

Static Balance

Static balance involves maintaining a desired shape in a stationary position. For this to happen, 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 (Sport NZ FMS Manual).

Static Balance Activities (Under 5s)

- **Heel toe walking** – Encourage children to put out their arms as if they are being an aeroplane, practise heel toe walking (one foot after the other) slowly around the room. To make harder put out some string/rope or draw a chalk line that children can practice along.
- **Walking on a line or beam** – When walking on a line or beam encourage children to have arms out and chin up. Make this harder by putting something on the beam the child has to pick up, or put something on their heads like a bean bag they have to try keep on.
- **Connect** – Move around and when the whistle goes the children have to connect their body parts together- e.g. elbow to knee, foot to knee, hand to head, foot to foot, hand to foot, elbow to hand etc.
- **Tight rope walking** – Get children to imagine they are on a tight rope high up in the air – heel toe walking, go backwards, jump, tippy toes. To make it harder try doing it on a rope.
- **Bean bag balances** – Put bean bag on head or other body parts and walk it around trying to keep balance.
- **Statues** – Play music and move around (dance, skip, jump etc) when music stops freeze. Alter this activity by having to freeze on one leg etc.
- **Freeze** – The group walks or jogs a short distance behind the leader. When the leader turns around, all the followers ‘freeze’ on the spot.
- **Balance Circuit** – Set up a range of balance equipment to make a circuit. Beams, rope, chalk lines, elevated equipment etc. As an extension: Fishing Trip balance circuit –. Beanbags are spread around. Children have to balance and lean down to ‘fish’ up a beanbag, then drop it off somewhere else.
- **Frogs and Flies** – Half the group are ‘flies’ and the other half are ‘frogs’. The flies ‘fly’ through the area, while the frogs jump from lily pad to lily pad (hot spots or other flat materials). On a signal, flies and frogs freeze and balance and the frogs stretch out (without coming off their lily pad) and try to catch the flies. If caught swap places.
- **Hoop flowerpots** – Put lots of hoops on the floor spread out and ask each child to stand inside one. Children bend down to pick up the hoop and they gradually stand up (like a flower growing) holding the hoop. When they reach full stretch they drop the hoop over themselves to the floor. Teachers can describe the growing, rain, sun, grow, grow. The wind blows (sway side to side) and then spins you around (spin on the spot one way then the other).