

# Additional Stability Activities to Try

These additional games and activities develop stability and a variety of other fundamental skills.

## Overview

Activity name	Movement skills/concept	Suggested group size	Suggested space	Page
Magic Carpet	Pulling, balancing on a moving object, at different speeds, space awareness and relationships (with others).	7	Hard smooth surface	170
Bumper Cars	Pivoting, turning around a long axis, running or walking skills and relationships (with others).	2	Hard or grass area	171
Blizzard	Communication, walking, dynamic balance, space and body awareness, moving through, on, over and under obstacles.	2	Hard or grass area	172
Cooperative Pushing and Pulling	Cooperatively pushing and pulling, space awareness, cooperative balancing and counterbalance.	2	Hard or grass area	173
Sharks and Islands	Running, jumping, dodging, balancing, landing and space awareness.	8+	Hard or grass area	175
Nose and Toes Tag	Running, dodging, balancing and relationships (with others).	10+	Hard or grass area	176
Stuck in the Mud	Static balance, locomotor skills, evading a tagger and space awareness.	8+	Hard or grass area	177
Line Tag	Walking, dynamic balance and space awareness.	8+	Hard or grass area defined by lines or cones	178
Tunnel Relay	Static balance, throwing, running, and relationships (with others).	5-7	Hard or grass area	179
Snail Race	Dynamic balance, slow, sustained walking, and balancing.	2+	Hard or grass area	180
Pushing and Pulling Challenges in Pairs	Pushing and pulling in pairs, resisting pushing and pulling, hopping, relationships (with others).	2	Level hard or grass area	181
Pushing and Pulling in Small Groups	Pushing, pulling, balancing, counterbalancing, trust and relationships (with others).	2-10	Level hard or grass area	183

## Magic Carpet

### Movement skills/concepts

Pulling, balancing on a moving object, space awareness and relationships (with others).

### Set-up

Gym mats (magic carpets) on a hard, smooth surface.

Groups of approximately 7, with one mat per group.

Having fun



### Activity

Children take turns in having a 'magic carpet' ride on the mat, pulled by the rest of the group steadily around the defined area. The rider can be lying, sitting or crouching and can control the speed ('slower', 'faster' or 'just right').

### Can you see ...?

- rider balancing on a wide base of support
- children pulling safely under control
- children working cooperatively together
- enjoyment

### You could ask ...

What was the best way of riding the 'magic carpet'?

Did your arms get tired from pulling the mat? How can you prevent this?

## Bumper Cars

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### Movement skills/concepts

Pivoting, turning around a long axis, running or walking skills and relationships (with others).

### Set-up

Defined grass or hard area.

Children in pairs stand side by side and join hands together in front.



Children  
modify activity  
to increase  
challenge

### Activity

Pairs move freely around the marked area. To avoid bumping into any other pair, the couples pivot turn and run in another direction when they meet.

### Can you see ...?

- quick pivot turn on the balls of the feet, quarter turn to half turn only
- head up to see other pairs

### You could ask ...

How will you and your partner work together to pivot and turn?

### Variations

*Change locomotor skills:* Use walking, skipping, hopping or jumping.

## Blizzard

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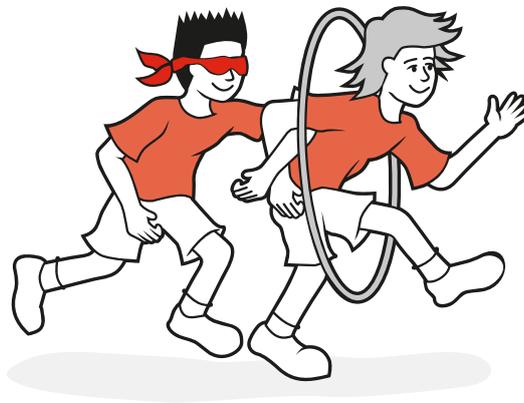
### Movement skills/concepts

Communication, walking, dynamic balance, space and body awareness, moving through, on, over and under obstacles.

### Set-up

Hoops, benches, mats, blindfolds.

Children in pairs work in a defined area: one partner is 'snow-blind' (with eyes closed or blindfolded) and the other can see.



### Activity

Two children are trapped in a snowstorm and are trying to find their way home. The objective is for the seeing partner to lead the 'snow-blind' partner through the blizzard (obstacle course) to safety. They go through a snow tunnel (hoop) and under an ice log (bench). Partners hold hands or link arms and try not to let go so neither one gets lost in the storm. Partners switch roles.

### Can you see ...?

- leader giving clear instructions
- snow-blind partner putting trust in leader

### You could ask ...

What type of instructions were the easiest to understand?

How do you build up trust in this situation?

### Variations

*Vary form of communication:* Instead of talking and holding hands, partners use a code such as finger clicks, claps or hums.

## Cooperative Pushing and Pulling

### Movement skills/concepts

Cooperatively pushing and pulling, space awareness, cooperative balancing, counterbalance.

### Set-up

Ropes, cardboard and hoops.

Children in pairs work on the floor or in a grass area.

### Activity

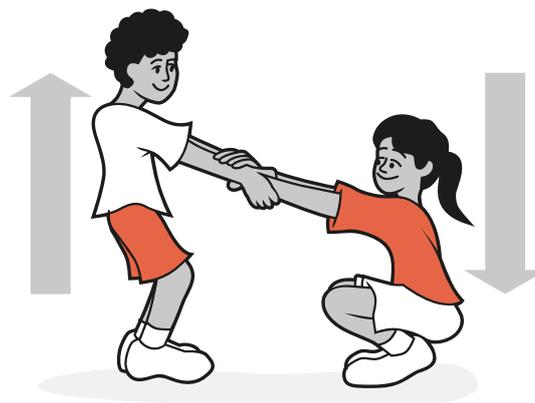
*Tow truck:* Place a piece of cardboard or a hoop on the floor. One partner stands on this and holds the end of a rope. The other takes the other end of the rope and tries to slowly pull their partner off the cardboard/hoop.

*Sawing logs:* Partners face each other, one foot forward, grasping both of the other's hands, with their elbows high. As one arm is pulled back, the other is extended well forward. Following a number of movements (5–10), they change the foot that is forward.



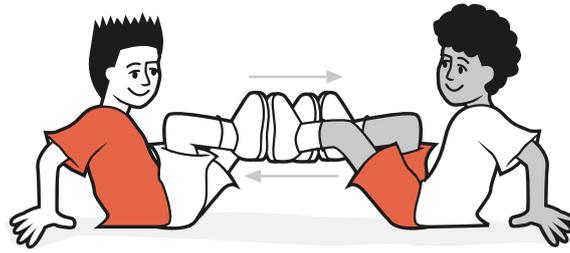
*Chainsaws:* Partners follow the same procedure as for sawing logs but, instead of backwards and forwards, they make circular hand movements.

*Back-to-back get up:* Evenly matched (for height) pairs stand back-to-back and link elbows. They push back against each other, then lower to a half squat and stand up again.



*Seesaws:* Partners face each other and hold hands. One child stands while the other crouches down. The standing child helps pull their partner up and, at the same time, crouches down. Both lean back slightly. Repeat several times, including a change in roles.

*Pedal power:* Partners sit facing each other, or sit leaning on their elbows for support. Each partner places the soles of their feet against their partner's; knees remain partly bent throughout.



#### Can you ...?

- push against your partner's feet, alternating bent and straightening legs with your partner's – try different ways of pushing
- push hard and fast for 20 counts, then slowly for 20 counts
- do double pushes in each position (i.e. two counts before changing leg position)
- try combinations (e.g. double push, double push, single, single, single)

*Be culturally  
aware and  
sensitive*

#### Can you see ...?

- stable foot and body position
- safe practices
- counterbalancing
- pairs matched in size

#### You could ask ...

Which activities did you enjoy the most?

Which activities required balance skills?

How can you perform these activities safely?

## Sharks and Islands

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### Movement skills/concepts

Running, jumping, dodging, balancing, landing and space awareness.

### Set-up

Children are scattered in the general space (islanders), one or two are 'sharks', with their arms raised for identification.

Hoops or mats 'Islands' scattered around the playing area – there are fewer islands than islanders.

### Activity

Sharks inhabit the space between the hoops or mats and attempt to tag any player who is not on an island. Only one player per island is allowed.

A player without an island may jump to an inhabited island, whereupon the occupier must run to find another island.

If tagged, that player becomes a shark.

### Can you see ...?

- head up, looking around
- landing in personal space

### You could ask ...

Sharks: How will you work together to tag the others?

Islanders: When will you jump and land on an island?

### Variations

*Vary locomotor and balance activity:* For example, hop between islands and scale balance on the island.

## Nose and Toes Tag

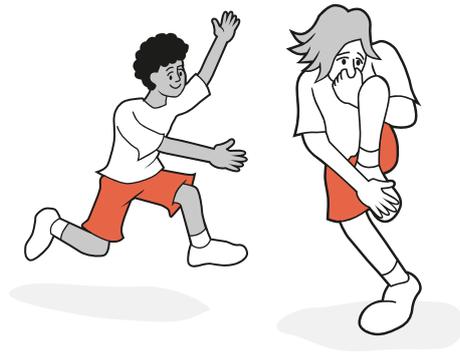
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### Movement skills/concepts

Running, dodging, balancing and relationships (with others).

### Set-up

Groups of approximately 10, with two or three taggers (holding up one arm for identification) per group, are spread out in a grass or hard surface area.



### Activity

The taggers attempt to tag other children. Other children are immune from being tagged if they are holding the toes of their left foot with their right hand, while the left hand, after passing under the left knee, holds their nose (or reversing roles for left and right hands).

### Can you see ...?

- balance
- tight muscles

### You could ask ...

*Runners:* When will you decide to balance or to evade the taggers?

How will you maintain your balance?

### Variations

*Vary skill:* Focus on a locomotor skill and balance, (e.g. hopping and stork balance).

## Stuck in the Mud

### Movement skills/concepts

Static balance, locomotor skills, evading a tagger and space awareness.

### Set-up

Children are spread out in a defined grass or hard surface area: one or two children are taggers; the rest are runners.



*Be culturally  
aware and  
sensitive*

### Activity

Taggers try to tag the runners. If tagged, a runner becomes 'stuck in the mud' and holds a static balance (e.g. straddle, scale balance, front support) until released.

To release a stuck child, a free runner must crawl under, step over or run around them, with the movement depending on the stuck runner's static position.

### Can you see ...?

- head up to see others
- tight muscles to hold balance

### You could ask ...

*Taggers:* How will you work together to tag the runners?

*Runners:* What can you do to hold your balance while you wait to be freed?

### Variations

*Vary locomotor and balance skill:* Try hopping or skipping as locomotor skill, and front support as balance skill.

## Line Tag

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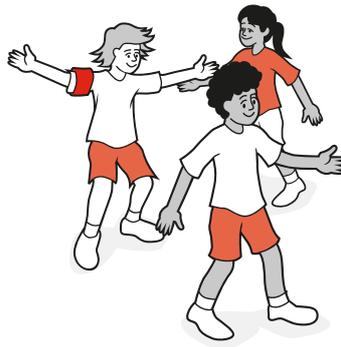
### Movement skills/concepts

Walking, dynamic balance and space awareness.

### Set-up

Hard area defined by cones or lines; bibs or bands.

Children spread out along lines/cones: two children are taggers, who wear bands.



### Activity

On a signal, children walk along the lines, trying to avoid being tagged. They can change direction, but cannot jump to other lines.

If tagged, a child puts on a band and begins to tag others.

### Can you see ...?

- walking only on the lines
- arms extended for balance

### You could ask ...

How will you use the lines to avoid being tagged?

### Variations

*Vary locomotor skills:* Use skipping, running or hopping.

*Modify rules:* Children can jump lines, or coach/teacher calls out specific lines that are safe (e.g. only vertical lines or curved lines).

## Tunnel Relay

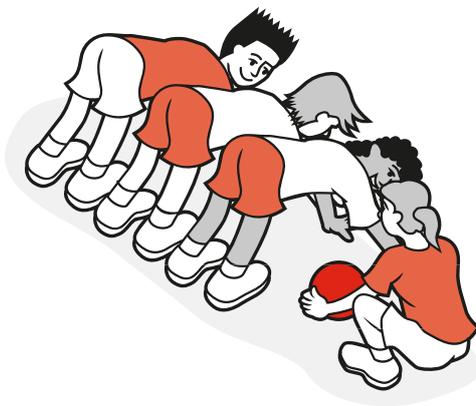
### Movement skills/concepts

Static balance, throwing, running, and relationships (with others).

### Set-up

Mats, balls.

Groups of five–seven, with a ball per group. Children are standing, lined up one behind the other with their feet spread in a straddle position.



### Activity

*Roll to the back:* The child at the front of the line rolls the ball under everyone's legs to the back person, who retrieves the ball and runs to the front. Repeat in the new positions.

*Front support:* Two children are at either end of a 'tunnel' created by the rest of the group, who begin on hands and knees side by side on the floor and then, on a signal, lift up into a front support to form the tunnel. The child in front of the tunnel rolls the ball to the child at the back, who then runs to the front. The child at the front joins the start of the tunnel and the child at the end of the tunnel disengages from the tunnel to receive the ball.

### Can you see ...?

- tight muscles
- being still

### You could ask ...

How can you hold the front support position?

### Variations

*Vary static balance position:* Try a 'V' sit or back support, and throw the ball over and roll under. Have a race with another group and see who finishes first.

## Snail Race

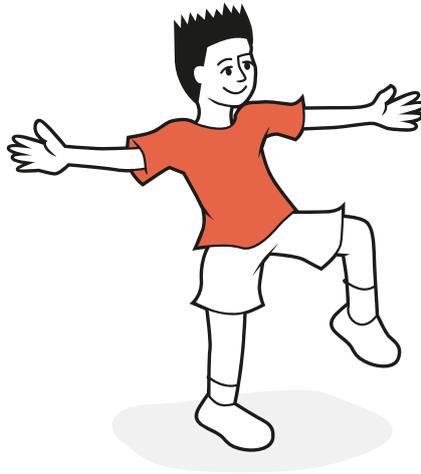
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### Movement skills/concepts

Dynamic balance; slow, sustained walking; and balancing.

### Set-up

Hard court area.



### Activity

The aim of this race is to be the last to finish.

All children line up on the start line. On a signal, children race as slowly as they can to the finish line. Children must be moving at all times. Any child who stops is out of the race.

### Can you see ...?

- arms stretched out for balance

### You could ask ...

How will you keep your balance when you are moving slowly?

### Variations

*Vary locomotor skill:* Use hopping, walking or jumping.

## Pushing and Pulling Challenges in Pairs

### Movement skills/concepts

Pushing and pulling in pairs, resisting pushing and pulling, hopping and relationships (with others).

### Set-up

Children are in pairs of evenly matched skill on a suitable surface.

Teach the wrist grasp.



### Activity

*Two-handed tug of war:* Partners face each other across a line and grasp one or both wrists. Each attempts to pull the other across the line. Next try two hoops instead of the line.

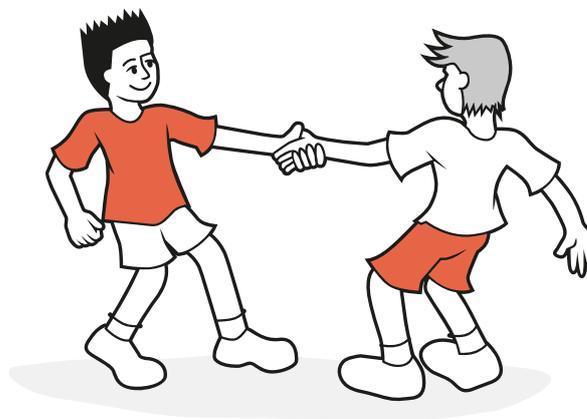
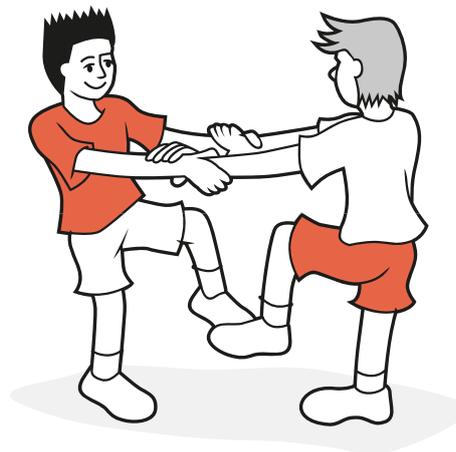
*Two-handed push:* Partners face each other across a line and place their palms against the other's palms. They both try to push their partner backwards so that they can walk across the line.

*Hopping tug of war:* Partners face each other, grasp wrists and raise one knee forward. They hop and pull until one contestant is forced to lower their leg.

*Hopping push:* Partners face each other with their hands on each other's shoulders and one foot raised. Each tries to push their opponent back over a line while hopping. Signal change of feet frequently.

*Turn the turtle:* One child lies face down with arms and legs spread. Their partner tries to flip them onto their back.

*Hand wrestle (Danish wrestling):* Partners face each other, grasp one wrist with right/left hand and put opposite foot forward. By pushing, pulling and feinting, they try to make their partner move their front foot. The other foot may be moved to counter. A point is scored when the partner moves over their front foot.



*Chinese boxing:* Each partner holds the opponent's right (left) wrist. The object is to touch the opponent's shoulder.

*Foot tug:* Hooking foot to foot, opponents try to pull each other across a line.

*Hoop wrestle:* Two hoops are placed so that they touch. Each partner stands in a hoop and places their hands on their opponent's shoulders. Pairs wrestle until one partner is forced outside the hoop. Skipping ropes, chalk circles or parallel lines could be used.



Are all children involved and enjoying activities?



*Ball tug:* Partners face each other. Both grip a large ball, then try to pull each other across a line.



*Indian wrestle:* Partners lie on their stomachs facing each other. They grip right/left hands, with elbows on the ground and forearms upright. They try to make the back of their partner's hand touch the ground.

### Can you see ...?

- evenly matched pairs
- strong, steady pushes and pulls
- strong grips
- friendly competition
- fair play and good sporting behaviour

### You could ask ...

What guidelines might you and your partner set up to enjoy these activities safely?

What are examples of fair play and good sporting behaviour?

## Pushing and Pulling in Small Groups

### Movement skills/concepts

Pushing, pulling, balancing, counterbalancing and relationships (with others).

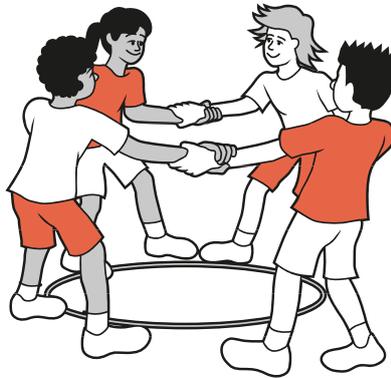
### Set-up

Hoops.

Teach wrist grip.

Groups work on a suitable surface.

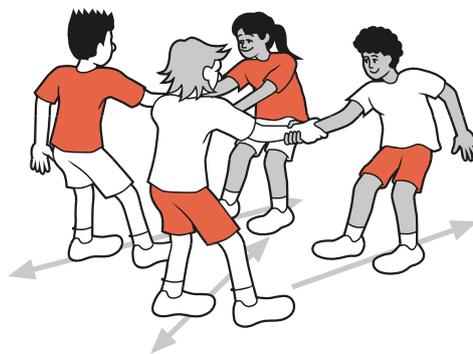
### Activity



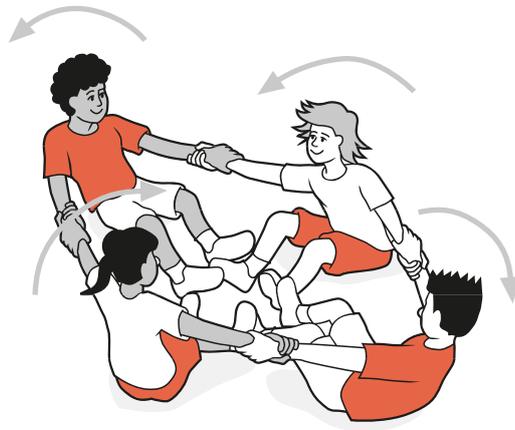
*Hot spot:* Groups use the wrist grip to join in a circle round a hot spot (a hoop or a similar ground marking). The aim is to pull the circle and make someone stand on the hot spot.

*Socko:* Place four or five gym mats together. Self-chosen groups of four–five children wear socks but no shoes. The aim is to remove the socks of other participants and to keep possession of your own socks.

Set clear rules on the degree of roughness allowed. Allow anyone to withdraw or call 'Stop' at any time. No kicking.



*Zigzag tug of war:* Two lines of three–four face each other. Each person takes a wrist grip with two people facing. Each line attempts to pull the other line to a mark.



*Rowing in fours:* Four children sit in a circle joined by the wrist grip and with knees slightly bent. One pair of opposites leans in while the other pair leans back. Change positions rhythmically.

### Can you see ...?

- safety
- fair competition

### You could ask ...

Balancing and pulling in small groups requires a lot of trust.  
How did your group build trust?