

# Striking with the Hand

Striking an object with the hand is a more advanced skill. It requires coordination of the hands and eyes, being able to track an incoming object and strike that object in one motion.

Younger children can enjoy this skill if it is learned in a developmentally appropriate manner, starting with the use of lightweight objects like balloons.

Sporting contexts where this skill is required are volleyball, basketball, and handball (Sport NZ Developing FMS Manual).

## Striking with the Hand - Activities (Under 5's)

### Tapping Activities:

- Both hands strike the floor or other still surface in time to a beat.
- Alternate hand strike floor to a beat.
- One hand strikes the other, which is held still at one side of the body.
- Both hands moving during clapping.
- With eyes shut, clap hands over head, under knees, behind back.
- Clap teacher/caregiver's hands.
- With hands tap different parts of the body.
- Add simple chants, songs, and music.

### Bouncing a ball:

Begin with large playground ball or small beach ball.

1. Bounce and catch with two hands, vary the number of bounces between catches.
  2. Bounce continuously with both hands.
  3. Bounce with dominate hand.
  4. Bounce with non-dominant hand.
- Sitting or kneeling, push/bounce a balloon downward, hands on top. Leave hands in place to catch when it bounces up.
  - Vary the ball - e.g., soft sponge ball, cubes, balloon ball, beach ball.
  - Vary height of bounce - from sitting, kneeling, standing, on low objects (e.g., steps or boxes)
  - Child bounces ball for teacher/caregiver to catch in container. Teacher/caregiver lifts container high to encourage child to push strongly.
  - Add simple tasks to bounce series- e.g., clapping, turning, bounce under leg, touch the floor.

### Bubble Fun

- Have a teacher or caregiver blow bubbles.
- Start off by trying to pop the bubble with your pointer finger.
- Try and pop the bubble by swiping/hitting with your hand. Use both front and back of hand. Try with opposite hand.

### Balloon Volleyball

- Using a balloon try to keep it off the ground. Try with both hands and then one hand.
- Move to hitting to a partner and trying to keep it off the ground.
- Tie up a rope or elastics and try and hit the balloon over the rope.

### Hit the ball

- Put a tennis ball in the toe of an old pair of tights (put the two legs together to make it stronger) and tie it from the clothesline or somewhere inside so that it hangs at a comfortable height for your child. Encourage them to hit the ball with the flat of his hand.

