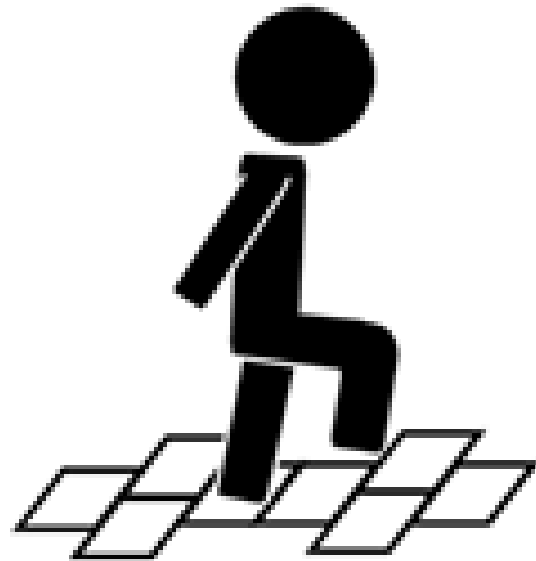
- Children should act out as different animals (slither like a snake, hop like a frog, fly like a bird, hop/jump like a bunny, gallop like a horse)
- Jump like a bouncing ball
- Jump/hop to the beat of music

Tips for jumping and hopping

- Bend knees and ankles, knees and hips
- Swing your arms back
- Land balanced with feet apart, knees bent and arms out
- Encourage your child to hop on the same foot for several hops in a row (foot of non-support leg carried behind or carried in front)

Try interactive games to practice jumping and hopping

- ✓ Hopscotch - draw a variety of hopscotch patterns. To make it challenging place a toy in one square and instruct the child to jump forward and miss the square where the toy (bean bag) has landed
- ✓ With chalk - mark out a series of lines with different intervals between the markers - Tell your child to jump/hop/leap and over lines from one end to the other.



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Week 5 -Underhand throwing

Developing physical literacy before puberty is important so children have the basic skills to be active for life. Children should build body control skills through sending and receiving skills through games that require coordination.

Practicing underhand throwing can be incorporated into different activities

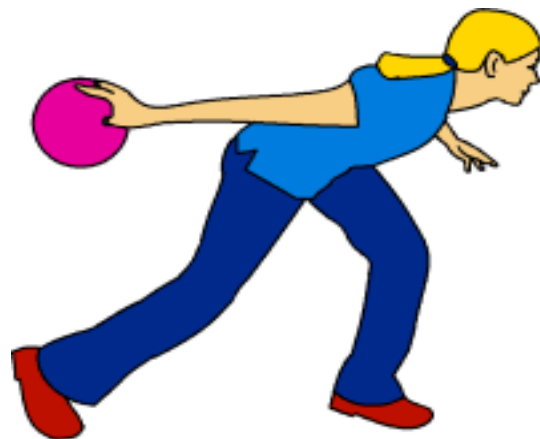
- Practice underhand throwing while passing a small soft toy to each other at home
- Practice one-hand underhand throwing and two hand
- Practice tossing soft small items

Tips for underhand throwing

- Use colors to help them remember. The red arm goes with the red shoe on the red marker.
- Swing their arms back like an elephant trunk
- Use large targets and then progress to smaller ones
- Tell your child that they want their hand to be pointing at the target when they are finished
- Practice rocking from back to front of the foot to improve weight transfer
- Release the ball around waist level

Try interactive games to practice underhand throwing

- ✓ Laundry basket ball - have a child underhand throw into the laundry basket at home. Change the spot on the floor from which the child throws from.
- ✓ Bocce - Place a toy somewhere on the floor and have the child throw their ball or soft toy to the spot where the toy is on the floor.



Week 6 - Galloping and Leaping

As children grow older they learn to move their body in a multitude of ways. Galloping is a locomotor movement that involves multiple steps. Practicing galloping and leaping using fun activities will get your child use to the rhythm and repetitiveness of the gait, as well as build self-confidence.

Practicing galloping/leaping can be incorporated into different activities

- Gallop together up the driveway,
- Gallop together in the yard
- Gallop together on a walk, in the park
- Leap over lines on the sidewalk

*Just make sure there is enough room, as well as a level surface, so no one trips and falls

Tips for galloping/leaping

- **Gallop** → Choose one foot and step forward, this leg will always be ahead of the other during a gallop, bring the back leg up to meet the front leg
- Tell your child to gallop "like a horse"
- **Leap** → A single-foot takeoff and landing (similar to a jump but a jump requires a two-foot takeoff). Child make start out by stepping over.

Try interactive games to practice galloping/leaping

- ✓ Gather your family together to have a horse race from one side of a grassy area to another
- ✓ Set up an obstacle course by placing objects around your yard. Ask your child to gallop to an object, move around it and gallop back as fast as possible.
- ✓ Have your child place a small toy broom or a stick between their legs and have them gallop around pretending they are riding a horse



Week 7 - Overhand throwing

Overhand throwing is important for children to learn to use both large and small muscles, to demonstrate spatial awareness, and begin to demonstrate hand-eye coordination in movement.

Practicing overhand throwing can be incorporated into different activities

- Ask your child to throw a soft toy (overhand) when passing the toy to you
- Practice overhand throwing soft toys into a laundry basket
- Have child roll their socks into a ball to throw

Tips for overhand throwing

- Focus eyes on target
- Non-throwing arm is pointed at target so the arms form a J-shape
- Tummy faces target
- Shift weight from back to front foot; practice rocking motion
- Point toes at target
- If your child is losing balance while throwing, take the body out of the throw and have him/her sit/kneel while throwing

Try interactive games to practice overhand throwing

- ✓ Make a basket with your arms and have your child throw their ball of socks or a soft ball into the centre of your arms
- ✓ Set up targets using house items (ie. Pillows) and practice throwing at the targets
- ✓ Play wall ball → throw ball at the wall or fence (outside) and have your child catch their throw



Week 8 - Bouncing

Bouncing requires your child to track the up and down movement of a ball, and to push it downward firmly so that it will rebound. Bouncing, needed in games like basketball, develops hand-eye coordination and responses to rebounding objects.

Practicing bouncing can be incorporated into different activities

- Ask your child to drop the ball once and try catching it while kneeling on both knees, kneeling on one knee, in a wide sitting position, while walking in a circle

Tips for bouncing

- Eyes focus on the ball transition to focusing ahead
- Push the ball with fingers (not slap)
- Ensure fingers are spread out on top of ball during the catch
- Place your hand on top of your child's hand to guide and help him/her experience the pushing action
- Keep the ball in front of the body, about hip height

Try interactive games to practice bouncing

- ✓ Place a hula hoop between you and your child, or use tape to form a circle. Stand two giant steps away from the hula hoop, opposite to each other. Bounce a ball to each other, with each bounce the ball must hit the floor inside the hula hoop
- ✓ Bounce the ball off the fence and catch it



Week 9 - Kicking

Gross motor skills are specific set of skills that can involve the feet and are important because they are the "building blocks" for complex and specialised skills required by children throughout their lives to competently and confidently play different games, sports, and recreational activities offered at school and in the community.

Practicing kicking can be incorporated into different activities

For example, when your child is outside for play time have him/her explore kicking a ball in various ways:

- Have your child kick the ball using their left foot and right foot
- Have your child kick the ball forward, sideways, diagonally
- Demonstrate to your child how to kick a ball with different amounts of force, at different levels

Tips for kicking

- Start with a larger ball and work towards a smaller ball
- Start from a stationary position and move towards moving object
- Use markers beside the ball to have the child step beside the ball
- Tell your child to focus their eyes on the ball (watch the ball)
- Tell your child to swing the kicking leg back

Try interactive games to practice kicking

- ✓ Set up floor markers and have your child try and kick a ball between the markers, to the right of the markers, and to the left
- ✓ Practice kicking the ball back and forth with your child increasing the distance between the two of you each time
- ✓ Set up targets (eg. Bowling pins, a net, pop cans) and draw a line 2-5 meters in front of the targets and have your child kick the ball attempting to knock over the pins or kicking the ball in the net (increase/decrease target size/number of pins).



Week 10 - Striking

Between the ages of three and five years children are starting to develop their gross motor skills and enjoy a wide variety of activities. It is important to simplify and break down the actions needed when teaching children new motor skills (sport skills). Remember that we want it to be fun to keep them engaged.

Practicing striking can be incorporated into different activities

- Blow bubble to your child and have him/her strike them with an open hand
- Roll up a pair of socks and toss them to your child. Have your child strike the socks with an open hand or a racket.

Try interactive games to practice striking

- ✓ Use hands to keep a balloon or soft ball in the air by tapping it upward (use one hand, other hand, both hands, hit soft, hit high, and hit low, hitting the balloon in different directions)
- ✓ Throw a soft/light ball to your child and have them hit it with a bat or racket.

Tips for striking

- Start with stationary objects prior to moving ones
- Progress to striking off a tee to a suspended hanging ball or balloon to slow-moving large ball to a small ball
- Use large objects to start (eg. Use a beach ball on a tee and work down to a tennis ball or softball)
- Stress making a big swing and follow-through (extend elbows)
- Adjust child's hand position according to left- or right-handed abilities
 - Right-handed - R hand above L on bat
 - Left-handed - L above R on bat



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