

The following table provides a description of various fundamental movement skills. Characteristics of each skill are provided to support with instruction, as well as cue words to support the child with performing the movement appropriately.

Children develop movement skills at different rates. Create a supportive environment that fosters movement development at the appropriate level for the child.

DODGE: a rapid shift of the body from one line of travel to another

Characteristics of the Dodge

- Eyes focused in direction of travel
- Body lowered during change of direction
- Change direction by pushing off outside foot
- Change of direction occurs in one step
- Can change direction in both directions

Cue Words for Children

- Look where you are running
- Get low
- Push off
- One step
- Go left, go right

SKIP: a rhythmical flow of the step-hop pattern

Characteristics of the Skip

- A rhythmical repetition of the step-hop on alternate feet
- Foot of nonsupport leg is carried near surface during hop
- Arms alternatively moving in opposition to legs
- Toe first landing

Cue Words for Children

- Step-hop, step-hop
- Keep back foot near the ground
- Arm/leg opposite
- Land toes first

RUN: move fast with your feet, and one foot off the ground all the time

Characteristics of the Run

Leg action:

- Foot contact is with the heel, or as speed increases, with the ball of the foot under the body
- Swing knee is raised high
- Support leg moves from slight bend to complete extension

Arm action:

- Elbow is bent at right angle (stay at this angle) and move in opposition to legs
- Upper arm drives forward and back

Cue Words for Children

- Balls of feet
- High knees
- Hands brush hips in backswing
- Drive arms
- Elbows in

JUMP: two-foot take-off with two-foot landing

Characteristics of the Jump

Get ready:

- Lower hips to sitting position (hips, knees, ankles flex in crouch)
- Shoulders lean forward
- Feet together in balance stance
- Bend knees, with toes staying in front of knees
- Swing arms back

Take-off:

- Simultaneous forceful extension at hips, knees, and ankles as arms thrust forward and upward
- Aim for 45 degree angle in flight path
- As body moves forward, hips, knees, ankle extend in succession

Flight:

- Full body extension
- Thighs parallel to ground
- Eyes focused ahead on target

Landing:

- Lower legs extend prior to landing
- Balanced landing, feet apart, heels on ground, knees bent, arms out
- Force taken on balls of feet, ankles, knees and hips on impact
- Arms reach forward to keep centre of gravity moving in direction of flight

Cue Words for Children

- Bend ankle, knees, and hips
- Crouch forward
- Arms back
- Explode with legs
- Swing up and forward with arms
- Look ahead and stretch out
- Knees up
- Quiet knees on landing
- Reach forward

HOP: one foot take-off with same foot landing

Characteristics of the Hop

Get ready:

- Body upright, look forward
- Arms bent at side (90 degree angle)

Push off and motion:

- "Swing leg" flexed, swings forward and upward to thrust
- Arms lifted rhythmically as support leg leaves ground
- Push off on ball of foot
- Pendulum action of swing leg to increase force

Landing:

- Softly on balls of feet
- Ankle flexion
- Slight knee flexion

Cue Words for Children

- Look ahead
- Spring with legs
- Spring and swing
- Swing with arms
- Soft touch down

STATIC BALANCE: the body balances in a stationary position

Characteristics of Static Balance

- Place body weight on one part or several parts of the body
- Stress stillness to hold position
- Centre of gravity is over base of support
- Focus eyes on a target/object
- Extend other body parts to even out distribution of weight/counterbalance

Cue Words for Children

- Be still or freeze
- Body weight in the middle
- Focus on target
- Extend other limbs

DYNAMIC BALANCE: control of the body as it moves

Characteristics of Dynamic Balance

- Maintain tension
- Establish a wide base of support
- Focus eyes on external target/object
- Extend other body parts to even out distribution of weight/counterbalance

Cue Words for Children

- Stay tight
- Spread out your weight
- Focus eyes
- Extend body parts

KICK: imparting force to an object with the foot

Characteristics of the Kick

Get ready:

- Stand behind the ball
- Step forward with kicking foot
- Plant support foot beside ball

Push off and motion:

- Kicking leg with knee bent swings freely from the hip through an arc toward the ball
- Backward body lean for initial balance
- Knee is quickly extended as the foot contacts ball
- Aim for midline slightly below centre of ball
- Contact on tops of toes and instep
- Left arm (right kick) extends toward direction of kick

Follow-through:

- Backward lean of trunk
- Kicking leg continues its movement forward across the body
- Use arms to maintain balance

Cue Words for Children

- Step forward
- Plant foot
- Balanced
- Lean into kick
- Aim
- Inside of foot
- Kick/swing through the ball

DRIBBLE with the hands: bouncing the ball up and down so that it stays in the dribbler's possession

Characteristics of Dribbling with hands

Eyes:

- Eyes looking forward

Body position:

- Feet in forward stride
- Body flexed at knees, hips, waist with slight forward lean
- Fingers and thumbs spread, five finger pads touching ball

Hand action:

- With wave (yo-yo) action with hand on ball, push ball to the floor
- Control the bounce with fingers and wrist
- Contact ball at about waist-level
- Ball bounces back to waist level

Cue Words for Children

- Look ahead
- Opposite foot forward to dribbling hand
- Cup the ball
- Wave to the ball

DRIBBLE with the feet: controlling the ball with one's feet so that it stays in the dribbler's possession while travelling

Characteristics of Dribbling with feet

Eyes & head:

- Keep eyes focused on the movement environment rather than the feet or ball

Body position:

- Keep head up

Foot action:

- Contact the ball starting with the inside of the foot with the foot positioned perpendicular to the ball
- Encourage using all parts of the foot such as inside, instep, outside, sole
- Kick lightly to keep the ball under control
- Direct the force through the centre of the ball
- Keep the ball no farther than one step length away

Cue Words for Children

- Eyes forward
- Head up
- Inside of the foot
- Centre of the ball

UNDERHAND ROLL: propelling an object away from the body so it rolls or slides at or near an intended target

Characteristics of the Underhand Roll

Preparation:

- Legs shoulder width apart - one foot slightly in front of the other (stride stance)
- Ball held in hand corresponding to back leg, hand is cupped with finger tips and palm holding object
- Slight hip rotation and trunk lean forward
- Eyes on target throughout

Rolling action:

- Forward swing with step forward with the foot opposite to the throwing arm

Follow through:

- Release at knee level or below, keep close to ground or surface
- Throwing arm follows through

Cue Words for Children

- Stride stance
- Opposite to forward foot, hand cupped
- Lean body forward
- Look
- Below knee, close to ground/surface
- Fingertips point to target

UNDERHAND THROW: propelling an object away from the body

Characteristics of the Underhand Throw

Preparation:

- Body Faces Forward

Throwing action:

- Preferred hand swings down and back
- Step forward with the foot opposite to the throwing arm
- Bend knees to lower the body
- Throwing arm has a slight bend
- Release ball with palm facing up

Follow through:

- Throwing arm follows through

Cue Words for Children

- Belly button faces the target
- Arms back
- Opposite foot
- Bend knees
- Fingertips point to target

OVERHAND THROW: propelling an object toward a given objective

Characteristics of the Overhand Throw

Preparation:

- Side facing
- Weight on the back foot
- Throwing arm circles downward and backward to make a W-shape with arms and body
- Eyes on the target

Throwing action:

- Foot opposite to throwing hand steps forward
- Hips rotate first then the upper body
- Weight is transferred from back foot to front foot
- Release ball just in front of the head

Follow through:

- Point throwing hand to target
- Throwing hand drops down and points toward the opposite knee

Cue Words for Children

- Side
- Make a "W"
- Look
- Back to front
- Across body

CATCH: receiving an object with the hands

Characteristics of the Catch

Preparation:

- Eyes on object to catch
- Align body with incoming object
- Arms at rest at side of body or slightly in front

Catching:

- Move hands to meet the object
- Elbows are bent and bend as object is brought down and towards the body
- Object is brought down and toward the body
- Hands adjust to flight and size of object
- If object is below the waist little fingers are close together
- If object is above the waist the thumbs are close together

Cue Words for Children

- Look
- Get behind
- Ready
- Soft hands
- Bring to body
- Pinkies together
- Thumbs together

SIDEARM STRIKE: propelling an incoming object using the hand or an implement using a side arm action

Characteristics of the Sidearm Strike

Preparation:

- Stand facing the incoming object to be struck
- Legs bent with hands out in front
- Watch the object to be struck all the time

Striking action:

- Turn so the shoulder opposite the striking hand is facing the object to be struck
- Take striking hand back and point to the incoming object with the non-striking hand to make a "W" shape with arms and body
- Contact the object front of the foot, opposite the striking hand (foot closest to the incoming object)
- Transfer weight from back foot to front foot
- Strike through the object
- Striking hand follows through high to the opposite shoulder
- Return to front facing

Cue Words for Children

- Front face
- Watch
- Back, "W"
- Hitting zone
- Back to front
- Follow high

TRAPPING: gaining control of an object with the body (e.g., feet, thighs, chest)

Characteristics of Trapping

- Get in ready position
- Anticipate a successful trap
- Move quickly to intercept the approaching object while deciding which part of the body to best initiate the trap
- In a balanced position, present the trapping surface to the ball and block it with that surface (e.g., inside of the foot or thigh, upper chest, forehead)
- As the ball contacts that body part, absorb the impact (soften, cushion) by slightly and slowly moving that body part in the direction of the ball flight
- If the ball is still not in control, use an applicable body part to further trap the ball.

Cue Words for Children

- Ready position
- Imagine success
- Move to intercept
- Decide on the type of trap
- Present the trapping surface to the ball and block the ball using that surface
- Cushion the object like you are catching an egg
- Continue to execute a trap until the object is under control