

# Hopping

## Description

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Hopping is a springing action that involves taking off from one foot and landing on that same foot. It involves dynamic balance, with the non-hopping side adding counterbalance and force to assist with the continuous forwards and upwards movement. Hopping is a component of many other fundamental skills, (e.g. in skipping and kicking for distance, in sports like athletics (component of triple jump) and in dance activities).



## Applying movement principles

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*Balance:* The body is balanced when the centre of gravity is over the base of support. The base of support is the hopping foot and, to achieve balance, the body leans towards the hopping foot while the non-hopping side provides the counterbalance and the arms assist.

*Force:* To achieve height or distance in the hop, a summation of force is required. This is achieved by extending the ankles, legs and arms forwards and upwards together.

## Learning cues

- swing both arms back, then vigorously forward and upward
- push off from toes in take-off
- land on toes, then ball of foot, bending knee to absorb shock

## Learning phases

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### Discovering phase

In this phase children enjoy being creative with hopping and discovering the different qualities of hopping. Characteristics at the discovering phase of learning are:

- body is upright
- very little height or distance is achieved in the hop
- children lose balance easily – they can do only one or two hops.

### Developing phase

Children develop hopping techniques through practising the skill of hopping in games and activities. Characteristics of hopping in this phase are:

- children lean slightly forwards
- arms move forwards and backwards vigorously
- knees flex in landing
- balance is poorly controlled.

### Consolidating phase

Applying the skill of hopping to a variety of contexts is the focus of this phase.

Characteristics of hopping in this phase are:

- non-hopping leg is used to support the take-off and momentum of the hop
- body leans forwards over the hopping foot
- arms are coordinated with take-off, moving forwards and upwards
- hopping action is continuous and rhythmical.

## Overview

Learning phase	Activity name	Movement skills/concept	Suggested group size	Suggested space	Page
<b>Discovering</b>	Enjoying Hopping	Hopping through different pathways, levels and qualities (e.g. fast, soft), and relationships (with equipment and partner).	1	Hard or grass surface	88
<b>Developing</b>	Hopping Far and High	Hopping for height, hopping for distance, static and dynamic balance.	2-4	Hard or grass area	90
	Long Hopping Relay	Hopping for distance, static and dynamic balance, and landing safely.	2-4	Hard or grass area	91
<b>Consolidating</b>	Hopping Tag	Sustained hopping, hopping for speed and to evade an opponent, balance (static and dynamic).	10	Hard or grass area	92
	Hopscotch	Hopping, balance and throwing for accuracy.	2-3	Hard or grass area	93

## Discovering Hopping

### Enjoying Hopping

#### Movement skills/concepts

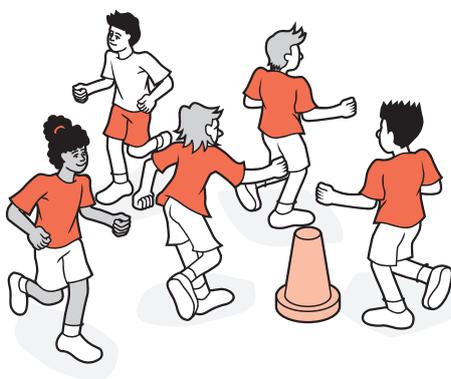
Hopping through different pathways, levels and qualities (e.g. fast, soft), and relationships (with equipment and partner).

#### Set-up

Ropes, hoops, discs, cones.

Children spread out in defined grass or hard surface area with equipment to hop over.

*Children learn  
by exploring*



#### 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

##### Can you see ...?

- enjoyment
- landing safely, with the knee bent on hopping foot
- using arms to balance

**You could ask ...**

Which is the easiest: hopping on the spot or for distance? Why is this?

Why do some of you hop better on one leg than the other? Which is your preferred leg?

What did it feel like not using your arms? How do you use your arms for hopping on the spot compared to hopping for distance?

**Variations**

*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.

## Developing Hopping

### Hopping Far and High

#### Movement skills/concepts

Hopping for height, hopping for distance, static and dynamic balance.

#### Set-up

Cones, low platform (bench, box top), chalk, balloon, string and ropes.

Children spread out in small groups in a defined hard or grass area.



#### Activity

Children practise activities.

#### Can you ...?

- stand on one foot, hop three times in a row and hold your landing
- hop as high as you can and hold your landing
- alternate high and low hops
- hop over lines or ropes on the ground (spread ropes out so they are in lines with a step in between, like a ladder)
- hop over low cones spread out in a line, hop over four obstacles in a row
- take two steps and hop as high as you can – step, step and hop. If you hop off your right foot, which foot will you step on to first

Progress approach from walking to running to six strides, taking off from a line.

#### Can you ...?

- hop as far as you can – put a cone where you land and try to improve on this
- hop over different parts of the 'widening stream' (two ropes laid out, narrow at one end and wider at the other)
- hop to head a suspended target (balloon held by another person)
- hop over a tall cone
- hop onto a low bench
- hop with different combinations of run-up (e.g. two stride, four stride run up), then hop over a series of objects (e.g. hop over rope, over cone, over rope, onto bench)

#### Can you see ...?

- taking off while swinging the arms forwards and upwards
- landing with knees bent

#### You could ask ...

What is the importance of your arms in hopping?

What is the difference between the way you hop for distance and the way you hop for height?

## Long Hopping Relay

### Movement skills/concepts

Hopping for distance, static and dynamic balance, and landing safely.

### Set-up

Cones.

Teams, each with the same number of children, are lined up behind a starting line in a grass or hard area, with one cone per team.



Are the children challenged?

### Activity

The first person in each team stands on the starting line and hops as far as they can. A cone is placed where they first contact the ground with their hopping foot. The second person then takes off from the cone and hops as far as they can, and the cone is moved to where the second person landed. The relay continues until everyone in the team has had a go.

The winning team is the team that has hopped the furthest.

### Can you see ...?

- taking off while swinging arms forwards and upwards
- using the non-hopping leg to give momentum to hop
- landing safely with a bent leg

### You could ask ...

How will you achieve the maximum possible distance in your hop?

How will you land safely?

### Variations

*Hopping for speed:* The first team finished with the coolest pose wins.

## Consolidating Hopping

### Hopping Tag

#### Movement skills/concepts

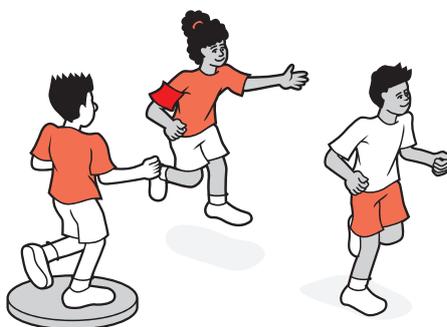
Sustained hopping, hopping for speed and to evade an opponent, balance (static and dynamic).

#### Set-up

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?

#### Variations

*Vary locomotor skill:* Leap, jump or skip.

## Hopscotch

### Movement skills/concepts

Hopping balance, and throwing for accuracy.

### Set-up

Chalk to mark out hopscotch patterns, beanbag or stone.

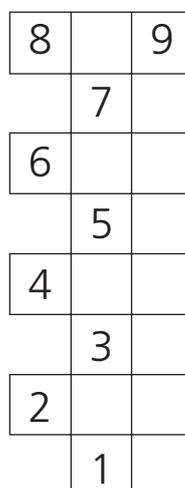
Groups of 2–3 spread out in a smooth, hard surface area.

### Activity

Groups take turns at the different hopscotch activities.

#### 1. Simple hopscotch

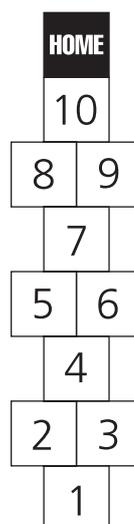
Players hop in sequence and place both feet in the empty spaces.



*Let the children play*

#### 2. Traditional hopscotch

In turn, each player throws the beanbag onto square 1, hops over square 1 to 2 and hops up through the sequence before jumping with two feet on 'Home'. Then they hop back down the sequence, pick up the beanbag and hop out. Repeat by throwing the beanbag in square 2, hopping over that square, and so on.



### 3. Ladder hopscotch

In turn, each player throws the beanbag into square 1, hops over this square, picks up their beanbag and hops into square 1 and out. They then throw the beanbag into square 2, hop into square 1, hop over square 2 and into square 3, pick up the beanbag, then hop into square 2, into square 1 and finally out. They continue in this way up and down the ladder.

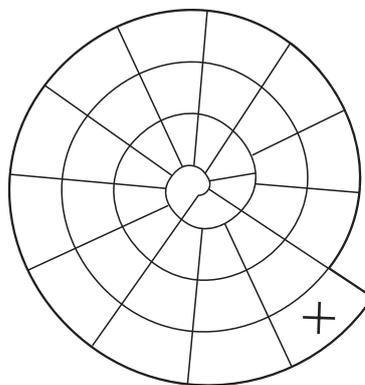
Draw the ladder with narrow rungs so the children have to jump sideways.

10
9
8
7
6
5
4
3
2
1

### 4. Snail hopscotch

In turn, each player hops in each section of the snail until they reach the centre circle; they then reverse the sequence to hop out of the snail. When a player completes the snail, they claim a section of the snail by placing a beanbag in it. No one is allowed in this section except the owner, who can use this section to rest.

After the group has played for a set time, the player who owns the most sections is the winner.



### Can you see ...?

- changing hopping legs when tired
- using arms for balance
- landing safely, with knee bent on hopping foot

### You could ask ...

Which hopscotch pattern did you find the easiest? Why was this?

Did you change the way you hopped for the snail pattern? If you did, what did you change?