

# Skills

<b>Aiming</b>	<p>Children need to be able to aim when playing throwing and kicking games. This skill develops gradually and children need good spatial awareness, balance and hand-eye coordination in order to successfully aim objects.</p> <p>Aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Can roll, throw, kick or strike a ball/object through a space</li><li>- Can roll, throw, kick or strike a ball/object towards a space</li><li>- Can roll, throw, kick or strike a ball/object towards an object</li><li>- Can roll, throw, kick or strike a ball/object to another person</li></ul>
<b>Bending</b>	<p>Bending forwards at the waist or hips, bending the knees, bending the elbows.</p>
<b>Carrying</b>	<p>Carrying objects with hands, on head, on shoulder, on forearm, on one bent knee (possibly while hopping on the other leg). Carrying an object with another vessel (such as a ball on a racket, toy in a bucket, beanbag in a bowl).</p> <p>Carrying small objects will support fine motor development. Carrying heavy objects will support the development of arm strength. Carrying objects on different body parts will support balance.</p>
<b>Catching</b> Fundamental Skill	<p>Catching a rolling ball, a ball or object thrown or a bouncing ball. Children progress from immature to mature abilities. Progress from two handed catch, which includes the arms, of a large ball to eventually being able to catch a small ball with just the hands.</p> <p>Aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Can focus on and track a ball/object in order to catch it</li><li>- Can scoop and catch a ball with their arms and hands (younger children)</li><li>- Can catch a ball/object with their hands (older children)</li><li>- Can line themselves up to be in a correct position to catch a ball/object</li><li>- Can use different parts of their bodies to stop a ball being thrown/rolled toward them</li></ul> <p>Progression:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Children might initially turn their head away when they are first learning to catch. Children will not make use of their hands to catch the ball. They will keep their arms straight until the ball makes contact and try to scoop it towards their chest.</li><li>2. Children will be less inclined to avoid the ball/object but might close their eyes. Children will try to make use of their hands to catch the ball/object. Their arms will be slightly bent at the elbows, however will still try to scoop it towards</li></ol>

their chest. They will not necessarily grasp the ball with their hands well.

3. Children will not try to avoid the ball/object and their eyes will track it. Their arms will bend as far as they need in order to catch the ball. They will grasp the ball with their hands with control.

- Collect a stationary object/ball
- Retrieve a rolling object/ball
- Take a given object/ball
- Receive a rolling ball
- Receive a bouncing object
- Catch a ball thrown a short distance
- Retrieve a bouncing ball and then sending it on, e.g. rolling, giving, bouncing, throwing, etc.
- Receiving a given object/ball whilst walking and then twisting to a new position and sending on (rolling, bouncing, etc.)
- Catching an object/ball thrown whilst travelling and then passing it on.
- When children first learn how to catch start with bubbles and balloons as they move slowly

**Clapping** Babies and children can clap their hands, eventually being coordinated to clap other people's hands in games such as pat-a-cake.

**Climbing** Even before babies can walk they like to climb and explore. Climbing supports the natural development of babies and young children and they should be allowed to do so in a safe environment. Ensure children have many opportunities to climb horizontal tree trunks, ladders and climbing frames/equipment, etc.  
Climbing supports the develop in many areas, such as:

- reaching for rungs above the shoulder raises the arms which increases the cardiovascular flow
- stretching increases and maintains flexibility
- pulling up with hands and arms while climbing a ladder or a climbing wall builds upper body, grip, and arm strength
- climbing steps and ladders develops leg strength and coordination

**Crawling** Some babies never crawl, however it is important to offer opportunities to prepare babies and encourage them to crawl, such as 'tummy time'.

Benefits of crawling including:

- Helping to strengthen muscles, and the tiny intrinsic muscles in the hand
- Assists children in learning bilateral coordination of their arms and legs
- Supports the development of the visual-motor system

**Dancing/Movement to Music** All children, including pre-walkers, love to dance to music. Many dance moves can be done across the midline, which benefits brain development. Dance and movement to music can support all skills, balance and brain development and is a great high impact physical activity that can be done in small spaces, large spaces, inside and outside.

Us a variety of music, such as recent pop songs, child specific songs and classical music.

Aims:

- Understands different tempos
- Can change between different tempos
- Can move in different ways to music, i.e. High/Low – Loud/Soft and Faster/Slower

### **Holding**

It is important to remember that babies and young children have small hands and the muscles in their hands are still developing. They will experiment with different objects; however support them by offering vessels to hold objects that they are not yet able to hold. Children should try holding objects not only with their hands but also with other body parts (this will also support body awareness and balance). Suggest ways to carry objects, ask them to make suggestions.

### **Jumping Fundamental Skill**

Babies and toddlers love to jump with the support of adults or objects such as tables, bars attached to walls, etc. When children are ready to jump by themselves they will prepare for jumping by slightly bending knees and swinging arms backwards. With feet close together, push off with both feet and land on both feet. Children will eventually propel their arms forwards and upwards whilst they are in the air. Children will require muscle strength and balance in order to jump effectively.

- Jumping upward for height
- Jumping for distance
- Jump with two feet and landing in the same place
- Jumping from two feet and landing on two feet
- Jumping from two feet to one foot
- Jumping from one foot to two feet
- Jumping onto something
- Jumping off something
- Jumping in and out of something (such as a hula hoop)
- Jumping in different directions

### **Landing**

Teach children to land on both feet at the same time with knees bent when they jump. They should also keep their knees slightly bent when they hop. This will prevent them from putting too much pressure on their joints.

### **Lying**

Children can lie still feeling how their bodies fit into a space. They can wriggle, move parts of their body and lie in different positions, creating shapes.  
Pre-crawlers should have opportunities to lie on their backs, stomachs and both sides.  
Older children should have opportunities to lie on their stomachs whilst doing fine motor activities /writing to support muscular development.

### **Picking up**

The more children develop the muscles in their hands and develop their fine motor skills the smaller the objects will be that they can pick up.  
By approximately the age of 15 months, babies will bend down from a standing position to pick up an object.  
By 18 months old, they should have mastered the pincer grip and can pick up small objects.  
Play activities where children need to run and pick up various size and weight objects. This will support high impact activity, fine motor development and strength.

<b>Placing</b>	<p>This can include placing pieces of puzzles, building blocks and physically standing in place. Helps children to learn where things/they physically go and how to place them so that they fit.</p> <p>This supports spatial awareness, fine motor development and problem solving</p>
<b>Pulling</b>	<p>Using upper and lower body strength to move an object or person towards you or away from a fixed point. Children will initially only use their arms to pull so little force will be used. Eventually they will learn to use their whole body, lean backwards, and pull with more power. Support children to learn to use their whole body by modelling and also using imagery.</p>
<b>Pushing</b>	<p>Using either only arms or upper and lower body strength to move an object or person. Support children to maintain stability while pushing. At first children will lean towards the object and use very little power. They should progress to pushing from a lunge position whilst leaning forward making for a more powerful push.</p> <p>Aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Push a ball with hands with correct arm movement</li> <li>- Push ball with feet</li> <li>- Push different sized and weighed objects with hands, feet and other body parts</li> <li>- Can push heaving objects by leaning forward</li> </ul>
<b>Rocking</b>	<p>Rocking helps develop body rhythm and balance.</p> <p>'Row row the boat' is a fun way to rock back and forth and from side to side.</p> <p>Rocking on something that rocks from side to side or back and forth with require various degrees of balance.</p>
<b>Rolling Fundamental Skill</b>	<p><u>Rolling a Ball</u></p> <p>Children will progress from rolling a large light ball with both hands in no particular direction to rolling a smaller heavier ball in a desired direction with one hand.</p> <p>Aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Can roll a ball on the ground whilst seated, squatting, on knees or bent from standing</li> <li>- Can roll a ball on a variety of surfaces (including down and up)</li> <li>- Can roll a ball aiming at another person/object</li> </ul>
<b>Running Fundamental Skill</b>	<p>Running is an extension of walking, except there is a flight phase when both feet are momentarily off the ground. Children in early years run with little control. Their arms, head and legs flail and they do not always have good body control in order to stop and avoid objects and others.</p> <p>Running is great for high impact physical activity, however in order for children to confidently take part in sports when they are older they will need to learn how to run with control. Please see the Fundamental Movement Skills section for further details.</p>
<b>Spinning</b>	<p>Spinning is important for the development of balance in babies and young children.</p> <p>When spinning in a group, children will need good spatial awareness to avoid bumping into each other.</p> <p>Include spinning in active stories or ask children to pretend to be spinning tops; starting fast and going slower and slower and then falling on the ground.</p>

<b>Stepping</b>	Stepping is the movement of the foot and placing it in a different place such as walking or going up and down stairs, etc. Step from one marker to another such as spots. Include these in stories such as stepping from 'lily pad' to 'lily pad'.
<b>Stopping</b>	Children in early years need to develop good body control in order to stay safe and take part in more physical activities and sport. Stop start games played at different speeds support development of body control. It also helps children develop body rhythm, which impacts on understanding the rhythm of language.
<b>Stretching</b>	Children's muscles can tighten when they are active so stretching helps their bodies to recover while remaining flexible. Stretching can be done in fun ways such as through active stories, yoga-based moves, etc. Babies need to reach and stretch to collect objects. Children to stretch up to the ceiling, out to the side, forward, lying down, etc. Ensure children understand that stretching means becoming wider, taller, and longer, etc.
<b>Taking</b>	Babies should reach and take objects rather than giving everything to them. Children take objects out of a container and then place back into the container. This helps fine motor skills. Taking and object from somewhere and taking it to another place. In early years children need to learn to share so it is important to teach them to take things only if it is acceptable and appropriate. Taking turns helps children to develop positive social skills.
<b>Throwing Fundamental Skill</b>	<p>Children will progress from passing a ball with two hands to throwing towards a nearby space (target) to throwing up, throwing overarm and throwing underarm (along the ground). Give children as much opportunity to try throwing in different ways, whilst moving and standing still.</p> <p>Progression:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hold a ball/object with two hands</li> <li>- Push a ball/object along the ground</li> <li>- Roll an object along the ground</li> <li>- Move a ball along the ground around the body</li> <li>- Bounce a ball with two hands and then with one hand</li> <li>- Give an object/ball to another person with two hands from the chest, one hand from the shoulder</li> <li>- Give an object/ball to another person with one hand from the shoulder</li> <li>- Give an object/ball to another person underarm with one hand</li> <li>- Throw an object/ball to another person with two hands from the chest, one hand from the shoulder</li> <li>- Throw an object/ball to another person with one hand from the shoulder</li> <li>- Throw an object/ball to another person underarm with one hand</li> <li>- Throw a ball over arm with one hand aimed at a specific place or person</li> <li>- Throw a ball over arm with one hand aimed at a specific place or person whilst traveling</li> </ul>
<b>Touching</b>	Touch is important for babies, which it is their first form of communication and makes them feel safe and cared for. Stimulating the senses sends signals to children's brains that help to strengthen neural pathways that are important for all types

of learning, e.g. when children explore different textures, surfaces and shapes, they develop their sense of touch, which lays the foundation for learning other skills, such as identifying objects by touch, and using fine-motor muscles. Activities where children need to feel objects, guess what they are and explain what they are feeling helps develop language and communication.

Setting courses where children need to touch each surface as they move around will get them moving but develop touch.

### **Turning**

Children can turn on the spot (pivot), turn while moving, turn their heads, turn their hands, turn to the left, turn to the right, etc.

Progression:

- Turn on a flat surface, turning back, to one side, to the other side, etc.
- Turn on a beam, step, etc.
- Turn whilst travelling

### **Walking**

Encourage babies to walk by offering support throughout your setting such as bars attached to the wall, tables at a level that will allow them to pull themselves up on and use to walk along. Also support them by holding both hands, progressing to holding one hand.

In order to walk children use smooth, straight steps with opposite arms swinging in a relaxed manner. Encourage children to enjoy walking by going on nature walks and including this skill in active stories and games.

### **Waving**

It is good for pre-crawlers to spend time on their tummy on the floor kicking their legs and waving their arms like they are swimming as it strengthens their backs and prepares them for crawling. Waving their arms supports spatial awareness as it helps babies to discover that their hands belong to them.

Waving your arms above your head raises your heart rate, which is good for cardiovascular health. A good cross-body move and waving to friends supports social skills.

### **Wiggling**

Wiggle your whole body supports gross motor development while wiggle your fingers and toes supports fine motor development. Wiggle various body parts such as arms, legs, bottom, fingers, feet to music. Also do action songs where children need to wiggle their fingers and toes.