

# Hopping

There is a natural learning progression for locomotor skills with children needing to be able to walk before they can run. This also goes for jumping and hopping. Most children will have the ability to be able to hop around 3-4 years old, but they need to be able to jump correctly first. It is important that we teach the children the correct techniques to be able to jump and hop correctly.

## General Overview of the 'Hop'

The hop is a continuous skill and involves taking off and landing on the same foot. Only one foot is used to lift the body and a smaller base of support is involved. Therefore, greater leg strength and dynamic balance is required for hopping than jumping.

It is an important skill to develop and acquire for safe body management, for example when you are pushed off balance or 'lose your footing'. Jumping and landing when catching the ball in netball, completing a basketball layup, playing the many forms of hopscotch, performing the triple jump and doing many dances all require the skill of hopping.



## Hopping Activities (5 - 12 year olds)

### Enjoying Hopping

**Setup** - Ropes, hoops, discs, cones. Children spread out in defined grass or hard surface area with equipment to hop over.

**Activity** - Children explore ways to hop.

Can you hop ...?

- on the spot, forwards/backwards/sideways
- and turn in the air
- and turn in the air making a quarter turn/half turn/full turn
- as quietly/noisily/quickly/slowly as you can
- as softly/hard as you can three times on your right/left foot
- alternating hard and soft landings
- over the rope, into the hoop, onto the disc, around the cones
- as high as you can, with little low hops, at a medium height
- as far as you can for distance
- without using your arms, using only one arm, using your opposite hopping foot
- alternating feet every eight/four/two beats
- with partners at the same time/moving forward holding hands/facing each other

### Hopping tug of war

In pairs, children hold one of partner's hands and hold their non-hopping leg with their other hand; they then try to pull each other off balance (no rough play).

### Follow the leader

In small groups, one person leads the group, one behind the other, on a hopping journey over, on and through obstacles.

## Hopping Travel

Collect a beanbag. Set it on the floor.

Hop through all the spaces without touching the beanbags.

On 'Home' command, hop home to your own beanbag without touching other beanbags or people.

### *Variations*

Run through the spaces and hop home.

Can you hop away from your beanbag and hop back to it? (Hop forwards)

## Obstacle Course

'Rivers and Puddles' – set up an obstacle course where children have to hop over 'rivers' (ropes) and hop over/ around 'puddles' (sequencing spots).

## Hopping to a Pattern

Hop to these patterns: RRR, LLL, or RLRRLL (R = right foot, L = left foot).

- Design your own hopping pattern.
- Design a hopping game using junk and/or commercial resources.

## Hopping Tag

*Setup* - Bands to identify the taggers, discs/spots. Grass or hard area. Groups of approximately 10, including two to three taggers (each wearing a band) per group.

*Activity* - This simple tag game incorporates hopping only.

Taggers hop to tag other participants who are also hopping within the designated area. When a person is tagged, the tagger gives their band to that person, who then becomes the tagger, while the previous tagger joins the rest of the group. You cannot be tagged if you are standing in a stork balance on one of the discs in the area.

Can you see ...?

- hopping only
- heads up to see where they are going
- using arms for balance
- changing hopping legs (using one only will get very tiring)

You could ask ...

Taggers: How can you work together to tag the hoppers?

Hoppers: What strategies can you use to evade the taggers?

## Hopscotch

See: <http://www.sportnz.org.nz/assets/Uploads/attachments/managing-sport/young-people/fundamental-movement-hopping.pdf>