

# Stability Skills



## Section contents

Landing	117
Balance	127
Rotation	153
Additional Stability Activities to Try	169

# Landing

## Description

---

Landing safely is an important skill for all children to learn. Essentially, it involves absorbing force over a large surface area and over a long period. Landings occur in a wide range of contexts such as: landing from a jump or a leap (leaping over a puddle); falling over accidentally (tripping over in the playground); and landing as part of a sport-specific skill (vault in gymnastics).



## Applying movement principles

---

*Absorbing force:* To absorb force, impact should be spread over the maximum area or distance possible, or both. When landing from a jump, each joint should bend to absorb the force.

## Learning cues

---

### Landing on feet

- land with feet apart
- bend knees
- land in the order of toes–ball–heel, wriggle toes
- pull stomach in – tuck bottom under
- stretch arms out in front
- hold head up, look straight ahead
- hold for 3 seconds (counting ‘thousand’ for each second)

### **Landing in prone position (on hands/arms)**

- hold arms shoulder width apart
- bend elbows
- spread fingers, keep hands flat
- hold head up
- hold body straight, pull stomach in (stop back from arching)

## **Learning phases**

---

### **Discovering phase**

Children in this phase explore different ways of landing from a variety of jumps and low obstacles. Having fun and being creative are the areas of focus for this learning phase. Characteristics of learning in this phase are:

- no stable base of support is evident
- children land with flat feet
- little 'give' with the knees is evident.

### **Developing phase**

Children experience landing from various heights and distances, and recognise the importance of absorbing the shock of the landing. Characteristics of landing in this phase are:

- stable base of support is evident
- when landing on feet, the order of toes–ball–heel is more consistent
- knees bend after heels contact the ground
- children rotate forward on landing.

### **Consolidating phase**

Children exhibit confidence and control in landing in a variety of changing and unpredictable situations. Characteristics of this phase are:

- landing is controlled and safe
- a wide base of support is evident
- shock is absorbed through the 'giving' action of ankles, knees and hips.

## Overview

Learning phase	Activity name	Movement skills/concept	Suggested group size	Suggested space	Page
<b>Discovering</b>	Landing on Feet	Jumping, landing and balancing, space awareness (levels and directions) and relationships (with equipment).	1	Level hard or grass area	120
<b>Developing</b>	Landing on Hands- Falling Forwards	Falling to land on front support, body and space awareness.	1	Level hard or grass area	121
	Landing on Hands- Falling Backwards	Landing on hands after falling backwards from different levels.	1	Level hard or grass area	122
<b>Consolidating</b>	Landing on Hands – Falling Sideways	Rolling sideways to land safely after falling from different levels.	1-2	Level hard or grass area	123
	Falling Forwards at Speed	Forward shoulder roll at speed from different levels and directions.	1	Level hard or grass area	124
	Falling Backwards at Speed	Backwards shoulder roll, body and space awareness.	1-6	Level hard or grass area	125
	Bite the Dust	Falling forwards and backwards, landing on feet and body awareness.	1	Level hard or grass area	126

## Discovering Landing

### Landing on Feet

#### Movement skills/concepts

Jumping, landing and balancing, space awareness (levels and directions) and relationships (with equipment).

#### Set-up

Ropes and bases/discs.

Children are spread out, with one rope and one base/disc each, in a level grass or hard area.



#### Activity

##### Can you ...?

- stand on your base and, on the signal, try to jump (high to give you more time in the air) and click your heels together before you land – how many clicks can you do before landing and can you land on your base?
- jump from your base and see how many times you can clap your hands together before you land – as your feet touch the ground, freeze your body, perfectly still and stay in that position for three seconds
- jump over a rope and land on the other side without falling down – think of your feet sinking into the floor as if the floor were a sponge and freeze in that position for three seconds
- jump over your rope in different ways – try to take off on one foot and land on two
- change the direction of your jump to land – jump forwards, backwards, sideways
- jump high in the air as you travel over your rope and land as softly as you can – freeze and hold for three seconds
- jog, run, skip, gallop, hop, etc and, on the signal, jump to land – freeze and hold for three seconds

##### Can you see ...?

- toe–ball–heel landing sequence
- knees bending after heels contact the ground
- straight back
- holding or 'stick' balance
- head up, looking straight ahead

##### You could ask ...

Which ways of jumping did you enjoy the best?

What position did you hold when you landed on your feet?

Why do you need to hold this position for at least three seconds?

##### Variations

*Vary object:* Jump over different objects (e.g. beanbags, balls, low-level box tops, benches).

*Children learn  
by discovering  
for themselves*

## Developing Landing

### Landing on Hands – Falling Forwards

---

#### Movement skills/concepts

Falling to land on front support, and awareness of body in personal and general space.

#### Set-up

Variety of landing surfaces, crash pad, mats.

Children are freely spaced.



#### Activity

Children practise the following activities:

- from kneeling, put your fingertips on the ground, then, by pressing down, 'squeeze' the water out of an imaginary sponge
- from crouching, fall forwards and stop before your stomach touches the ground
- try the above on varied landing surfaces, over elastic or flexi cord
- from standing, fall forwards like a tree being felled, dominoes (group), a wave at the beach, etc.
- play 'Timber Tag' in a defined area with several taggers – when a player is tagged, they fall forwards calling 'Timber' and become the new tagger.

#### Can you see ...?

- bending of fingers, palms, heels of hand, then elbows
- fingers slightly inwards, hands flat
- straight back, tightened tummy

#### You could ask ...

How do you feel about falling forwards?

What do you need to do to land safely on your hands/arms?

## Landing on Hands – Falling Backwards

### Movement skills/concepts

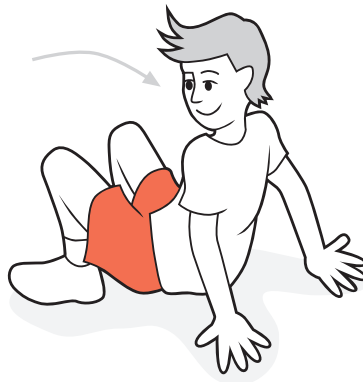
Landing on hands after falling backwards from different levels.

### Set-up

Variety of landing surfaces, crash pad, mats.

Children are freely spaced.

Are all  
children  
succeeding?



### Activity

Children practise the following activities:

- rock backwards from sitting, arms take weight – crouch, stand, fall backwards and land
- jump backwards over a line or out of a hoop – crouch, fall backwards and land
- jump backwards off low equipment – crouch, fall backwards and land

### Can you see ...?

- starting with landings on a padded or soft surface
- assisting those with a fear of falling backwards
- fingers facing same way as toes
- hands breaking the fall, then bottom, back and shoulders touch the ground
- legs high to avoid hitting nose

### You could ask ...

What are some situations that may cause you to fall backwards?

If you were falling backwards, what should you do to land safely?

## Consolidating Landing

### Landing on Hands – Falling Sideways

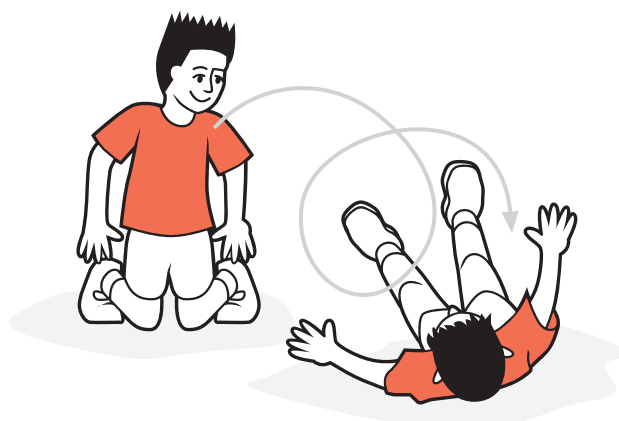
#### Movement skills/concepts

Rolling sideways to land safely after falling from different levels.

#### Set-up

Variety of landing surfaces.

Children are freely spaced.



Are children  
having fun?

#### Activity

From kneeling, fall sideways to rock onto arm, side and shoulder.

- try both directions
- fall down a slope (wedge-shaped mat) – roll sideways
- while moving, fall and roll sideways, then stand and keep going – start with walking, gradually increasing speed to jogging, running and dodging
- in pairs, shake hands in front support, then try to pull your partner off balance

*Tip the spider:* In pairs, one partner (spider) is on all fours. The other partner tips the spider onto their side by pushing on the spider's shoulder that is closer to the partner and pulling on the spider's opposite hand.

#### Can you see ...?

- arms staying straight
- hands facing inwards towards body
- surface even and soft

#### You could ask ...

When might you use this type of landing?

What do you need to do to land safely when falling sideways?

## Falling Forwards at Speed

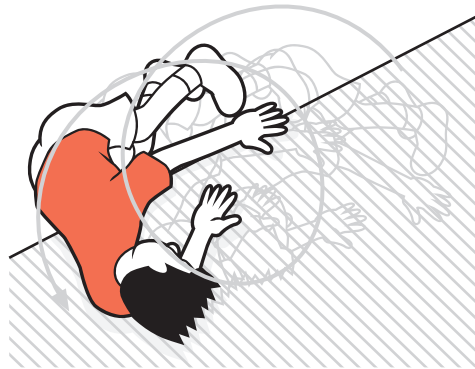
### Movement skills/concepts

Forward shoulder roll at speed from different levels and directions.

### Set-up

Slope or ramps, firm mats or suitable surface.

Children are freely spaced.



### Activity

Children practise a forward shoulder roll.

- fall forwards down a slope – look sideways
- from one side of a line, roll diagonally forwards to other side
- roll diagonally over elastic
- try chessboard rolling – roll from one square (or circle) diagonally forwards to the next

### Can you see ...?

- body extended and low
- hands flat, turned inwards
- landing with lower arm–upper arm–shoulder–back–feet
- falling and rolling slowly at first, then with increasing speed

### You could ask ...

How do you feel about falling forwards fast?

How can you fall forwards fast but safely?

### Variations

*Add obstacles:* Dive over a low obstacle and roll forwards.

## Falling Backwards at Speed

### Movement skills/concepts

Backwards shoulder roll, body and space awareness.

### Set-up

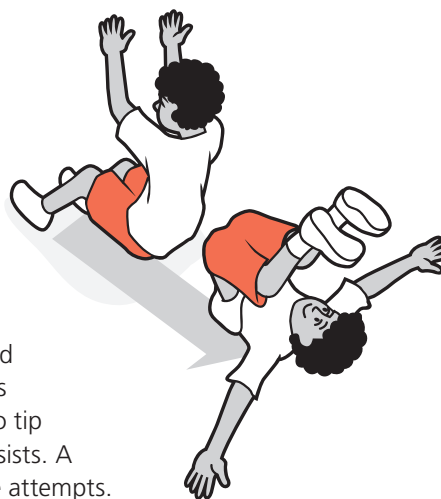
Firm mats, large balls, slopes or ramps.

### Activity

*Tip the boat:* In pairs, players sit opposite each other on a mat in a tightly tucked position, with arms strongly wrapped around legs. One player (the tipper) places their toes under the opponent's feet. The tipper has to tip the boat of the opponent. The opponent resists. A tip scores one point. Switch roles after three attempts.

*Backward shoulder roll:* Fall back and shoulder roll down a slope.

*Rock the boat:* Place a mat on about eight balls. While four children swivel the mat (boat), two (or three) other children sit on it, fall off (or out of) the boat and backward shoulder roll. Children can kneel or crouch as well.



### Can you see ...?

- head looking to one side, knees on that side close to ears
- looking at knees as they come over
- arms out to side
- falling slowly first, then with increasing speed
- landing surfaces safe and even

### You could ask ...

How can you land safely when falling backwards?

How do you feel when you fall backwards?

## Bite the Dust

---

### Movement skills/concepts

Falling forwards and backwards, landing on feet and body awareness.

### Set-up

Benches, box tops, mats, hoops, ropes, chalk.

Children, equipment and targets are spread out in a general space.

### Activity

Children move in random directions to a specified pattern (e.g. eight runs, fall forwards and freeze; or eight skips, jump to stand still, and fall backwards).

Children 'make-believe' they are falling and landing. Examples are:

- landing from a parachute jump
- falling from a bicycle
- falling while ice skating or rollerblading
- being tripped in a game of netball/soccer
- losing balance while walking along a steep cliff and rolling down the bank
- slipping off the monkey bars and falling on the bark.

### Can you see ...?

- landing surfaces safe and even
- awareness of others
- correct techniques

### You could ask ...

What is the first thing you need to think about when you lose your balance or start to fall? Why is this?

Children often break an arm or collarbone when they fall. What can you do to prevent this when you fall?

*Be creative*

# Balance

## Description

---

Balance is attained when the centre of gravity is over the base of support. There are two types of balance: 1. **static** balance – involves maintaining a desired shape in a stationary position (e.g. handstand in gymnastics); and 2. **dynamic** balance – involves the control of the body as it moves in space. All movements require some sort of static balance, from which all controlled movement originates and is managed through effective posture and muscular contractions and relaxation.



The ability to balance, whether stationary or moving, is a key to success in most sports and physical activities.

## Applying movement principles

---

### Balance

- for stationary balance, the centre of gravity needs to be over the base of support
- the wider the base of support and the closer the centre of gravity is to the base of support, the easier it is to balance
- when body parts extend to one side beyond the base of support, the body needs to make a corresponding extension in the opposite direction to achieve counterbalance

### Learning cues

---

- establish a wide base of support (feet or hands)
- lower body – bend knees or arms to lower the centre of gravity
- extend body parts to help counterbalance
- focus eyes on an object to help balance
- tighten (contract) muscles to hold balance

## Learning phases

---

### Discovering phase

Children enjoy discovering balancing on the spot, while moving, making different body shapes on equipment and with others. Characteristics of balancing for the beginner phase are:

- children tend to look down at their feet
- overcompensate body parts to balance, (e.g. waving arms wildly)
- can balance with support
- balance is attained sporadically.

### Developing phase

Children develop more confidence in balancing by practising different balances in problem-solving activities and balancing with others. Characteristics of balancing in this learning phase are:

- eyes focus more on apparatus or target
- children lose balance less often
- arms used to balance
- static balance is achieved more often on the dominant leg
- children have dynamic balance – they can balance forwards and backwards, with considerable concentration and effort.

### Consolidating phase

Applying the skills of balancing to games and sports like gymnastics is the focus of this learning phase. Children have become confident and proficient in balancing, demonstrating:

- eyes focus on external target
- arms and other body parts used to counterbalance
- static balance is achieved with eyes closed and on both legs
- in dynamic balance, movement is fluid and confident, and involves an alternate stepping action.

## Overview

Learning phase	Activity name	Movement skills/concept	Suggested group size	Suggested space	Page
<b>Discovering</b>	Let's Have Fun with Body Shapes	Static balance, body and space awareness.	1	Level hard or grass area	131
	How do we Balance?	Static balance, dynamic balance, body and space awareness.	1	Level hard or grass area	132
	Balancing with Equipment	Static balance, body and space awareness, and relationships (with equipment).	1-3	Level hard or grass area	134
	Let's Move while Balancing	Dynamic balance, static balance, space awareness, weight transfer and weight bearing, body awareness and relationships (with equipment).	1	Level hard or grass area	136
	Climbing – It's a Balancing Act!	Dynamic balance, climbing at different levels, on equipment, in general space and in different directions.	1-5	Level hard or grass area	138
<b>Developing</b>	Freeze	Static and dynamic balance, relationships (with others), body and space awareness.	4	Level hard or grass area	139
	Connect It	Static and dynamic balance, body awareness, space awareness and relationships (with others).	1-2	Level hard or grass area	140
	Puzzle Balances	Static balance, balancing on different body parts, problem solving, body and space awareness.	1-3	Level hard or grass area	141
	Statics	Static balance, body and space awareness.	2-3	Level hard or grass area	142
	Cooperative Balances	Static balance, counterbalance, body and space awareness, problem solving and relationships (with others).	2	Level hard or grass area	144
	Climbing on Equipment	Dynamic balance, climbing on equipment at varying heights, angles and spaces.	1-5	Area with safe landing surface	146

Learning phase	Activity name	Movement skills/concept	Suggested group size	Suggested space	Page
<b>Consolidating</b>	Inverted Balances	Inverted static balance, body and space awareness.	1	Area with safe landing surface	147
	Connect Five	Cooperative balances, counterbalance, space and body awareness and relationships (with others).	5-7	Level hard or grass area	148
	Balance Circuit	Dynamic and static balance, space awareness and relationships (with others and equipment).	1-4	Level hard or grass area	149
	Partner Support Balances	Cooperative balances, counterbalance, space and body awareness and relationships (with others).	2	Level hard or grass area	151
	Balancing on Hanging Ropes	Balancing using equipment, body and space awareness.	1	Area with safe landing surface	152

## Discovering Balance

### Let's Have Fun with Body Shapes

#### Movement skills/concepts

Static balance, body and space awareness.

#### Set-up

Mats.

Children, each with a mat, are spread out in a defined area with an even surface.

#### Activity

##### Who can balance while making ...?

- a narrow/wide/twisted/curl shape with your body in a standing position
- the same shape as above but resting on other part(s) of the body, (e.g. a wide shape while your hands and feet are on the ground)
- a wide shape with your upper body and a narrow shape with your lower body
- a twisted shape with your upper body and a curled shape with your lower body
- a symmetrical/asymmetrical shape
- a shape at different levels – low, medium and high
- the shape of a letter of the alphabet, (e.g. X, T, C, F, I, L, O, V, Y)
- a number shape, (e.g. 7, 6, 2)
- the shape of the first letter of your name or your favourite number



##### Can you see ...?

- children being creative
- tight muscles
- balancing like a statue – not moving
- eyes up



##### You could ask ...

Which body shape made it easy to balance?

Could you be pushed over in that shape?

Which body shape made it easy to be pushed over?

#### Variations

*Create a shape story:* Make up a travelling shape story, (e.g. move from a wide shape to a twisted shape to a curled shape). Keep the transitions smooth.

*Make group shapes:* As a small group, form simple three or four-letter words, (e.g. OAR, BIRD, SUN, CAT, MAN).

## How do we Balance?

---

### Movement skills/concepts

Static balance, dynamic balance, body and space awareness.

### Set-up

Mats.

Children, each with a space on a mat, are scattered around an area with an even surface.



### Activity

#### Can you balance ...?

- on one body part, (e.g. on your side, back, front, shoulders, knees)
- as above but with your eyes closed
- while moving your weight from one body part to another part, (e.g. from one foot, to your tummy, to your back)
- on two body parts, (e.g. on one hand and one knee)
- on three body parts, (e.g. on one elbow, one foot and one knee)
- as above while holding for three seconds (count 'alligators' or 'thousand' as one second)
- on two/three body parts that are on the same/different sides of the body
- at different levels – low, medium and high
- starting low, moving to a high position and finishing with a low position
- on one foot and change the position of your arms, bottom and other foot
- while changing the position of your base, (e.g. start with balance on two feet, move one in front of the other, lower your level, now bring feet close together and raise your level)
- while travelling through space in any way you choose (e.g. walking, hopping, like a robot), then, on a signal, creating a static balance, (e.g. balance on different body parts, making different shapes and at different levels)

#### Can you see ...?

- tight muscles
- balancing like a statue – not moving

**You could ask ...**

Which sort of balance gave you the best base of support?

Which sort of balance was easy to hold for three seconds?

**Variations**

*Combine balances:* Create your own balance story, (e.g. change from a one-body-part balance to a three-body-part balance to a four-body-part balance). Hold each one for three seconds.

*Add levels and shapes to balance story:* For example, move from a one-body-part balance at a high level, to a two-body-part balance in a wide shape, to a three-body-part balance at a low level.

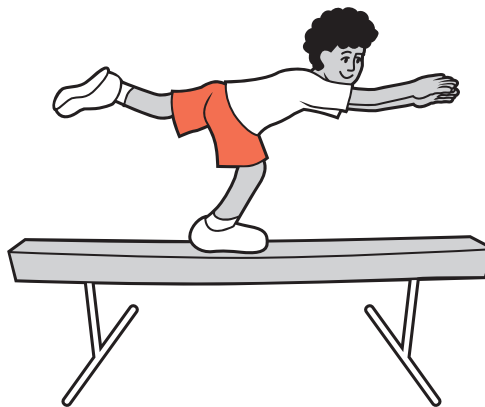
## Balancing with Equipment

### Movement skills/concepts

Static balance, body and space awareness, and relationships (with equipment).

### Set-up

Mats, benches, discs/bases, beanbags, balls, foam frisbees.



### Activity 1: On-the-spot balance

Children are scattered throughout an area while standing on a disc/base, where there is also some equipment (beanbag, ball and foam frisbee).

- choose one piece of equipment and try to balance it on any body part while standing on your spot
- balance one of the objects on your head while standing on one foot and staying on your spot
- balancing only on your bottom, balance a ball between your feet while keeping your feet off the ground

### Activity 2: Bench balance

Each small group of approximately three–four children stands beside a low bench. In turn, children step up onto the middle of the bench and hold a balance for three seconds.

- vary the type of balance (e.g. shapes – wide, narrow, levels – low, medium, high and body parts – one foot, bottom, two hands, one knee)
- be creative (e.g. pose like a ballerina, Superman, a tennis player, or any other sporting or dancing star)

### Can you see ...?

- tight muscles
- being as still as possible
- balancing with arms extended out to side (aeroplane arms)

**You could ask ...**

How can you keep very still when you are balancing?

What did you do to keep your feet off the floor in the sitting balance?

**Variations**

*Combine balances:* Move from one balance to another, holding each for three seconds (count 'one thousand' as one second).

*Combine balances with travelling:* Balance on one spot with one object (e.g. balance on one foot with object on head), then travel to another spot still balancing the object (e.g. walking with the object on head), then choose another balance with another object (e.g. balance on shoulders with legs off the ground balancing a ball).

## Let's Move while Balancing

### Movement skills/concepts

Dynamic balance, static balance, space awareness, weight transfer and weight bearing, body awareness and relationships (with equipment).

### Set-up

A variety of equipment or playground/gymnastic apparatus, such as low benches, ropes, hoops, bars, low fence, wobble boards. Also playground markings like grids, or patterns etc.

Children are spread out in a level hard or grass area.



### Activity

#### Who can ...?

- travel with only one/two/three body part(s) touching the ground – on a signal, freeze in that position and hold for three seconds
- travel around the room like a crab, or a monkey, or a bear – on a signal, freeze in that shape and hold for three seconds
- put weight on different points, (e.g. elbows, knees, head)
- put weight on different surfaces, (e.g. back, tummy side)
- move from one surface to another, (e.g. back to tummy)
- move from points to a surface, (e.g. foot to back)
- travel along lines, ropes, a line of blocks or around a hoop
- walk along a low bench/beam – stop and hold a balance for three seconds
- walk along an inclined bench
- balance on an unstable base, (e.g. wobble board)

#### Can you see ...?

- head up – point of focus
- arms extended out to side (aeroplane arms)
- good posture – tight muscles

**You can ask ...**

How can you keep your balance when you are walking along a line or a low bench?

**Variations**

*Go on a balance journey:* For example, travel around the room (bear walk or hopping) moving on, off, over, under and around the equipment. On a signal, balance in a certain way on the nearest apparatus (e.g. balance like a bear).

## Climbing – it's a Balancing Act!

### Movement skills/concepts

Dynamic balance, climbing at different levels, on equipment, in general space and in different directions.

### Set-up

Hoops, ladder, steps, hand and foot cut-outs or animal footprints.

Individuals or small groups start at different points of a smooth surface circuit.



### Activity

Children practise the following activities in the circuit.

*Mirror games:* In pairs, one person does an arm or leg action and the other mirrors this action. How fast can you move?

*Climbing steps:* Make steps from equipment, or use existing steps with cut-out hand/foot shapes, which children move over with hand/foot crawling action.

*Hoop patterns:* Set up a trail of hoops which children follow on all fours, placing only one hand or one foot in a hoop at a time.

*Horizontal ladder:* On all fours, children conduct a firefighter rescue by moving along a drawn ladder, or a real ladder horizontally placed, and rescuing an object (e.g. teddy/doll) at the end.

### Can you see ...?

- alternate, independent foot and leg action
- safe surface for hands
- frequent breaks from walking on the hands

### You could ask ...

What did you enjoy about climbing?

Did you find any activities difficult? Why was this?

## Developing Balance

### Freeze

---

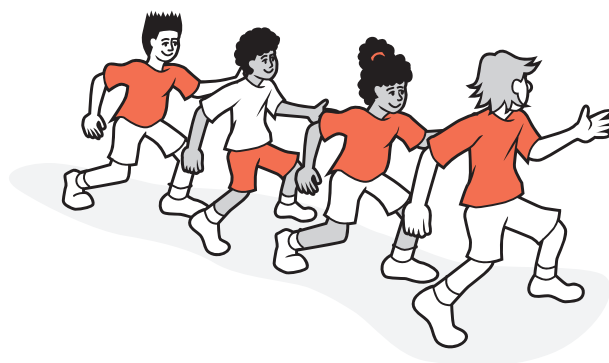
#### Movement skills/concepts

Static and dynamic balance, relationships (with others), body and space awareness.

#### Set-up

Hard or grass surface.

Each group of four stands in a line with a leader at the front.



#### Activity

The group walks or jogs a short distance behind the leader. When the leader turns around, all the followers 'freeze' on the spot.

Any children who move or who are slow to stop collect a 'thaw' point.

Repeat several times – the leader can change the type of movement to skipping or galloping etc. Change the leader after several turns.

Who can avoid collecting any thaw points?

#### Can you see ...?

- quick reactions
- using space
- tight muscles
- stable base
- eyes on leader

#### You could ask ...

What can you do to freeze suddenly when the leader turns?

Can you hold your shape for three seconds?

#### Variations

*Vary movement:* Change the type of movement after each stop, (e.g. to hopping, crawling).

*Vary body shape:* Leader nominates some kind of statue position, which the children assume, (e.g. ballerina, tall shape, stretched elastic).

## Connect It

---

### Movement skills/concepts

Static and dynamic balance, body awareness, space awareness and relationships (with others).

### Set-up

Children are spread out in a defined area on a hard or grass surface.



### Activity 1: Connecting yourself

Children walk freely about the area. On a signal, they stop and listen to the coach/teacher calling out two body parts, which each child then has to join together. Examples include: elbow to knee, hand to foot, foot to foot, hand to shoulder, head to hand, knee to ankle, foot to head.

### Activity 2: Connecting in pairs

In pairs, children travel around the area in a designated way (e.g. walking or skipping) while joined together (linking arms). On a signal, the pairs connect to each other by the body parts called by the coach/teacher. Examples include: two feet (one foot from each partner in the pair), two hands, one foot and one knee, one shoulder and one head, one elbow and one hip, one ankle and one knee.

### Can you see ...?

- head up – focused on an object or spot
- tight muscles

### You could ask ...?

What do you need to do with your body to maintain your balance?

How can you and your partner work together to maintain your balance?

### Variations

*Vary the way of travelling around in space:* Use different dynamic balance activities, (e.g. kangaroo walk, crazy crab, monkey walk).

*Vary body shapes and levels:* Include narrow/wide body shapes and low/medium/tall levels.

## Puzzle Balances

### Movement skills/concepts

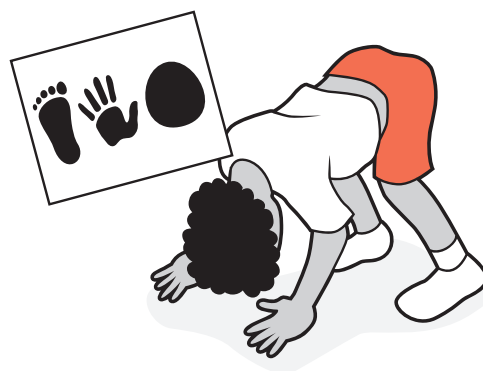
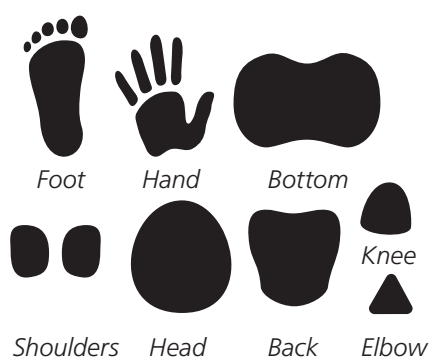
Static balance, balancing on different body parts, problem solving, body and space awareness.

### Set-up

Mats.

Even surface in a defined hard or grass surface area.

Prepare a set of small cards with two or more symbols on each card, chosen so that it is possible to achieve a balance from that combination. Below are some ideas for symbols that could be used.



### Examples of cards and balance

- two feet and two elbows
- head, two hands and two feet
- bottom and two hands
- one knee and one foot

### Activity

Children take a sheet with a series of puzzle balances and see how many balances they can do to solve the puzzle, using mats provided.

### Can you see ...?

- head up – focused on object
- stillness
- tight muscles
- avoidance of activities that put pressure on neck

### You could ask ...

What do you need to do with the body parts that are not part of your base of support?

What do you need to do to maintain your balance?

### Variations

*Create a sequence:* Move from puzzle balance to puzzle balance to create a sequence.

*Work in pairs or small groups:* Group members instruct each other (verbally) about how to do the puzzle balances.

## Statics

---

### Movement skills/concepts

Static balance, body and space awareness.

### Set-up

Mats.

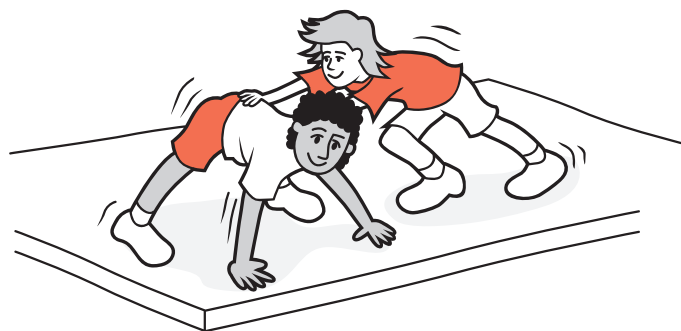
Children in pairs or groups of three, with a mat per pair/group on a hard, even surface.

### Activity

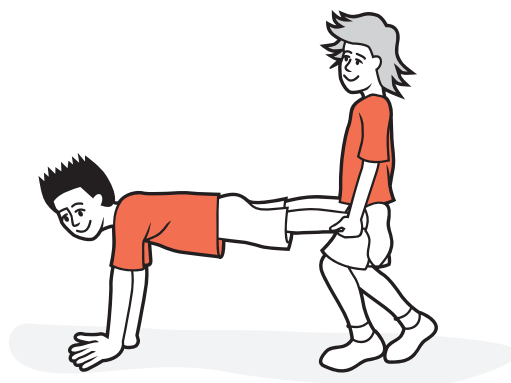
The object of this activity is to maintain a tight body position in each stance.



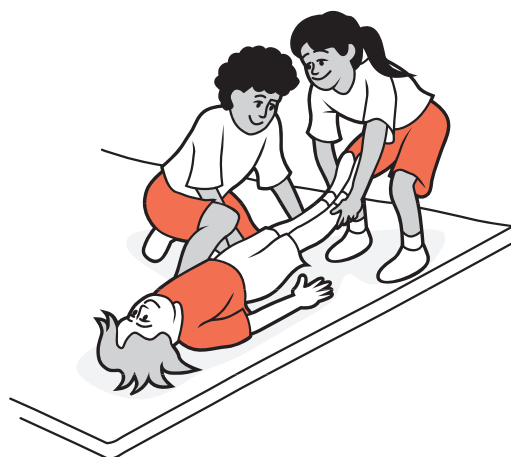
*Immovable rock:* One child (the rock) lies on their back on the mat with a straight body, arms above head. Two partners try to roll the rock over, while the rock resists by keeping a tight body. Switch roles and repeat.



*Tip the spider:* In pairs, one child (the spider) is on all fours forming a stable bridge. The partner attempts to tip over the spider. Switch roles and repeat.



*Wheelbarrow lift:* In pairs, one child is the wheelbarrow who is in a tight front support position. Their partner should grasp the wheelbarrow's legs around the knee joint and lift no higher than their own thighs (approximately 50 cm).



*Lift the plank:* In groups of three, one child (the plank) lies on their back on the floor with a tight straight body and arms by their side. Partners try to lift the plank no higher than knee height.

### Can you see ...?

- tight muscles
- lifting with knees and straight back

### You could ask ...

How do you lift safely without hurting your back?

To keep a straight body, what do you need to do?

### Variations

*Standing immovable rock:* In pairs, children take turns at standing in an upright, stable position – partners try to push them over.

## Cooperative Balances

---

### Movement skills/concepts

Static balance, counterbalance, body and space awareness, problem solving and relationships (with others).

### Set-up

Benches, box tops, mats and balls.

Children are in pairs of approximately the same height and size. Each pair has a mat or a defined area to work in.



### Activity

With a partner, explore how many ways you can balance.

Repeat with only one base of support for each partner.

Repeat one more time, this time without using your foot as a base of support (e.g. using back or hands).

Can you balance with your partner – on a line, bench/box top, or crash pad with only ...?

- two feet on the ground
- two hands and one foot
- one foot and two knees
- one back and one foot

With your partner, can you be the shape of ...?

- an apple tree
- a yacht
- a letter of the alphabet – try A, D, G, J, P, U – or a number

Can you perform the 'dead bug carry'? One partner kneels on all fours and the other lies on their back on top. The person underneath then moves around.

Create a sequence of balances, moving smoothly from one balance to another.

In groups of 3 or 5, create a pyramid

**Can you see ...?**

- counterbalance
- wide base of support
- slow control when engaging and disengaging
- pairs matched for height and weight

**You could ask ...**

What do you need to do to balance with your partner safely and under control?

How can you and your partner counterbalance?

**Variations**

*Vary equipment:* Balance in pairs using a ball or rope.

*Mirror image balances:* In pairs, each partner mirrors the other's shape.

## Climbing on Equipment

### Movement skills/concepts

Dynamic balance, climbing on equipment at varying heights, angles and spaces.

### Set-up

Ropes, ladders, bars, poles, climbing net. Available playground/gymnastic equipment.

Individuals or small groups start at different points of a circuit.

### Activity

*Horizontal ladders:* Children move along on all fours, facing downwards and upwards.

*Jungle gym and similar equipment:* Mark a course on the equipment with numbered tags to follow either in a set order or in any order.

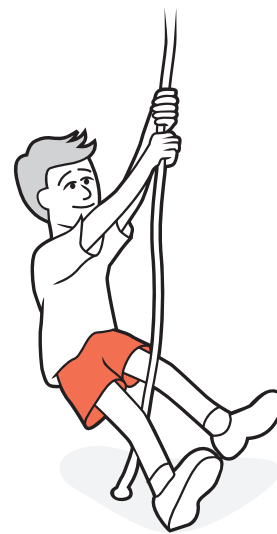
*Inclined equipment:* Children follow a circuit of ladders, nets, benches, parallel pipes, etc. They then try it in reverse order or help an 'injured' partner around.

*Vertical ladders/wall bars:* Children climb up and down, climb up, across/through and down.

*Low, horizontal rope:* With a rope over a slippery surface, children lie on their back and pull along with a hand-over-hand action.

*Vertical ropes:* From sitting on the floor, children pull up hand over hand to standing, then lower hand over hand to sitting.

*Combination climbs:* Set up an obstacle course using ropes, ladders, bars, nets, beams, boxes, outdoor equipment, etc. Climb this in different ways.



### Can you see ...?

- alternate, independent foot and leg action
- safe surface for hands
- frequent breaks from walking on the hands
- creative play – children exploring and discovering equipment

### You could ask ...

How do you adjust your climbing action when climbing up a rope compared to climbing on a fixed structure?

What was the most difficult equipment to climb? Why was this?

## Consolidating Balance

### Inverted Balances

#### Movement skills/concepts

Inverted static balance, body and space awareness.

#### Set-up

Wall, chairs, safety mats.

Mats are scattered in a defined area, with children sharing each mat.

#### Activity

*Shoulder stand:* Start in a crouched position with fingers touching the mat. Rock back so your bottom, then back, then shoulders touch the floor. Support your weight by bending your arms at the elbows and supporting your hips with your hands. Hold for 3 seconds and then slowly roll back into crouched position.

*Tripod balance:* Start in a crouched position, make a triangle with your hands and head, and walk one knee and then the other onto your elbows. Weight is on the crown of your head, not your forehead. 'Squeeze' your fingers.

*Handstand:* Stand with your back against a wall. Beginning in a squat position, place your hands flat on the mat, keeping your arms straight. Walk up the wall then down, keeping a tight body.

*Kick ups:* Face the wall, one foot in front of the other (front-back stance). Lean forward and place your hands down on the mat, shoulder width apart and fingers pointing forwards. Using your back leg as a lever, kick your leg upward so that the weight is supported by your arms. Come down safely by twisting your trunk slightly to bring feet down in a new place.

#### Can you see ...?

- wide base of support
- tight body
- control when engaging and disengaging
- support where needed

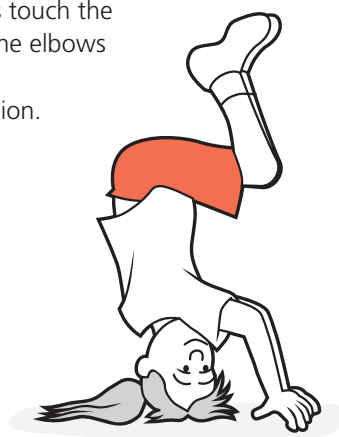
#### You could ask ...

What do you need to do to balance in an inverted position?

What are some ways you can safely come out of a balance? Show me.

#### Variations

*Inverted balance on equipment:* Do a shoulder stand between two chairs. Make sure that the chairs are stable, and that support is available.



## Connect Five

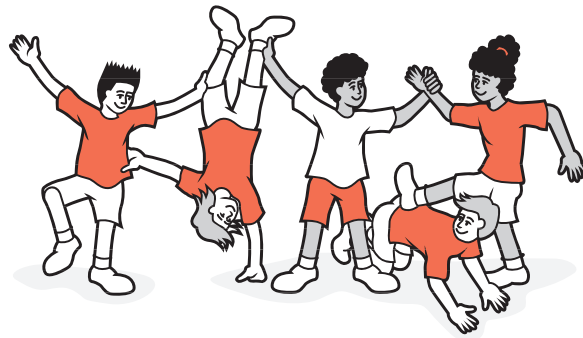
### Movement skills/concepts

Cooperative balances, counterbalance, space and body awareness, and relationships (with others).

### Set-up

Area with an even surface.

Groups of five or seven.



### Activity

One child starts off the activity by selecting a balance with a wide base of support. In turn, each other child adds to the statue by slowly making another shape (wide/narrow/curled/twisted) touching the first statue with one body part.

Once the group balance statue is complete, on a signal each child (except the first one) moves slowly away from the original single-child statue, using a locomotor or turning action.

On a signal, each child moves slowly back into the group statue, with well-defined shapes, and holds their balance.

On a signal, each child moves slowly away again, forming an individual statue by themselves with a base of support and a shape that is different from those used for the group statue.

### Can you see ...?

- tight muscles
- keeping still – like a statue
- smooth, slow movement
- counterbalance

### You could ask ...

What do you need to do to counterbalance?

### Variations

*Choose a theme and add a movement:* Create the shape of an object and carry out the movements of that object (e.g. a washing machine).

## Balance Circuit

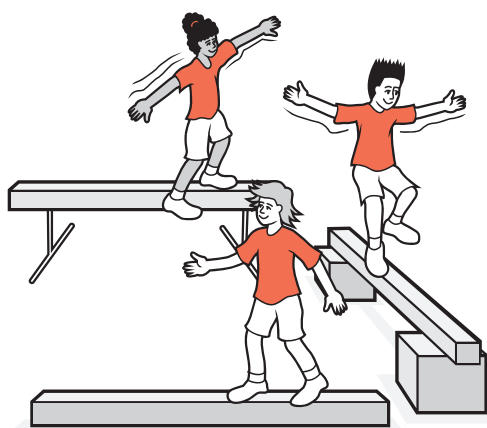
### Movement skills/concepts

Dynamic and static balance, space awareness and relationships (with others and equipment).

### Set-up

Beams/benches, mats, wobble boards, stilts, Swiss balls, box tops.

Small groups of no more than four, starting at different points of a circuit.



### Activity

Children practise the following activities in the circuit.

*Beam/bench station:* Have three beams/benches at different heights. Children travel along the beam/bench using different locomotor skills (leaps, jumps, walking forwards, backwards, sideways). Then create a sequence (e.g. walk to end, turn, scale balance, walk to centre, do a cat leap, walk to end, do a jump, quarter turn to land).

*Balance on less stable objects:* Have a wobble board (different heights and bases), stilts and balance (Swiss) ball. Children experiment with different ways of balancing on apparatus, using different body parts (e.g. standing, sitting, kneeling). Can you balance on the apparatus with your eyes closed?

*Stationary balances on equipment:* Have a selection of box tops. Children create a series of balances, without leaving the surface of the box, transferring from one balance to the next. Then create a sequence of balances on the box that includes: an approach (e.g. run, walk) to the box; a transfer (e.g. jump, step) onto the box; a series of balances on the box; and a dismount (e.g. straddle to land) from the box.

*Inverted balances on ground:* Try a cartwheel on the ground, on a line (it is like a handstand but sideways). Once their legs are in the air, children bring them together and twist the body so that they land to the left and right – sometimes this is called a round-off. Try a cartwheel with only one hand on the ground.

*A floor routine:* Have a mat area of approximately 6–10 metres square, space permitting. Children create a sequence that combines stationary balances and travelling movements (e.g. running, galloping, skipping). Include at least three balances, each with: a different base of support; a minimum of three travels, with a change in direction and level; and one inverted balance. Have a beginning and an end shape.

**Can you see ...?**

- tight muscles
- wide base of support
- slow control when engaging and disengaging
- arms extended for balance (counterbalance)

**You could ask ...**

How can you safely control engaging and disengaging from a stationary balance?

## Partner Support Balances

---

### Movement skills/concepts

Cooperative balances, counterbalance, space and body awareness, and relationships (with others).

### Set-up

Mats scattered in a defined area with an even surface.

Children in pairs, matched for height and weight, and with one mat per pair.



### Activity

With your partner, children create a balance that has one wide and one narrow shape. Partners need to work together to partially support each other's weight.

Children create different balances with their partner where they are partially supporting each other's weight, then totally supporting each other's weight.

Create a balance where one partner performs an inverted balance.

### Can you see ...?

- wide base of support
- extending body parts to counterbalance
- tight muscles

### You could ask ...

How can you safely support each other's weight?

## Balancing on Hanging Ropes

---

### Movement skills/concepts

Balancing using equipment, body and space awareness.

### Set-up

Hanging ropes with mats underneath.

### Activity

On a hanging rope, children explore ways of balancing in an upright position.

#### Can you hang while ...?

- supporting your weight with your hands
- supporting your weight with your hands and legs
- creating some basic shapes (e.g. wide, narrow, curled and twisted with your free body parts)
- creating symmetrical and asymmetrical shapes

#### Can you see ...

- tight muscles
- tight grip on the rope

#### You could ask ...

What do you need to do with your body to hold your position on the rope?

### Variations

*Inverted balance:* If children have sufficient upper arm/shoulder strength, try an inverted balance on the hanging rope.



# Rotation

## Description

---

Rotation includes a variety of movement patterns that require the body to move through space and around its own axis. It includes movements such as twisting, rolling, turning and spinning. These movements are evident in everyday activities, games and most sports (e.g. pivoting in basketball, twisting and turning in tennis, forward roll in gymnastics).



## Applying movement principles

---

*Rotation:* A rotary movement involves a movement in a circle around a fixed point. As the radius (length) of the circle decreases, the speed of the spin increases. In other words, the tighter the tuck, the faster the spin. To slow down the spin, extend the arms or legs.

## Learning cues

---

- in turning/twisting activities, keep part of the body stable – the twisting action happens around this part
- to increase the speed of a turn, twist or roll, pull arms and legs close to the body
- to decrease the speed of a turn, extend arms and legs away from the body
- use the hands to support or push off evenly
- take care in rotating joints – avoid twisting/rotating hinge joints (e.g. knee, elbow)
- rotate under control

## Learning phases

---

### Discovering phase

Children enjoy exploring and discovering the many ways their body and body parts can rotate, rock and roll. Children in this phase are challenged to rock backwards, rock in a round or ball-like position in preparation for rolling, and roll with a straight body. Characteristics of the rolling/rocking action for this learning phase are:

- body tends to uncurl in rolling/rocking action
- arms are not used or are uncoordinated with rolling/rocking action
- children can't 'get over' backwards or sideways.

### Developing phase

Children become more confident in controlling their body and body parts when rotating, rolling and turning. In this phase, activities focus on rolling in different directions, using the hands and arms. Characteristics of rolling at this level are:

- body is curled in a tight ball shape
- body still uncurls at end of rolling action
- hands and arms are used more
- children can perform only one roll at a time.

### Consolidating phase

Children in this phase can comfortably and safely perform rotation activities that are high-risk (on equipment), can sequence and connect different skills with rotation, and can change direction or speed in unpredictable situations. Characteristics of rolling in this phase are:

- body remains in a tight ball position throughout the roll
- arms are used to push off and for balance and coordination
- momentum of the roll is carried through to the finish
- children can perform controlled consecutive rolls.

## Overview

Learning phase	Activity name	Movement skills/concept	Suggested group size	Suggested space	
<b>Discovering</b>	Rotating the Body and Body Parts	Turning, rotation, space and body awareness, time and energy.	1	Level hard or grass area	156
	Introduction to Rocking and Rolling	Rocking forwards and backwards, body and space awareness.	1	Level hard or grass area	157
	Rotation with Equipment	Rotation, space and body awareness, relationships (with equipment), speed and flow.	1	Level hard or grass area	158
	Let's Swing	Discovering swinging, space awareness and relationships (with others).	1	Level hard or grass area	159
<b>Developing</b>	Turning Around a Long Axis	Turning around long axis, space awareness, body control, and time and energy.	1	Level hard or grass area	160
	Log Rolling	Rolling along a long axis, body control, space awareness and relationships (rolling with a partner).	1	Level hard or grass area	161
	Rolling Backwards	Rolling backwards and space awareness.	1	Level hard or grass area	162
	Rolling Forwards	Rolling forwards, space awareness and body control.	1	Level hard or grass area	164
	Swinging with Equipment	Swinging on equipment, body and space awareness.	1-5	Level hard or grass area	165
<b>Consolidating</b>	Rotating with a Partner	Rotating with a partner, cooperative balancing, rotating through long and horizontal axes at different speeds, body awareness and relationships (with others).	2	Level hard or grass area	167
	Conveyor Belt	Rolling along a long axis, relationships (with others), problem solving and timing.	4-5	Level hard or grass area	168

## Discovering Rotation

### Rotating the Body and Body Parts

#### Movement skills/concepts

Turning, rotation, space and body awareness, time and energy.

#### Set-up

Music.

Children are spread out freely in a defined grass or hard area.



*As a teacher/  
coach children  
join in*

#### Activity

Who can rotate, turn or circle ...?

- body parts – arms, legs, one at a time, both at a time
- whole body, upper body only, lower body only
- the body in space – up high, down low, forwards, backwards, sideways
- fast/slow, gradually increasing speed, decreasing speed
- strongly, weakly, gently, tightly, relaxed
- in a tall/small/bunched position
- while standing, sitting, kneeling, lying
- like a leaf blowing in a gentle wind, on a windy day and in a cyclone

#### Can you see ...?

- having fun
- care in rotating joints – no rotation/twisting of hinge joints

#### Variations

*Add music:* Turn and move in time to the music.

*Add turning like a theme:* Turn, spin or rotate like a merry-go-round, a drill, a clothes line.

## Introduction to Rocking and Rolling

### Movement skills/concepts

Rocking forwards and backwards, body and space awareness.

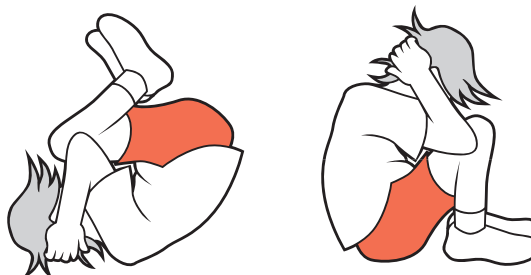
### Set-up

Flat mats, wedge-shaped mats.

Children, each with access to a mat, are freely spaced.

### Activity

*Exploring rocking:* How many ways can you rock? Try on your back/front. Can you rock forwards, backwards, side to side? Now try rocking with your feet crossed, legs straight, and now bent. Have you tried to rock side to side, standing, sitting, sitting astride a ball while rocking side to side?

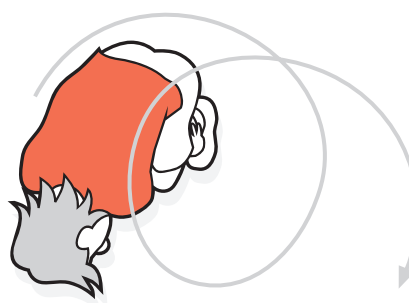


*Rocking chair:* Be a rocking chair. Lie on your back, bring your knees into your chest, cross your feet and hold with your hands. Your back should be round like an egg. Rock forwards and backwards. Now can you rock forwards and backwards to stand on your knees without letting go of your feet?

*Rock to stand:* In pairs, one child is the rocking chair, who rocks three times and then, on the third rock, rocks up and reaches out their hands to their partner who helps them to stand. After a few times, let the rocking chair try rocking to stand without any assistance.

*Egg roll:* Sit in your rocking chair position (knees bent, round back like an egg), with your chin tucked into your knees. Roll sideways so that you finish on your knees, push with your elbow and knees as you roll.

*Circle egg roll:* In the egg roll position, with your hands under the inside of your legs and your fingers locked around your ankles, try to 'egg roll' around in a circle like a rolling ball. If you get dizzy, **stop**, count to three and then roll back the other way.



### Can you see ...?

- round back
- tucked position
- chin to chest
- enjoyment

### You could ask ...

Which was the easiest way to roll? Why was this?

Which was the hardest? Why was this?

## Rotation with Equipment

### Movement skills/concepts

Rotation, space and body awareness, relationships (with equipment), speed and flow.

### Set-up

Poi, hoops, ribbons, music, ropes.

Children are spread out freely in a defined area with a chosen piece of equipment.

### Activity

Can you ...?

- explore different ways to rotate your piece of equipment
- vary the speed of rotation and the position of your body, (e.g. lying down, sitting, kneeling, standing)
- rotate one piece of equipment –with left and right hands
- rotate two pieces of equipment, and both simultaneously if possible
- add music, locomotion
- with one piece of equipment, explore movement in two different directions and at two different heights
- make big circles in the air, small circles, a figure 8
- be a helicopter



Try something different

### Can you see ...?

- wrist action for small, fast movements
- arm action for large, slower movements
- loose grip to allow easy rotation

### You could ask ...

Which activities did you enjoy the most?

What did you do to the piece of equipment to turn it faster?

Which activity was the most difficult? Why was this?

### Variations

*Give directions in Maori:* Teki mua – in front; ki muri – behind; ki raro – below; ki runga – above.

*Create a sequence:* Create a short sequence or pattern.

## Let's Swing

---

### Movement skills/concepts

Discovering swinging, space awareness and relationships (with others).

### Set-up

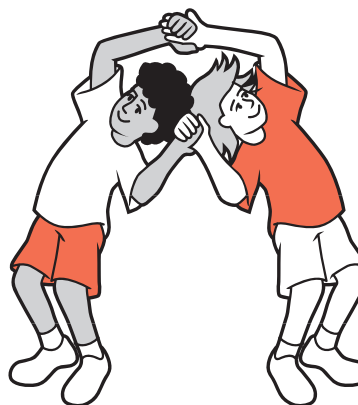
Suitable music.

Children are spread out in a defined space in a grass or hard area.

### Activity

Children discover swinging.

- Which parts of your body can you swing?
- Can you swing side to side, backwards and forwards, in circles and figures of 8?
- Who can swing high, medium and low?
- Can you swing fast, slow, increasing/decreasing in speed?
- Who can make different shapes or patterns with their swing?
- Show me an animal that swings.
- Can you swing when kneeling, lying, sitting?
- Show me how you swing to music.
- Join one hand with a partner and see how many ways you can swing your joined hands.
- How else can you swing in pairs? Try washing the dishes.



### Can you see ...?

- relaxed swinging
- rhythmical movements

### You could ask ...

Which way of swinging did you enjoy the most?

How many different ways did you swing your body parts?

### Variations

*Create a sequence:* Make up a swinging sequence.

## Developing Rotation

### Turning Around a Long Axis

#### Movement skills/concepts

Turning around a long axis, space awareness, body control, and time and energy.

#### Set-up

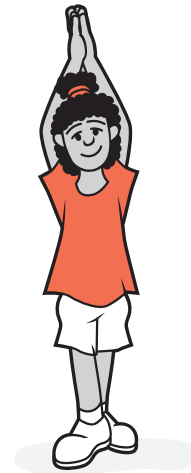
Music.

Children are spread out in a general space, on a floor or hard surface that is easy to turn on.

#### Activity

On a signal, rotate or spin around:

- on your bottom (hands, no hands)
- on your stomach
- on your back
- tall like a flagpole
- like a screwdriver turning a screw
- like a washing machine
- like a revolving door
- to 'tell the time' (e.g. jump and turn to 3 o'clock)



Standing on two feet, jump with a straight body and make: a quarter (90 degrees) turn; a half (180 degrees) turn; a three-quarter (270 degrees) turn; and a full (360 degrees) turn.

#### Can you see ...?

- change of focal point
- turning tall
- balance
- use of arms and legs to control turn

#### You could ask ...

How does extending/moving your legs out affect your turn?

What happens when you tuck/hold your body in close?

#### Variations

*In-out game:* One child is the leader making the calls. On a call of 'Out', children stand and turn with their hands out like a clothes line. On a call of 'In', they bring their hands in and spin like a ballet dancer. On a call of 'In-out-in-out', those who make a mistake move to the side of the area but continue the activity. The game continues until one child is left in the middle. Change leaders and repeat activity.

## Log Rolling

### Movement skills/concepts

Rolling along a long axis, body control, space awareness and relationships (rolling with a partner).

### Set-up

Mats.

Children are spaced freely on a wooden floor or grass surface, sharing a mat with a partner.



*Are children  
enjoying  
themselves?*

### Activity

Children do an individual log roll:

- lie on your back, stretched out, with your arms above your head and your hands clasped then, with a long, stiff body, roll from back to front to back
- do a log roll, one way and then the other
- do a log roll without letting your arms and legs touch the mat

### Can you see ...?

- maintaining a long body position

### You could ask ...

What do you need to do to keep your arms and legs off the ground when you are log rolling?

### Variations

*Log roll relay:* In groups of 6, half are the rollers and the other half are the leapers. The two groups stand at opposite ends of a mat. On a signal, rollers (spaced apart) start log rolling down the mat. Leapers leap over the approaching rolling logs. When rollers reach the end of the mat, the rollers become the leapers and the leapers become the rollers.

## Rolling Backwards

### Movement skills/concepts

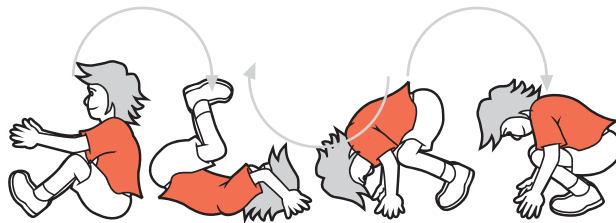
Rolling backwards, body and space awareness.

### Set-up

Mats, slope, crash pads.

### Activity 1: Rolling backwards over shoulder

1. Sit on a level mat with your knees bent. Raise your arms, with the palms of your hands up and your fingers pointing backwards over your shoulders. Hold this position, then rock back to balance on your shoulders, putting your hands on the floor to support yourself. Hold for 4 seconds.
2. Backward shoulder roll down a slope. Sitting on top of a slope, roll backwards with your knees bent and one arm out to the side. Rock backwards to bring one leg over your head between the side arm and head. Land on your knee and bring the other leg to follow.
3. Now try 2 from a squat position, bringing both legs to the side of one ear and arms straight along mat.
4. Repeat 2 and 3 on a ground-level mat. Practise rolling to one side, then to the other.



### Activity 2: Rolling backwards

Try these on the slope first and then on a level mat.

1. Start from the sitting position, pointing your hands back your shoulders with palms up. Tuck your chin to your chest. Push off with your toes, keep your body tucked and your back round, roll onto your back and push off hands to land on knees, then take a squat position.
2. Repeat as above but start from a squat and progress to a straddle, then go to a standing position, finishing in the same way as you began.

### Can you see ...?

- slow, controlled action
- chin to chest
- tucked body
- round back
- folding and unfolding action
- pushing arms straight

**You could ask ...**

Why do we need to put our chin on our chest?

What shape do you make with your back? Why is this important?

**Variations**

*Backward roll on equipment:* Try rolling on a crash pad or a box top.

*Make up a sequence:* Include a balance, a jump and a roll in the sequence.

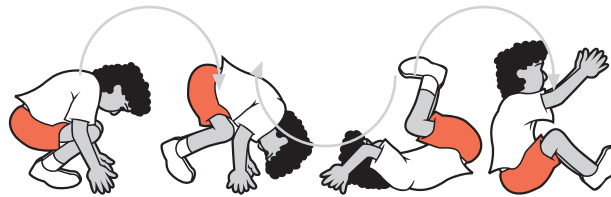
## Rolling Forwards

### Movement skills/concepts

Rolling forwards, space awareness and body control.

### Set-up

Beat board, mats, crash pads, high box, a slope.



### Activity

Start the progressions for rolling forwards on a slope and then move to a level surface on the ground.

*Tip over:* Begin in a low squat position with your hands on the mat and your knees between your arms. Lean forward, tuck your chin to your chest and look back under your legs. Raise your hips until you tip over, bending your arms, and roll onto your back to a sitting position.

Try this again from a straddle stand and from a stand with two feet together.

*Forward roll:* Begin in a crouch position, with head up. Place your hands on the mat slightly forwards of your feet, with your fingers pointing forwards. Push your toes, raise your hips and tuck your chin to your chest to round your back. Land on the tops of your shoulders and push with your hands as you roll forwards to a crouch position.

### Can you see ...?

- slow, controlled movement
- chin to chest
- a natural arm bend
- back of head and shoulders contacting with the mat

### You could ask ...

What do you have to do with your body to tip yourself forwards?

How do you roll forwards safely?

### Variations

*Roll on different surfaces:* Try a forward roll on a crash pad or a box top, or on a line.

*Create a forwards roll sequence:* Forwards roll from a squat position, then forwards roll to straddle, forwards roll to stand? Include other rolls in the sequence as well, (e.g. backwards, egg roll, log roll).

## Swinging with Equipment

---

### Movement skills/concepts

Swinging on equipment, body and space awareness.

### Set-up

Bars, ropes, playground/gymnasium equipment, desks, safety mats.

Children in small groups at each piece of equipment, with safety mats under the equipment.

### Activity

Can you ...?



- swing between two desks – on forearms first, then on hands, varying body shape (e.g. from tuck to long body)



- do a long swing from a horizontal bar, keeping the bars at chest height (it is better to bend your knees than to take chances) then swing to land and stand still
- do a long swing from one or two ropes
- run and swing to land as if you are swinging across an obstacle or to reach a set boundary (e.g. the other side of a river)



### Can you see ...?

- landings on toe–ball–heel and with bent knees
- soft surfaces below equipment
- sufficient strength to take the body weight
- spotting where needed
- constant hand grasp in all inverted positions – no sign of letting go or regrasping while inverted

### You could ask ...

Which pieces of equipment did you enjoy swinging on the most?

What are safe ways of swinging?

Which types of swinging will you use when you are playing in the playground?

## Consolidating Rotation

### Rotating with a Partner

#### Movement skills/concepts

Rotating with a partner, cooperative balancing, rotating through long and horizontal axes at different speeds, body awareness and relationships (with others).

#### Set-up

Grass, floor or hard area.

Children in pairs, matched approximately for height and weight.



#### Activity

*Clothes line:* Partners face each other and each grips both of the other's wrists. Turn like a revolving clothes line on a mild/windy/gusty day. Now turn like a clothes line that has a heavy load of washing.

*Partner log roll:* Partners lie on their stomachs facing each other, with arms stretched out above the head. Link hands and roll in the same direction. Keep your body long and straight.

#### Can you roll ...?

- three times in a row
- so that your feet don't touch the mat
- with your feet locked together instead of your hands
- with a 'sock' held between your feet

*Eskimo roll:* Partner 1 lies on their back; Partner 2 stands facing forwards with their feet near Partner 1's shoulders. Partner 1 holds Partner 2's ankles and raises their legs so that Partner 2 can hold each leg above the ankle. Partner 2 leans forward and places Partner 1's feet on the floor and performs a forward roll. Partner 1 follows, still holding onto Partner 2's ankles.

#### Can you see ...?

- controlled movement when rolling with partner
- communication with partner – working together

#### You could ask ...

How do you and your partner work together to perform the partner log roll?

#### Variations

*Snake in the grass:* Four children on their stomachs, with straight bodies, lie in a chain on a mat. Each child holds onto the ankles of the child ahead of them. On a signal, the whole chain rolls over onto their backs and then onto their stomachs.

## Conveyor Belt

### Movement skills/concepts

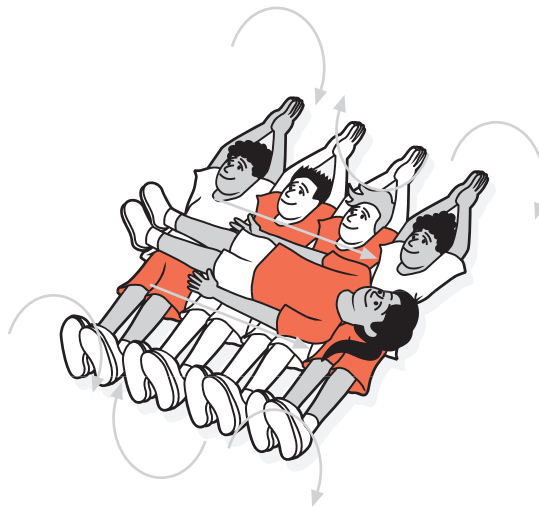
Rolling along a long axis, relationships (with others), problem solving and timing.

### Set-up

Grass or tumbling mats.

Groups of four-five.

Working  
together



### Activity

Children lie side by side, shoulder to shoulder to form a conveyor belt. One child lies on their back across the conveyor belt. On a signal, all children in the conveyor belt rotate in the same direction, moving the top child along the conveyor belt.

How far can you travel, keeping the child on the belt?

### Can you see ...?

- individuals maintaining a long, straight body
- conveyor belt staying close together

### You could ask ...

What can you do to ensure you move together in the conveyor belt?

### Variations

*Use soft toys:* Line up soft toys as the conveyor belt for the children to roll over.

*Increase number of children:* Make the conveyor belt longer with more children. Also make it continuous – after the top child passes over the belt, they quickly get up and add themselves to the front of the belt.

# Additional Stability Activities to Try

These additional games and activities develop stability and a variety of other fundamental skills.

## Overview

Activity name	Movement skills/concept	Suggested group size	Suggested space	Page
Magic Carpet	Pulling, balancing on a moving object, at different speeds, space awareness and relationships (with others).	7	Hard smooth surface	170
Bumper Cars	Pivoting, turning around a long axis, running or walking skills and relationships (with others).	2	Hard or grass area	171
Blizzard	Communication, walking, dynamic balance, space and body awareness, moving through, on, over and under obstacles.	2	Hard or grass area	172
Cooperative Pushing and Pulling	Cooperatively pushing and pulling, space awareness, cooperative balancing and counterbalance.	2	Hard or grass area	173
Sharks and Islands	Running, jumping, dodging, balancing, landing and space awareness.	8+	Hard or grass area	175
Nose and Toes Tag	Running, dodging, balancing and relationships (with others).	10+	Hard or grass area	176
Stuck in the Mud	Static balance, locomotor skills, evading a tagger and space awareness.	8+	Hard or grass area	177
Line Tag	Walking, dynamic balance and space awareness.	8+	Hard or grass area defined by lines or cones	178
Tunnel Relay	Static balance, throwing, running, and relationships (with others).	5-7	Hard or grass area	179
Snail Race	Dynamic balance, slow, sustained walking, and balancing.	2+	Hard or grass area	180
Pushing and Pulling Challenges in Pairs	Pushing and pulling in pairs, resisting pushing and pulling, hopping, relationships (with others).	2	Level hard or grass area	181
Pushing and Pulling in Small Groups	Pushing, pulling, balancing, counterbalancing, trust and relationships (with others).	2-10	Level hard or grass area	183

## Magic Carpet

### Movement skills/concepts

Pulling, balancing on a moving object, space awareness and relationships (with others).

### Set-up

Gym mats (magic carpets) on a hard, smooth surface.

Groups of approximately 7, with one mat per group.

Having fun



### Activity

Children take turns in having a 'magic carpet' ride on the mat, pulled by the rest of the group steadily around the defined area. The rider can be lying, sitting or crouching and can control the speed ('slower', 'faster' or 'just right').

### Can you see ...?

- rider balancing on a wide base of support
- children pulling safely under control
- children working cooperatively together
- enjoyment

### You could ask ...

What was the best way of riding the 'magic carpet'?

Did your arms get tired from pulling the mat? How can you prevent this?

## Bumper Cars

### Movement skills/concepts

Pivoting, turning around a long axis, running or walking skills and relationships (with others).

### Set-up

Defined grass or hard area.

Children in pairs stand side by side and join hands together in front.



Children  
modify activity  
to increase  
challenge

### Activity

Pairs move freely around the marked area. To avoid bumping into any other pair, the couples pivot turn and run in another direction when they meet.

### Can you see ...?

- quick pivot turn on the balls of the feet, quarter turn to half turn only
- head up to see other pairs

### You could ask ...

How will you and your partner work together to pivot and turn?

### Variations

*Change locomotor skills:* Use walking, skipping, hopping or jumping.

## Blizzard

---

### Movement skills/concepts

Communication, walking, dynamic balance, space and body awareness, moving through, on, over and under obstacles.

### Set-up

Hoops, benches, mats, blindfolds.

Children in pairs work in a defined area: one partner is 'snow-blind' (with eyes closed or blindfolded) and the other can see.



### Activity

Two children are trapped in a snowstorm and are trying to find their way home. The objective is for the seeing partner to lead the 'snow-blind' partner through the blizzard (obstacle course) to safety. They go through a snow tunnel (hoop) and under an ice log (bench). Partners hold hands or link arms and try not to let go so neither one gets lost in the storm. Partners switch roles.

### Can you see ...?

- leader giving clear instructions
- snow-blind partner putting trust in leader

### You could ask ...

What type of instructions were the easiest to understand?

How do you build up trust in this situation?

### Variations

*Vary form of communication:* Instead of talking and holding hands, partners use a code such as finger clicks, claps or hums.

## Cooperative Pushing and Pulling

### Movement skills/concepts

Cooperatively pushing and pulling, space awareness, cooperative balancing, counterbalance.

### Set-up

Ropes, cardboard and hoops.

Children in pairs work on the floor or in a grass area.

### Activity

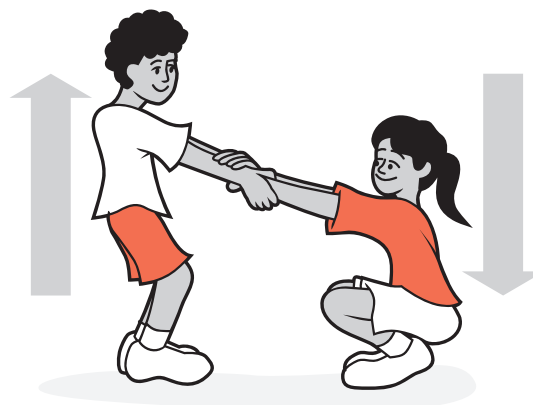
*Tow truck:* Place a piece of cardboard or a hoop on the floor. One partner stands on this and holds the end of a rope. The other takes the other end of the rope and tries to slowly pull their partner off the cardboard/hoop.

*Sawing logs:* Partners face each other, one foot forward, grasping both of the other's hands, with their elbows high. As one arm is pulled back, the other is extended well forward. Following a number of movements (5–10), they change the foot that is forward.



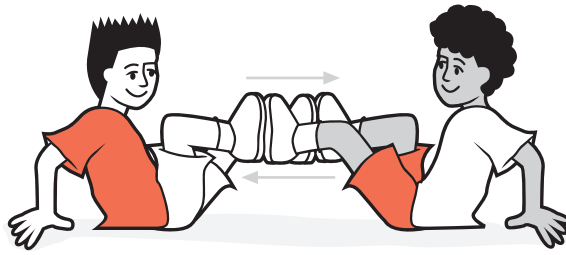
*Chainsaws:* Partners follow the same procedure as for sawing logs but, instead of backwards and forwards, they make circular hand movements.

*Back-to-back get up:* Evenly matched (for height) pairs stand back-to-back and link elbows. They push back against each other, then lower to a half squat and stand up again.



*Seesaws:* Partners face each other and hold hands. One child stands while the other crouches down. The standing child helps pull their partner up and, at the same time, crouches down. Both lean back slightly. Repeat several times, including a change in roles.

*Pedal power:* Partners sit facing each other, or sit leaning on their elbows for support. Each partner places the soles of their feet against their partner's; knees remain partly bent throughout.



#### Can you ...?

- push against your partner's feet, alternating bent and straightening legs with your partner's – try different ways of pushing
- push hard and fast for 20 counts, then slowly for 20 counts
- do double pushes in each position (i.e. two counts before changing leg position)
- try combinations (e.g. double push, double push, single, single, single)

*Be culturally  
aware and  
sensitive*

#### Can you see ...?

- stable foot and body position
- safe practices
- counterbalancing
- pairs matched in size

#### You could ask ...

Which activities did you enjoy the most?

Which activities required balance skills?

How can you perform these activities safely?

## Sharks and Islands

---

### Movement skills/concepts

Running, jumping, dodging, balancing, landing and space awareness.

### Set-up

Children are scattered in the general space (islanders), one or two are 'sharks', with their arms raised for identification.

Hoops or mats 'Islands' scattered around the playing area – there are fewer islands than islanders.

### Activity

Sharks inhabit the space between the hoops or mats and attempt to tag any player who is not on an island. Only one player per island is allowed.

A player without an island may jump to an inhabited island, whereupon the occupier must run to find another island.

If tagged, that player becomes a shark.

### Can you see ...?

- head up, looking around
- landing in personal space

### You could ask ...

Sharks: How will you work together to tag the others?

Islanders: When will you jump and land on an island?

### Variations

*Vary locomotor and balance activity:* For example, hop between islands and scale balance on the island.

## Nose and Toes Tag

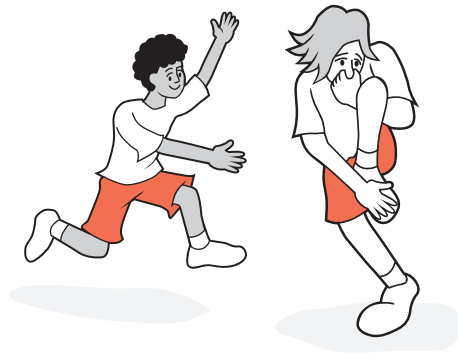
---

### Movement skills/concepts

Running, dodging, balancing and relationships (with others).

### Set-up

Groups of approximately 10, with two or three taggers (holding up one arm for identification) per group, are spread out in a grass or hard surface area.



### Activity

The taggers attempt to tag other children. Other children are immune from being tagged if they are holding the toes of their left foot with their right hand, while the left hand, after passing under the left knee, holds their nose (or reversing roles for left and right hands).

### Can you see ...?

- balance
- tight muscles

### You could ask ...

*Runners:* When will you decide to balance or to evade the taggers?

How will you maintain your balance?

### Variations

*Vary skill:* Focus on a locomotor skill and balance, (e.g. hopping and stork balance).

## Stuck in the Mud

### Movement skills/concepts

Static balance, locomotor skills, evading a tagger and space awareness.

### Set-up

Children are spread out in a defined grass or hard surface area: one or two children are taggers; the rest are runners.



*Be culturally  
aware and  
sensitive*

### Activity

Taggers try to tag the runners. If tagged, a runner becomes 'stuck in the mud' and holds a static balance (e.g. straddle, scale balance, front support) until released.

To release a stuck child, a free runner must crawl under, step over or run around them, with the movement depending on the stuck runner's static position.

### Can you see ...?

- head up to see others
- tight muscles to hold balance

### You could ask ...

*Taggers:* How will you work together to tag the runners?

*Runners:* What can you do to hold your balance while you wait to be freed?

### Variations

*Vary locomotor and balance skill:* Try hopping or skipping as locomotor skill, and front support as balance skill.

## Line Tag

---

### Movement skills/concepts

Walking, dynamic balance and space awareness.

### Set-up

Hard area defined by cones or lines; bibs or bands.

Children spread out along lines/cones: two children are taggers, who wear bands.



### Activity

On a signal, children walk along the lines, trying to avoid being tagged. They can change direction, but cannot jump to other lines.

If tagged, a child puts on a band and begins to tag others.

### Can you see ...?

- walking only on the lines
- arms extended for balance

### You could ask ...

How will you use the lines to avoid being tagged?

### Variations

*Vary locomotor skills:* Use skipping, running or hopping.

*Modify rules:* Children can jump lines, or coach/teacher calls out specific lines that are safe (e.g. only vertical lines or curved lines).

## Tunnel Relay

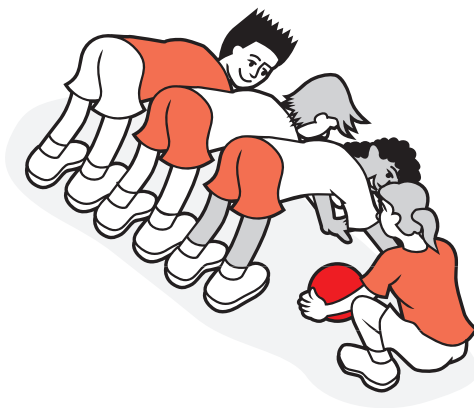
### Movement skills/concepts

Static balance, throwing, running, and relationships (with others).

### Set-up

Mats, balls.

Groups of five–seven, with a ball per group. Children are standing, lined up one behind the other with their feet spread in a straddle position.



### Activity

*Roll to the back:* The child at the front of the line rolls the ball under everyone's legs to the back person, who retrieves the ball and runs to the front. Repeat in the new positions.

*Front support:* Two children are at either end of a 'tunnel' created by the rest of the group, who begin on hands and knees side by side on the floor and then, on a signal, lift up into a front support to form the tunnel. The child in front of the tunnel rolls the ball to the child at the back, who then runs to the front. The child at the front joins the start of the tunnel and the child at the end of the tunnel disengages from the tunnel to receive the ball.

### Can you see ...?

- tight muscles
- being still

### You could ask ...

How can you hold the front support position?

### Variations

*Vary static balance position:* Try a 'V' sit or back support, and throw the ball over and roll under. Have a race with another group and see who finishes first.

## Snail Race

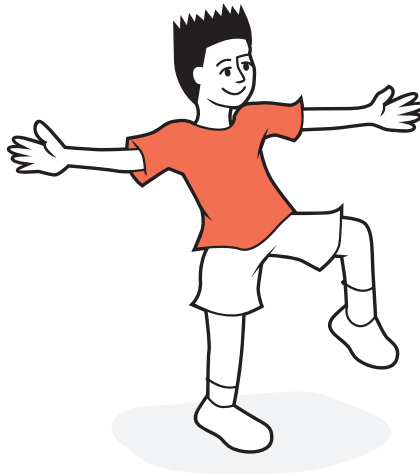
---

### Movement skills/concepts

Dynamic balance; slow, sustained walking; and balancing.

### Set-up

Hard court area.



### Activity

The aim of this race is to be the last to finish.

All children line up on the start line. On a signal, children race as slowly as they can to the finish line. Children must be moving at all times. Any child who stops is out of the race.

### Can you see ...?

- arms stretched out for balance

### You could ask ...

How will you keep your balance when you are moving slowly?

### Variations

*Vary locomotor skill:* Use hopping, walking or jumping.

## Pushing and Pulling Challenges in Pairs

### Movement skills/concepts

Pushing and pulling in pairs, resisting pushing and pulling, hopping and relationships (with others).

### Set-up

Children are in pairs of evenly matched skill on a suitable surface.

Teach the wrist grasp.



### Activity

*Two-handed tug of war:* Partners face each other across a line and grasp one or both wrists. Each attempts to pull the other across the line. Next try two hoops instead of the line.

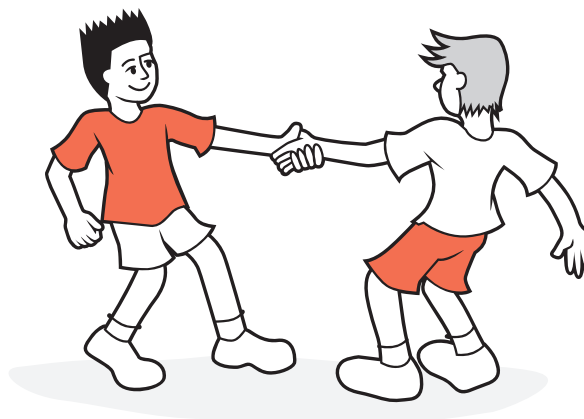
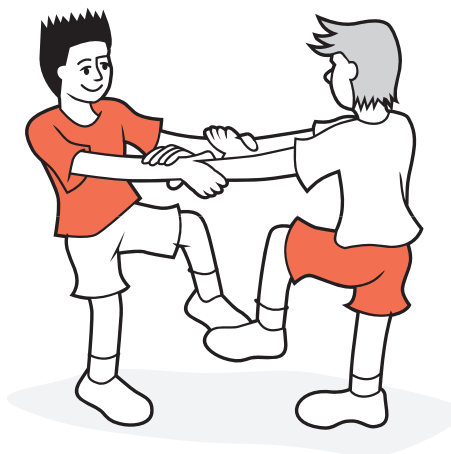
*Two-handed push:* Partners face each other across a line and place their palms against the other's palms. They both try to push their partner backwards so that they can walk across the line.

*Hopping tug of war:* Partners face each other, grasp wrists and raise one knee forward. They hop and pull until one contestant is forced to lower their leg.

*Hopping push:* Partners face each other with their hands on each other's shoulders and one foot raised. Each tries to push their opponent back over a line while hopping. Signal change of feet frequently.

*Turn the turtle:* One child lies face down with arms and legs spread. Their partner tries to flip them onto their back.

*Hand wrestle (Danish wrestling):* Partners face each other, grasp one wrist with right/left hand and put opposite foot forward. By pushing, pulling and feinting, they try to make their partner move their front foot. The other foot may be moved to counter. A point is scored when the partner moves over their front foot.



*Chinese boxing:* Each partner holds the opponent's right (left) wrist. The object is to touch the opponent's shoulder.

*Foot tug:* Hooking foot to foot, opponents try to pull each other across a line.

*Hoop wrestle:* Two hoops are placed so that they touch. Each partner stands in a hoop and places their hands on their opponent's shoulders. Pairs wrestle until one partner is forced outside the hoop. Skipping ropes, chalk circles or parallel lines could be used.



Are all children involved and enjoying activities?



*Ball tug:* Partners face each other. Both grip a large ball, then try to pull each other across a line.



*Indian wrestle:* Partners lie on their stomachs facing each other. They grip right/left hands, with elbows on the ground and forearms upright. They try to make the back of their partner's hand touch the ground.

### Can you see ...?

- evenly matched pairs
- strong, steady pushes and pulls
- strong grips
- friendly competition
- fair play and good sporting behaviour

### You could ask ...

What guidelines might you and your partner set up to enjoy these activities safely?

What are examples of fair play and good sporting behaviour?

## Pushing and Pulling in Small Groups

### Movement skills/concepts

Pushing, pulling, balancing, counterbalancing and relationships (with others).

### Set-up

Hoops.

Teach wrist grip.

Groups work on a suitable surface.

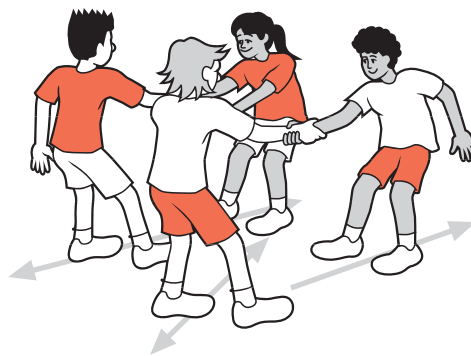
### Activity



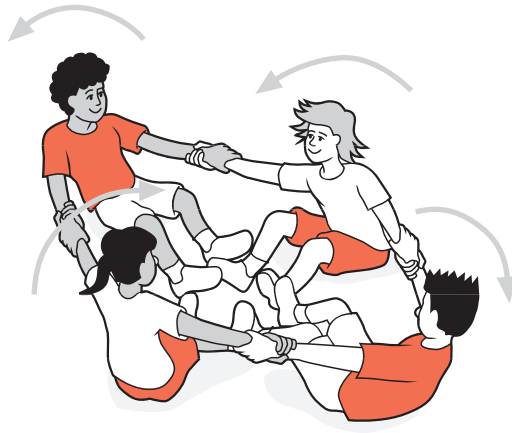
*Hot spot:* Groups use the wrist grip to join in a circle round a hot spot (a hoop or a similar ground marking). The aim is to pull the circle and make someone stand on the hot spot.

*Socko:* Place four or five gym mats together. Self-chosen groups of four–five children wear socks but no shoes. The aim is to remove the socks of other participants and to keep possession of your own socks.

Set clear rules on the degree of roughness allowed. Allow anyone to withdraw or call 'Stop' at any time. No kicking.



*Zigzag tug of war:* Two lines of three–four face each other. Each person takes a wrist grip with two people facing. Each line attempts to pull the other line to a mark.



*Rowing in fours:* Four children sit in a circle joined by the wrist grip and with knees slightly bent. One pair of opposites leans in while the other pair leans back. Change positions rhythmically.

**Can you see ...?**

- safety
- fair competition

**You could ask ...**

Balancing and pulling in small groups requires a lot of trust.  
How did your group build trust?