

Striking and Fielding Games

The concept of striking and fielding games is to 'score more runs than the opposition using the number of innings and or time allowed'.

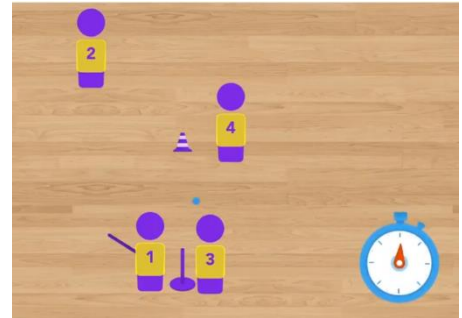
Tactical problems related to striking and fielding games include striking the object to an open space, scoring points, reducing space on defence, and bowling/pitching accurately. Examples of striking and fielding sports include baseball, cricket, softball, kilikiti, and T-ball.

Race to the Bases

Level: Year 3 and above

Equipment: Per team: 1 bat, 1 ball, 1 batting tee, 1 cone

Purpose: Race to the Base is a simple striking and fielding game that is perfect for introducing striking to your students as well as for helping students develop an understanding of fielding tactics.



Formation: Divide the class into teams of four students. Each player on a team is assigned a number from 1 to 4. Each team sets up a playing area that consists of a batting tee and a large cone that are placed 6m apart. The batting tee will be called the "batting base" and the cone will be called the "running base".

Directions to play the game:

To start the game, Player One steps up to the tee and bats a ball off of it. As soon as they do so, they begin to run back and forth between the tee and the cone. Each time they get to a base, they score a point for themselves (e.g. if a player makes it to the running base and back, they earn 2 points).

The batting player continues to run until the other players (the fielding players) on the team successfully touch the running base with the ball. Every fielding player must catch the ball before it is touched on the running base. The ball must be held as they do so, which means it cannot just be thrown to hit the cone. Once a fielding player successfully touches the running base with the ball, the running player's turn is done. Player Two then gets a turn at bat and Player One joins the rest of the team as a fielding player.

The round continues until each player on the team has had a turn to bat and run. In between each round, the players discuss tactics that they can use to a) increase the amount of points they score when running and b) stop the running player from scoring a lot of points.

Variations:

- At any point, if you would like to have students work on striking a pitched ball, you can have the next player in the batting order pitch the ball to the batting player.
- **Build One: Batting Practice**
Player One starts at bat and strikes the ball into the playing area. The other players on the team (the fielding players) have to field the ball and attempt to get it back to the tee as quickly as possible. This process is repeated two more times and then the next player (Player Two) goes to bat and Player One joins the fielding team.
- **Build Two: Race To The Bases**

Students now play the full game of Race to the Bases. As a modification, batting players can have the next player in the batting order pitch the ball using an underhand or overhand throw (e.g. if Player Three is at bat, Player Four can pitch). If the batting player chooses this option, they have four attempts to strike the pitched ball. Also, you can add a rule that when the ball is caught out of the fire, play is automatically dead. This encourages fielding players to reflect on their positioning in the field!

- **Build Three: Babe Ruth**

The teacher will now place three spots in the playing area: a red spot, a blue spot, and a yellow spot. The fielding players must now set up with one player at the running base and the two other players standing on two of the three spots. The batting player must attempt to strike the ball in the direction of the open spot.

Once the batting player has struck the ball, the fielding players may leave their positions to field the ball to the running base.

Players then rotate positions as with the earlier builds.

Modifications to be able to use game with younger students:

- Instead of using a bat the children can just throw the ball.
- Instead of the rule around every fielder having to catch the ball before it is touched on the running base, just have it that they get the ball back as fast as possible.
- Instead of running between the tee and the cone, the children could bounce up and down and count the number of bounces they can do, before the ball gets back.

Links to fundamental movement skills:

Manipulation skills

Striking with an implement

Catching

Throwing

Locomotor skills

Running

Stability Skills

Stopping

Lunging

Turning and pivoting

<https://thephysicaleducator.com/game/race-to-the-bases/>