

Balance Tag Games

SKILL FOCUS

Locomotor Movement | Balancing

SPORTAUS

Special
Olympics
Australia



GAME SUMMARY:

These warm up activities get players performing locomotor movement and static balances.

Equipment needed:

- > Markers
- > Bibs for taggers

Game setup:

Mark out a square playing space with clear boundaries. Players spread out inside the square. Choose one player to be the tagger and give them a coloured bib.



COACH INSTRUCTIONS

GAME 1: STORK TAG

Ask players to spread out around the playing area.

TO THE TAGGER: "Run around and try to gently tag all the players who are moving."

TO EVERYONE ELSE: "Run around and try to keep away from the tagger. If you get tagged, you need to freeze and stand like a stork. Players who are not tagged can free someone who is standing like a stork by giving them a high 5."

GAME 2: FROST & THAW

Choose one player to be the tagger or 'Frost'. Choose another player to be 'Thaw' who can free players who have been tagged.

TO FROST: "Run around and try to gently tag all the players who are moving."

TO THE RUNNERS: "Run around and try to keep away from Frost. If you get tagged by Frost, you need to freeze in a balance position. You can only join back into the game if Thaw frees you."

TO THAW: "If you see a player that is frozen on the spot, you can free them by giving a high 5."

BRANCH OUT! Tips to modify Balance Tag Games

Rules:

- > Add more taggers.
- > Players perform different locomotor movements e.g. skipping, hopping.
- > Change the balance that players need to perform within each game, e.g. balance on 1 leg only.
- > Rotate Thaw by swapping roles with the player they free.

Equipment:

- > Using more field markers will better outline playing boundaries.

Teaching Style:

- > Give **1 on 1 coaching** to discretely correct balancing technique.
- > **Ask players** to think of their own balances.

Environment:

- > Ideally play indoors and minimise distractions.
- > Make the playing area bigger to allow players to spread out, or smaller to increase the intensity of the game.

ALTERNATE SPORTS & SKILLS

Use these games to develop locomotor movement skills for any sport and balancing skills for gymnastics:



SAFETY!

- > Ensure playing area is free from hazards and obstructions. If indoors, make sure boundaries are well clear of walls.
- > Players need to be aware of those around them to avoid collisions.
- > Start with a slow locomotor movement such as walking or jogging. Build up spatial awareness skills before getting players to run at speed.
- > Balances need to be appropriate to ability level of players.

Frogs & Lily Pads

SKILL FOCUS

Locomotor Movement



GAME SUMMARY:

Players practice two-foot jumping and landing technique by jumping between hoops.

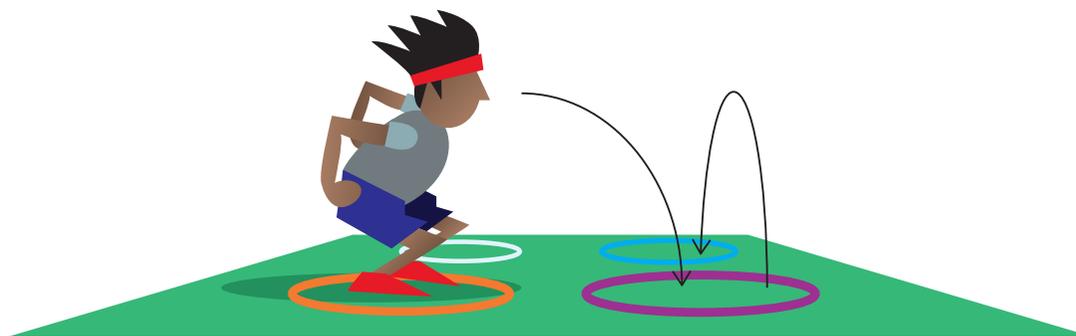
Equipment needed:

> Hoops

Game setup:

Distribute several hoops inside the playing area (at least 5 more than the number of players). Make sure hoops are an appropriate distance apart for players to safely jump from hoop to hoop. Players stand inside a hoop. Demonstrate how to perform a two-foot jump by swinging arms back to propel forward and land on two feet with knees bent.

OPTIONAL: Use fun names such as 'pond' for the playing space, 'lily pads' for the hoops and 'frogs' for the participants.



COACH INSTRUCTIONS

STAGE 1

"Jump into as many hoops as you can."

STAGE 2

"I will give you 30 seconds, count how many different hoops you can jump into. You must be the only person in your hoop."

Repeat and see if players can beat their score.

STAGE 3

Progression from stage 3.

"This time, I am a tagger (or 'shark'). If you jump into the same hoop as me your score goes back to zero."

Call "STOP!" after 30 - 60 seconds. Choose a player to become the tagger. Repeat the game.

ASK: "How can you make sure you keep away from the tagger?"

FOUNDATION:

Skill Development

COMPLEX:

Strategies & Tactics



BRANCH OUT! Tips to modify Frogs & Lily Pads

Rules:

- > Allow players to walk or jog in between the hoops if constant jumping is too difficult.
- > Rotate taggers - if a player jumps in a hoop with the tagger, they become the tagger.
- > Vary skill, e.g. players can take off from one foot and land on two feet.

Equipment:

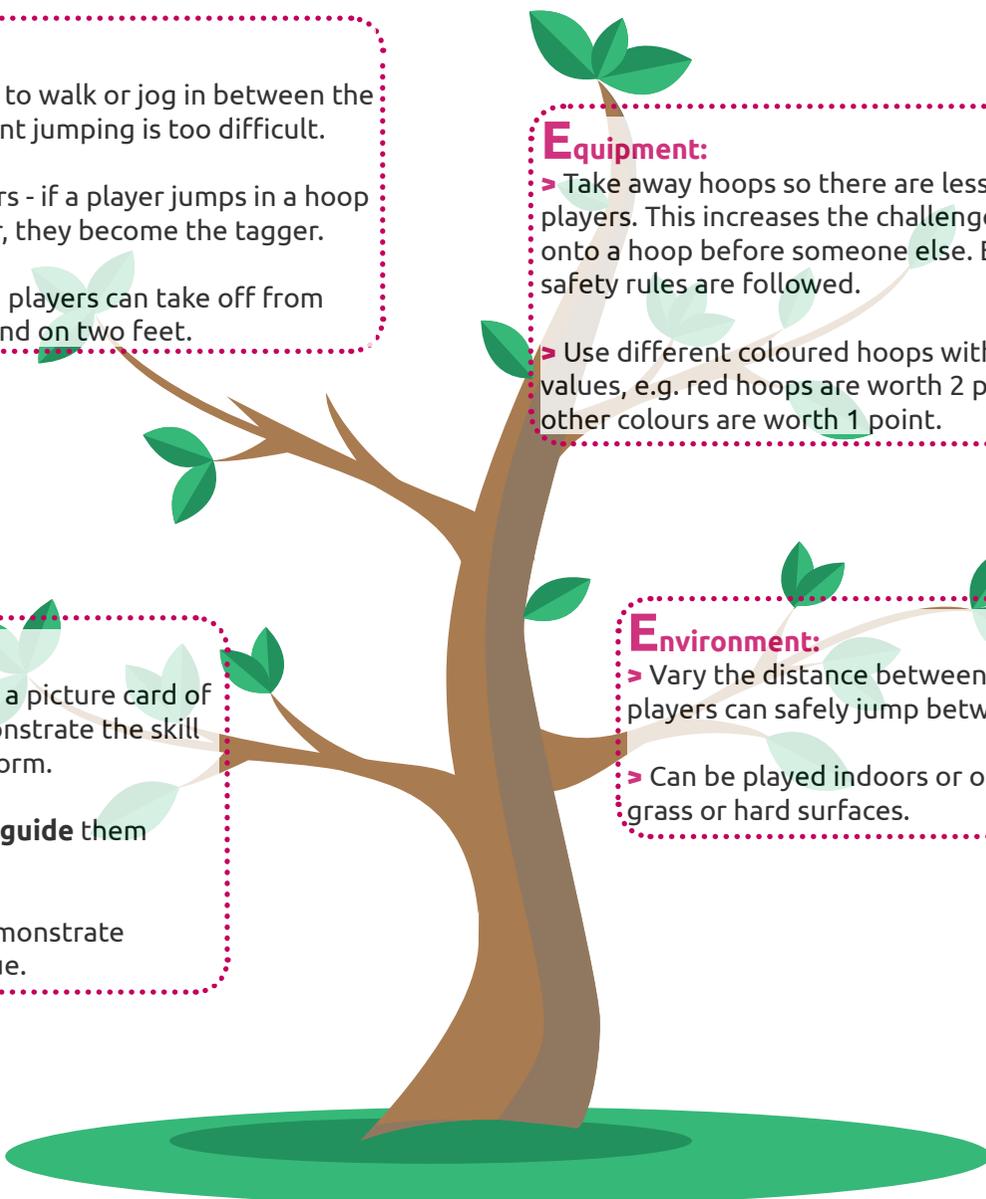
- > Take away hoops so there are less hoops than players. This increases the challenge of jumping onto a hoop before someone else. Ensure safety rules are followed.
- > Use different coloured hoops with different values, e.g. red hoops are worth 2 points and all other colours are worth 1 point.

Teaching Style:

- > Use **visual aids** such as a picture card of a two-foot jump to demonstrate the skill you want players to perform.
- > Jump with players and **guide** them through the skill.
- > Use **role models** to demonstrate correct jumping technique.

Environment:

- > Vary the distance between hoops (ensure players can safely jump between hoops).
- > Can be played indoors or outdoors, on grass or hard surfaces.



ALTERNATE SPORTS & SKILLS

Use this game to develop other locomotor skills such as hopping and leaping.

SAFETY!

- > Encourage players to look where they are jumping so they don't collide with another person.
- > Play on grass rather than hard surfaces for safety.
- > If playing on a hard surface, players must be careful to land in the middle of the hoop so it doesn't slide under foot.

Balance Energisers

SKILL FOCUS

Locomotor Movement | Balancing



GAME SUMMARY:

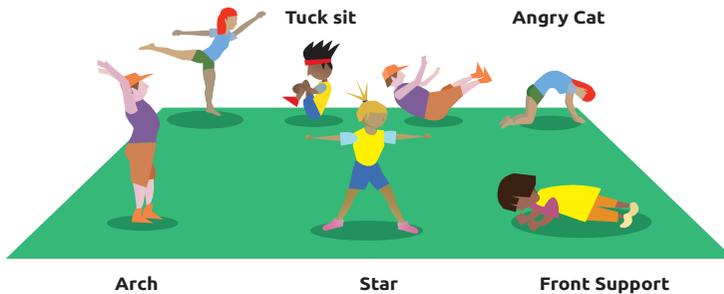
These warm up activities get players performing a variety of locomotor movements and static balances.

Equipment needed:

- > **All Games:** markers
- > **Balancing Act:** variety of objects to use for balancing such as balloons, poles, shoes, hats, tennis racquet, balls, etc.

Game setup:

Mark out a square playing space with clear boundaries.



COACH INSTRUCTIONS

GAME 1: TRAFFIC LIGHTS

Players spread out inside the square.

Coach Instructions:

"When I say GREEN LIGHT, jog around inside the square. When I say YELLOW light, jog on the spot. When I say RED LIGHT, you must stop and perform the balance I call out."

Use a variety of balances. Be creative and give balances fun names, for example:

- Speed hump = players curl into a ball
- Tree = stand up tall with arms reaching up in the air (high V)
- Bridge = hold a front support bridge on hands and feet / knees
- Pedestrian crossing = lunge movements
- Street light = arabesque balance

FOUNDATION:

Skill Development

GAME 2: HERE, THERE, NOWHERE

Players line up along an end line.

Coach Instructions:

"When I say HERE, run towards me. When I say THERE, run away from me. When I say NOWHERE, I will then give you a balance and you need to do it on the spot. You can copy me."

Balances can include tuck sit, arabesque, angry cat, V-sit, arch, side support etc.

GAME 3: BALANCING ACT

Provide a variety of objects.

Coach Instructions:

"Pick up an object. I will call out a part of your body. You need to balance the object on this body part. Try to hold your balance and keep the object still for 5 seconds."

Body parts that can be used to balance objects on include palm / back of hand, knee, foot, elbow, chin.

ASK: "How can you keep your body stable when you're balancing something on your foot?"

COMPLEX:

Strategies & Tactics

BRANCH OUT! Tips to modify Balance Energisers

Rules:

- > Players must hold static balances for a set amount of time, e.g. 5 seconds.
- > Players perform different locomotor movements e.g. skipping, hopping.

Equipment:

- > Be creative with the equipment used for **Balancing Act**. Objects just need to be safe and light enough for players to hold comfortably.

Teaching Style:

- > Give **one on one coaching** to discretely correct balancing technique.
- > **Ask players** to think of their own balances.

Environment:

- > Ideally play indoors and minimise distractions.
- > Make the playing area bigger to allow players to spread out, or smaller to increase the intensity of the game.

ALTERNATE SPORTS & SKILLS

Use this game to develop balancing and movement skills for gymnastics.



SAFETY!

- > Ensure playing area is free from hazards and obstructions. If indoors, make sure boundaries are well clear of walls.
- > Players need to be aware of those around them to avoid collisions.
- > Start with a slow locomotor movement such as walking or jogging. Build up spatial awareness skills before getting players to run at speed.
- > Balances need to be appropriate to ability level of players.

Body Balances

SKILL FOCUS

Balancing



GAME SUMMARY:

Players move around the playing space. On the coach's call, players perform a balance using specific body parts.

Game setup:

Mark out a safe playing space. When playing the game with pairs, match players of similar ability level.



STAGE 1

Play individually.

*"Move around the playing area. When I call **STOP** you need to freeze. You then need to perform a balance for 5 seconds with only the body parts I say touching the floor."*

Some examples can be:

- 1 foot
- 1 foot, 2 hands
- 2 hands, 2 knees
- 2 feet, 1 hand

STAGE 2

Play in pairs.

*"Move around the playing space with your partner. When I call **STOP** you need to freeze. You then need to perform a balance for 5 seconds with your partner. I will tell you which parts of your bodies can be touching the floor. You have to be touching or holding onto your partner."*

Pairs can only have the body parts called out combined touching the floor. Some examples can be:

- 3 feet, 2 hands
- 2 knees, 4 hands
- 2 bottoms, 2 hands, 2 feet

ASK: *"Is it easier to balance when you're closer to the ground or further away?" "How can you work with your partner to hold the balance?"*

COACH INSTRUCTIONS

FOUNDATION:

Skill Development

COMPLEX:

Strategies & Tactics



BRANCH OUT! Tips to modify Body Balances

Rules:

- > Use different locomotor movements to move around e.g. hopping, skipping, jogging.
- > Vary the time that players need to hold the balance.
- > Allow creativity and award points for interesting and new balances.
- > Make it harder by adding challenging combinations using body parts such as backs, elbows and shoulders.

Equipment:

- > Gym mats can be used for safety if playing on hard surface.
- > Challenge players by adding an object such as a hoop, ball or bean bag to balance between them.

Teaching Style:

- > Provide **one on one coaching** during game.
- > Use **picture cards** to show the skills and movements you want players to perform.
- > Use appropriate **physical contact** to support players to improve their technique.

Environment:

- > Ideally play indoors where there are no distractions to allow players to concentrate on each balance.

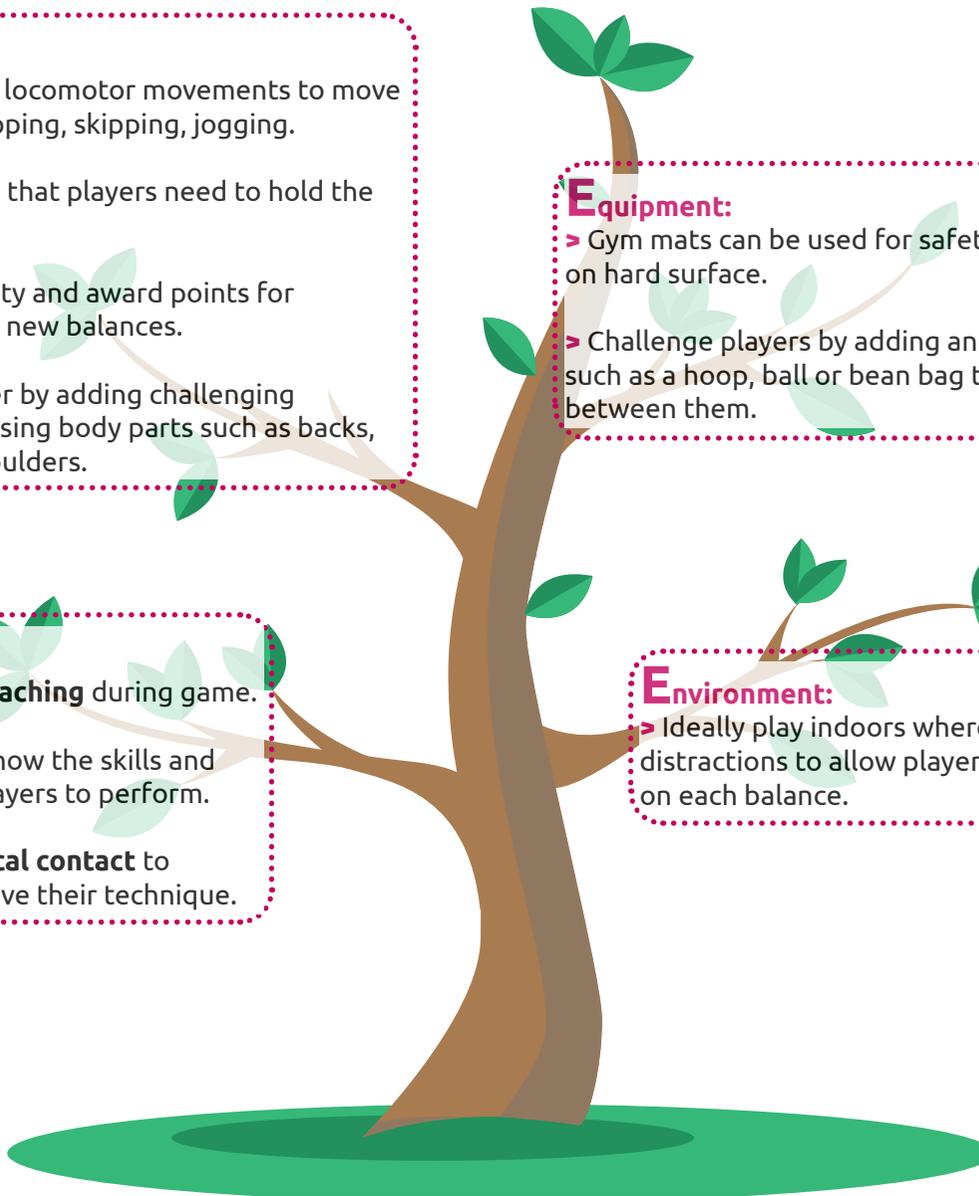
ALTERNATE SPORTS & SKILLS

Use this game to develop balancing and movement skills for gymnastics.



SAFETY!

- > Balances need to be appropriate to the ability level of players.
- > Play on soft surfaces or use gym mats.
- > Do not let players use their head to balance on.
- > Make sure players move out of the balance slowly (do not just let go).



Body Obstacle Course

SKILL FOCUS

Balancing | Locomotor Movement



GAME SUMMARY:

Players work in relay teams. 2 or 3 players hold a balance to create an obstacle course. 1 player runs through the course then swaps position with one of their team members.

Equipment needed:

- Coloured dots x 3-4 of different colours
- Gym mats for players to balance on (optional)

Game setup:

Place coloured dots on the floor to mark where players make obstacles. Have different colours to indicate different shapes.



STAGE 1

Spread dots around the room / playing space.

"Move around the room making a shape on each of the dots. Hold positions for at least 5 seconds then move to another dot."

"On the red dots, make a stone by curling up into a ball."

"On the blue dots, make a bridge by holding your body up on your hands and feet."

"On the yellow dots, make a tree by standing up tall with your arms reaching up towards the sky."

See if players can make a shape on all dots.

STAGE 2

Split the group into teams of 4. Place 4 dots in a line for each team, with one player standing on each dot.

TO FIRST PLAYER: "Curl up into a ball on the ground and stay still like a stone."

TO SECOND PLAYER: "Make a bridge by holding your body up on your hands and feet. Keep your body straight."

TO THIRD PLAYER: "Stand up tall like a tree with your arms reaching up towards the sky."

TO THE RUNNING PLAYER: "Run up to the stone and carefully step over. Then run to the bridge and crawl under. Run around the tree and back to the start. Swap places with the stone."

Repeat with the next player swapping places with the bridge and so on.

STAGE 3

Progression from stage 2.

Teams have a relay race.

"I will give you 1 minute, count how many players you can get to run through the obstacle course."

Repeat and see if teams can beat their score.

ASK:

"Can you think of another shape you can make with your body?"

COACH INSTRUCTIONS

FOUNDATION:

Skill Development

COMPLEX:

Strategies & Tactics

BRANCH OUT! Tips to modify Body Obstacle Course

Rules:

- > Use different locomotor movements to move between obstacles eg. skipping, hopping.
- > Allow players to think of their own shapes.

Equipment:

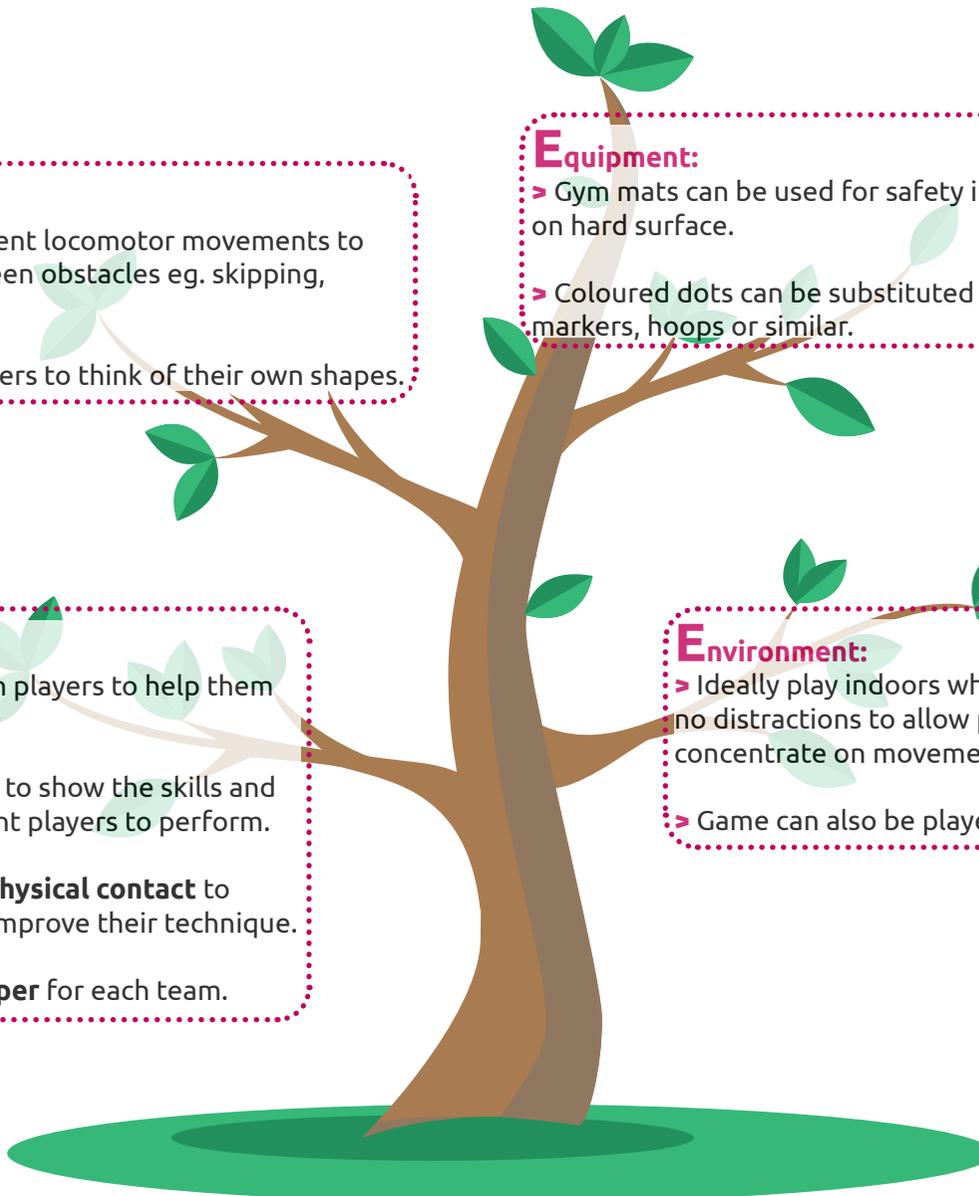
- > Gym mats can be used for safety if playing on hard surface.
- > Coloured dots can be substituted for markers, hoops or similar.

Teaching Style:

- > **Move around** with players to help them through the game.
- > Use **picture cards** to show the skills and movements you want players to perform.
- > Use appropriate **physical contact** to support players to improve their technique.
- > Assign a **staff helper** for each team.

Environment:

- > Ideally play indoors where there are no distractions to allow players to concentrate on movements.
- > Game can also be played on grass.



ALTERNATE SPORTS & SKILLS

Use this game to develop balancing and movement skills for gymnastics.



SAFETY!

- > Balances and movements need to be appropriate to the ability level of players.
- > Play on soft surfaces or use gym mats.
- > Do not let players use their head to balance on.
- > Make sure players move out of the balance slowly (do not just let go).
- > When players are stepping over, under or around players holding a balance, make sure they do it safely.

Dance and Spin

SKILL FOCUS

Locomotor Movement | Balancing

SPORTAUS

Special
Olympics
Australia



GAME SUMMARY:

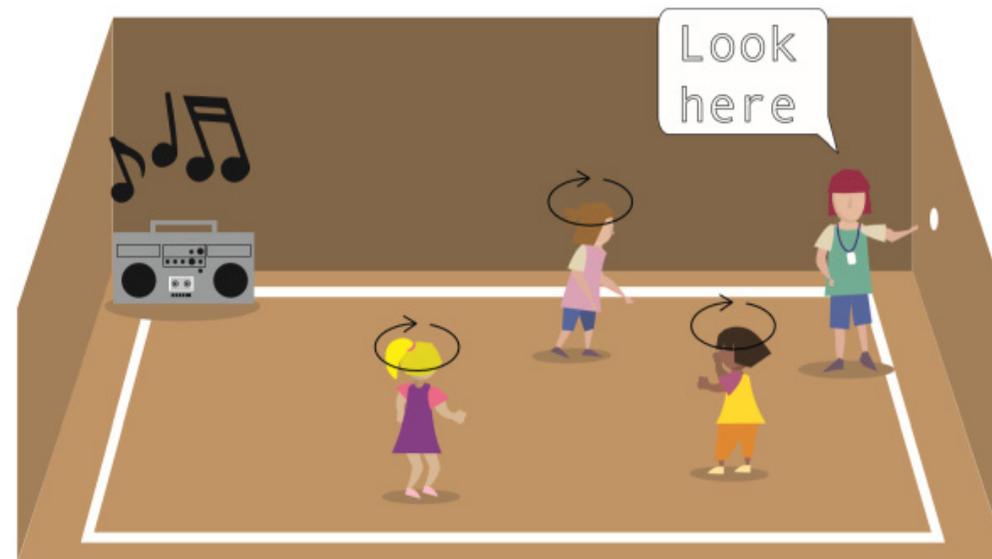
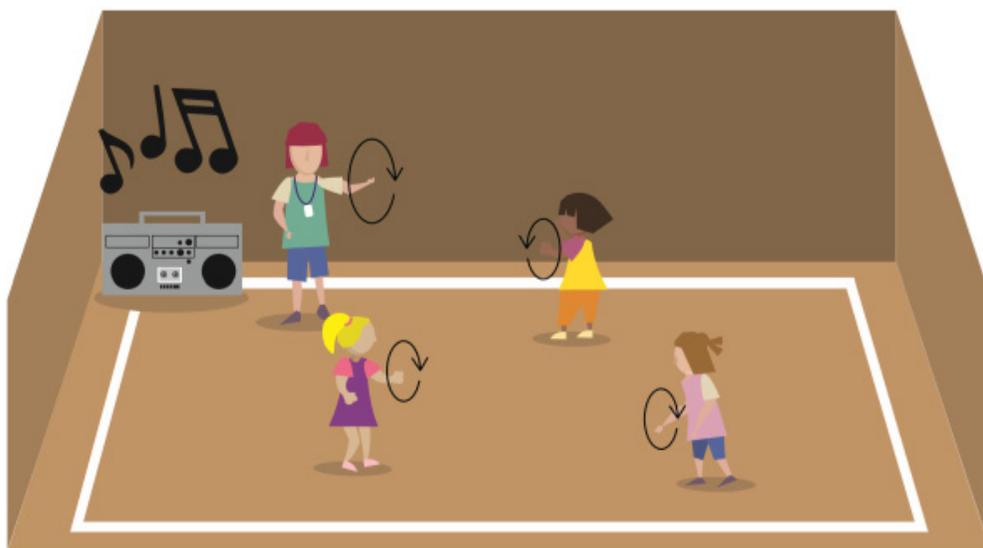
Players dance around the room. When the music stops, players perform a rotation movement.

Equipment needed:

► Music player

Game setup:

Use any playing space away from obstructions and hazards. Players spread out so they have sufficient space to move.



COACH INSTRUCTIONS

GAME 1: CIRCLE FUN

"We are going to use different parts of our body to make circle movements. When the music starts, dance around the room. Be careful not to bump into anyone. When the music stops you need to freeze and copy me."

Each time the music stops, call out either "left leg", "right leg", "left arm" or "right arm". Players copy you making circles with that body part. You can make large circles or small circles. Start the music after 10 seconds.

ASK: "How can you keep your balance while you are making circles with your arm/leg?"

GAME 2: SPOT TURNS

"We are going to practice spinning on the spot. When the music starts, dance around the room. Be careful not to bump into anyone. When the music stops you need to freeze and listen to my instructions."

Each time the music stops, pick a spot on one of the walls for all players to focus on. Explain how to turn in a full circle while maintaining eye contact on that spot i.e. quarter turn to the right looking over left shoulder, quarter turn to the right looking over left shoulder, quarter turn to the right looking over right shoulder, quarter turn to the right looking over right shoulder.

ASK: "How does it help to look at one spot while you turn?"

BRANCH OUT! Tips to modify Dance and Spin

Rules:

- > Change direction of circles (clockwise/anti-clockwise) or turns (left/right.)
- > Players can perform different locomotor movements instead of dancing e.g. skipping, hopping, animal movements.
- > **Circle fun:** Players can perform circles while sitting down.
- > **Spot turns:** Players can jump turns (quarter, half or full circle)

Equipment:

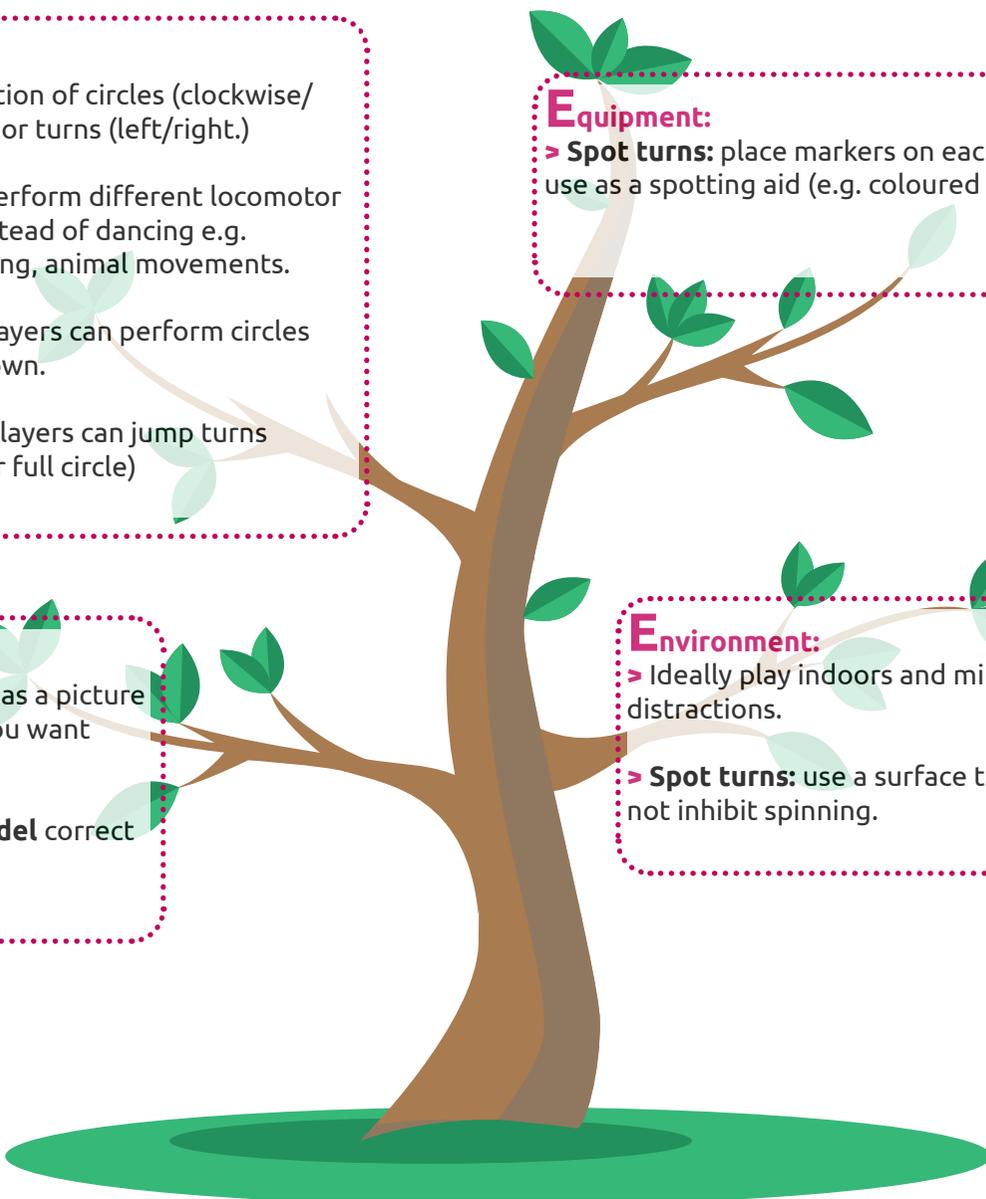
- > **Spot turns:** place markers on each wall to use as a spotting aid (e.g. coloured paper).

Teaching Style:

- > Show a **visual aid** such as a picture card of the movement you want players to perform.
- > Use players to **role model** correct technique.

Environment:

- > Ideally play indoors and minimise distractions.
- > **Spot turns:** use a surface that does not inhibit spinning.



ALTERNATE SPORTS & SKILLS

Use this game to develop movement and balancing skills for gymnastics and dance.



SAFETY!

- > Ensure playing area is free from hazards and obstructions.
- > Players need to be aware of those around them to avoid collisions. No physical contact is allowed.
- > Ensure there is sufficient space for players to perform circles and turns.
- > Start with slow music to encourage slow locomotor movement. Build up spatial awareness before getting players to move quickly.
- > Avoid too much spinning.

Hoop Stretch

SKILL FOCUS

Balancing



GAME SUMMARY:

Players explore balancing with different body positions while keeping at least one part of the body in a hoop.

Equipment needed:

- > Hoops - 1 per player
- > Gym mats (optional)

Game setup:

Players find a space where they cannot touch anyone else and place their hoop on the floor.



COACH INSTRUCTIONS

STAGE 1

Single skill.

Coach to start as leader.

"I will perform a balance. You need to copy me using your hoop and hold the balance for 3 seconds."

1 part of the body must always be in the hoop.

STAGE 2

Progression from stage 1 – short skill sequence.

"This time, I will perform a combination of skills. You need to copy me and hold each balance for 5 seconds."

Combine 2 or 3 balances into a sequence for players to copy.

ASK: *"Which body part do you feel stretching for each balance?" "What can you do to hold the balance for 5 seconds?" "Can anyone think of a new balance we can perform?"*

FOUNDATION:

Skill Development

COMPLEX:

Strategies & Tactics



BRANCH OUT! Tips to modify Hoop Stretch

Rules:

- > Vary challenge. Start with 2 hands and 2 feet on the floor and progress to 1 hand and 1 foot.
- > Players can also balance on knees or elbows depending on ability level.
- > Increase or decrease time that players need to hold balance.

Equipment:

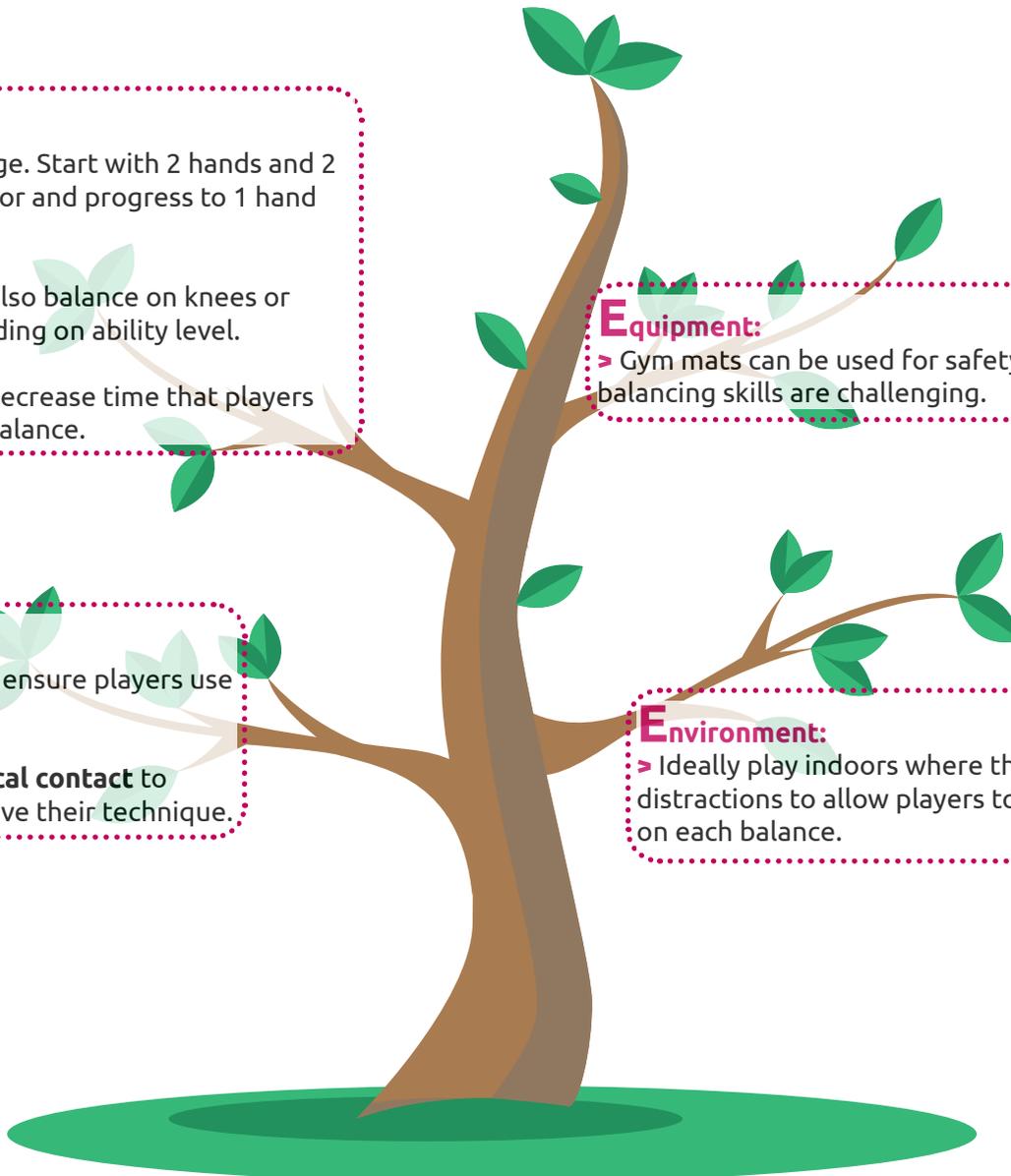
- > Gym mats can be used for safety if balancing skills are challenging.

Teaching Style:

- > **Demonstrate skills** to ensure players use correct technique.
- > Use appropriate **physical contact** to support players to improve their technique.

Environment:

- > Ideally play indoors where there are no distractions to allow players to concentrate on each balance.



ALTERNATE SPORTS & SKILLS

Use this game to develop balancing skills for gymnastics.



SAFETY!

- > Ensure there is adequate space between players.
- > Balances need to be appropriate to the ability level of players.
- > Start with a short duration for players to hold a balance and increase holding time as activity progresses.
- > Do not bounce in any stretch position.

Musical Games

SKILL FOCUS

Locomotor Movement | Balancing

SPORTAUS

Special
Olympics
Australia



GAME SUMMARY:

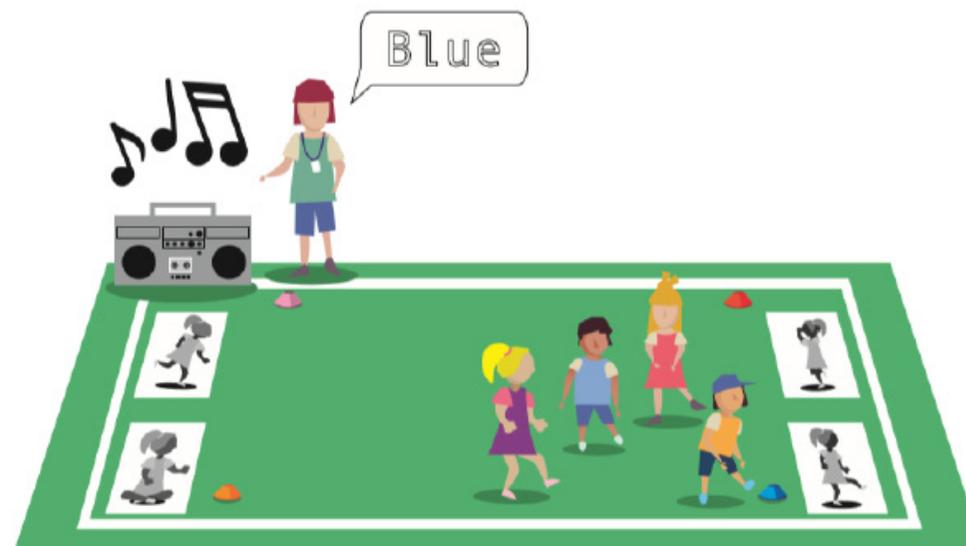
Players dance freely around the room. When the music stops, players perform a balance.

Equipment needed:

- Music player
- Markers (4 colours)
- Posters with pictures of balances

Game setup:

Use any playing space away from obstructions and hazards. Players spread out so they have sufficient space to move. For game 2 'Corners', place a different coloured marker in each corner of the room or playing space. Place posters on the wall or floor showing different balance for each corner.



COACH INSTRUCTIONS

GAME 1: MUSICAL STATUES

"Dance around the room while the music is playing. Be careful not to bump into anyone. When the music stops you must stop and stay still like a statue."

Give players different balances to hold each time the music stops.

ASK:

"What are some different ways you can dance to the music?"

"Can you think of an interesting balance or statue we can all do?"

"How can you make sure you hold your body still like a statue?"

GAME 2: CORNERS

Point out the 4 different coloured markers in each corner. Hold up the pictures and demonstrate each of the balances one at a time.

"Dance around the room while the music is playing. Be careful not to bump into anyone. When the music stops I will call a colour. You need to move to that corner and perform the balance that is in the picture. Try to hold the balance for 5 seconds."

ASK: "How can you make sure you hold your body position without falling over?"

BRANCH OUT! Tips to modify Musical Games

Rules:

- > Vary the length of time players need to hold their balance (shorter or longer).
- > Players can perform different locomotor movements instead of dancing e.g. skipping, hopping.
- > When the music stops, ask a player to decide a balance for the group to perform.
- > Players can perform a statue in pairs.

Equipment:

- > Game 2 '**Corners**': Have extra posters with different balances for players to perform
- > Incorporate objects into the balances (e.g. bean bags).

Teaching Style:

- > Show a **visual aid** such as a picture card of the movement or balance you want players to perform.
- > **Ask players** to think of their own balances and locomotor movements.

Environment:

- > Ideally play indoors and minimise distractions.
- > Games can be played on carpet or a hard surface.

ALTERNATE SPORTS & SKILLS

Use this game to develop balancing skills for gymnastics and dance.



SAFETY!

- > Ensure playing area is free from hazards and obstructions.
- > Players need to be aware of those around them to avoid collisions. No physical contact is allowed.
- > Start with slow music to encourage slow locomotor movement. Build up spatial awareness before getting players to move quickly.
- > Balances need to be appropriate to ability level of players.

Movement Energisers

SKILL FOCUS

Locomotor Movement | Balancing

SPORTAUS

Special
Olympics
Australia



GAME SUMMARY:

These warm up activities get players performing a variety of fundamental movement skills and movement patterns.

Equipment needed:

- Coloured dots
- Gym mats (optional)



GAME 1: EVERYBODY

Use the rules of 'Simon says' without eliminating players.

Game Setup:

Place coloured dots in front of the coach for players to stand on. Ensure all players can see the coach.

Coach Instructions:

"I will call out and perform different movements. I want you to copy me, but only if I say **EVERYBODY** before the movement, for example 'Everybody hop on one foot.'"

COACH INSTRUCTIONS

GAME 2: MIRROR MIRROR

Players work in pairs.

Game Setup:

Place coloured dots in 2 rows, use a different colour for each row e.g. blue row and yellow row. Pairs stand on dots facing each other, one partner on blue dot and one on yellow dot.

Coach Instructions:

"If you are on the [blue] dot, you will be the leader. You need to slowly perform different movements for your partner to copy.

If you are on the [yellow] dot, you need to copy the movement that your partner is performing".

Swap leaders after 2 minutes.

Movements can include, hopping, jumping, balancing, stretching or coordination exercises such as patting the head while rubbing the tummy.

BRANCH OUT! Tips to modify Movement Energisers

Rules:

- > Challenge players by getting them to perform movement combinations.
- > **Everybody:** If players make a mistake, get them to perform a movement (e.g. 5 star jumps) then join back in.

Teaching Style:

- > **Mirror Mirror:** Give **one on one coaching** to discretely help players develop movement skills.
- > **Allow players** to think of their own balances.

Equipment:

- > Players can use equipment such as balls, hoops or skipping ropes.

Environment:

- > Ideally play indoors and minimise distractions.

ALTERNATE SPORTS & SKILLS

Use these games as a warm up or wet weather contingency activity for any sport. These games can also be used to develop balancing skills for gymnastics.



SAFETY!

- > Use gym mats if performing floor movements and balances.
- > Ensure adequate space between players.
- > Start with low intensity, foundation movements and build up to more complex movements.
- > Balances and movements need to be appropriate to ability level of players.

Mexican Wave

SKILL FOCUS

Balancing



GAME SUMMARY:

Players stand in a circle. The leader performs a skill and each player in the circle must repeat the skill one at a time around the circle like a Mexican wave.

Game setup:

Players stand in a circle with enough space between each player to avoid body contact.



COACH INSTRUCTIONS

STAGE 1

Single skill.

Coach to start as leader.

"I will perform a skill. You need to copy me one at a time around the circle."

Skills can be anything. Some examples include balances, star jumps, hops etc.

STAGE 2

Progression from stage 1 – short skill sequence.

"This time, I will perform a combination of skills. You need to copy me one at a time around the circle."

Combine 2 or 3 movements into a sequence for players to copy.

Give players a turn at being the leader and change the leader each turn.

STAGE 3

Progression from stage 2 – skill combination.

TO LEADER: "Choose 1 skill to perform."

TO 2ND PERSON: "Copy the leader's skill then add your own."

TO 3RD PERSON: "Copy the 2 skills in order, then add your own."

Continue this pattern around the circle. Players towards the end may need support to remember all skills in order.

FOUNDATION:

Skill Development

COMPLEX:

Strategies & Tactics



BRANCH OUT! Tips to modify Mexican Wave

Rules:

- > Allow lenience on skill performance depending on ability level.

Equipment:

- > Gym mats can be used for safety if balancing skills are challenging.

Teaching Style:

- > Provide **one on one coaching** during the game.
- > Use **picture cards** to show the skills and movements you want players to perform.
- > **Demonstrate** skills to ensure players use correct technique.
- > Use appropriate **physical contact** to support players to improve their technique.

Environment:

- > Ideally play indoors where there are no distractions to allow players to concentrate on each balance.

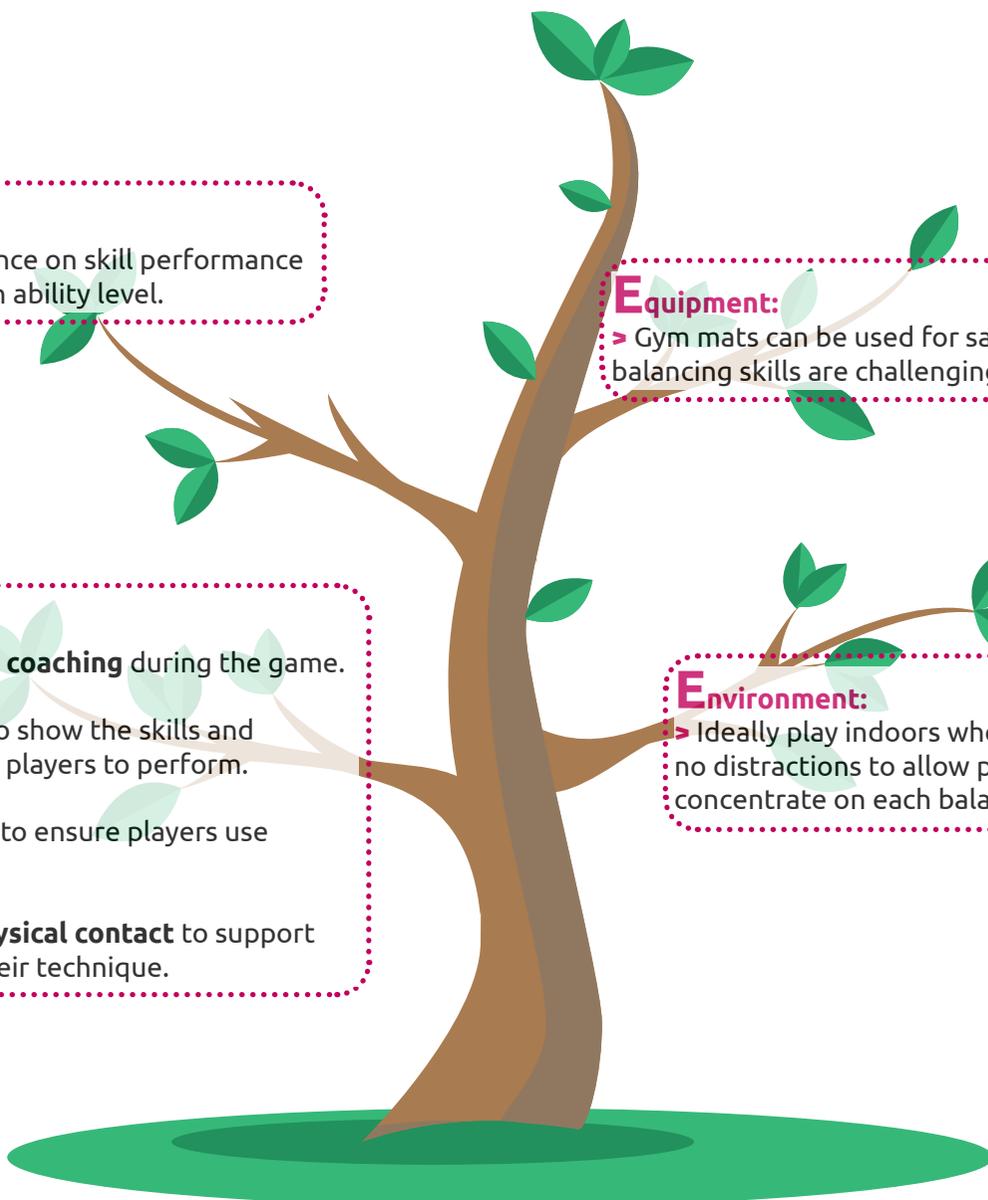
ALTERNATE SPORTS & SKILLS

Use this game to develop balancing and movement skills for gymnastics.



SAFETY!

- > Ensure there is adequate space between players.
- > Skills and movements need to be appropriate to ability level of players.



Swap Spots

SKILL FOCUS

Locomotor Movement | Balancing



GAME SUMMARY:

Players stand in a circle. On the coach's call, they try to change positions with another player as quickly as possible.

Equipment needed:

► Coloured dots

Game setup:

Place coloured dots in a circle, 1 dot per player. The circle should be approximately 5 meters in diameter with ample space between each dot. Play with 6 - 10 players with each player standing on a dot.



COACH INSTRUCTIONS

STAGE 1

Place one spare dot within the circle (without a player standing on it).

TO PLAYERS: "When I call your name, run to the spare dot as quickly as you can."

Change the locomotor movement after everyone has a turn e.g. hopping, skipping, jumping.

STAGE 2

Use player names or give each player a number which they must remember.

TO PLAYERS: "I will call out at least 2 names/numbers. If I call your name/number, you need to swap positions with another person who I have called out."

Start by calling the names/numbers of 2 players so they do a direct swap. Gradually call more players out to swap spots.

STAGE 3

Progression from Stage 2.

Choose one player to stand in the middle and take their dot out of the circle so there are no vacant dots.

TO PLAYERS: "This time it is a race! If you miss out on getting to a dot, you need to stand in the middle."

ASK "Can you think of a way you can work together with another player to make sure you both get to a free dot?"

BRANCH OUT! Tips to modify Swap Spots

Rules:

- > Before each call, give players a balance to hold while stationary on their dot.
- > Players perform different locomotor movements e.g. skipping, hopping.
- > Add another player to the middle of the circle.
- > Players can't swap positions with the player next to them.

Equipment:

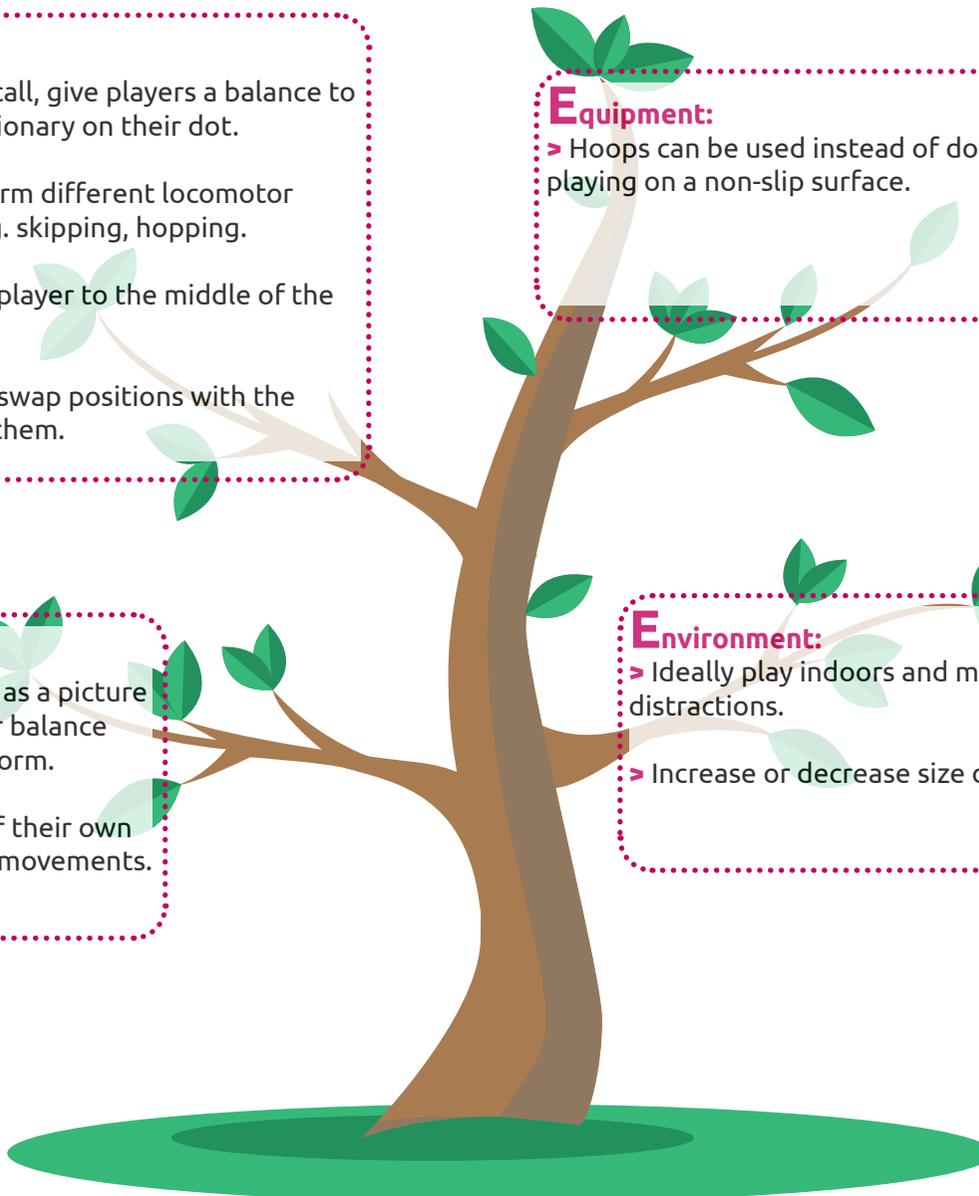
- > Hoops can be used instead of dots if playing on a non-slip surface.

Teaching Style:

- > Show a **visual aid** such as a picture card of the movement or balance you want players to perform.
- > **Ask players** to think of their own balances and locomotor movements.

Environment:

- > Ideally play indoors and minimise distractions.
- > Increase or decrease size of the circle.



ALTERNATE SPORTS & SKILLS

Use this game to develop locomotor movement skills for any sport and balancing skills for gymnastics.



SAFETY!

- > Ensure playing area is free from hazards and obstructions.
- > Players need to be aware of those around them to avoid collisions. No physical contact is allowed.
- > Start with a slow locomotor movement such as walking or jogging. Build up spatial awareness skills before getting players to move at speed.
- > Balances need to be appropriate to ability level of players.

Team Alphabet

SKILL FOCUS

Balancing



GAME SUMMARY:

Players make a letter of the alphabet using their bodies.

Equipment needed:

- > Gym mats
- > Alphabet letter print outs

Game setup:

Spread gym mats around the floor.



COACH INSTRUCTIONS

STAGE 1

Work individually.

"I'm going place a letter on your mat. Try to use your body to make the shape of this letter."

Give each individual a letter and change the letters after each balance.

Use only these letters which are easy to form:

- A, C, F, I, K, L, T, U, V, Y, Z

STAGE 2

Work in pairs.

"I'm going place a letter on your mat. You and your partner need to work together to make this shape using your bodies."

Change letters after each balance.

Start to introduce these letters which are harder to form:

- B, D, E, G, H, J, M, N, O, P, Q, R, S, W, X

STAGE 3

Work in pairs or groups of 3.

"Walk around the playing space. When I call a letter, you need to find a mat and make that letter with your partner / group using your bodies. Hold the balance for 5 seconds."

ASK: "How can you work with your partner to hold the balance?"

FOUNDATION:

Skill Development

COMPLEX:

Strategies & Tactics



BRANCH OUT! Tips to modify Team Alphabet

Rules:

- > Vary the time that players need to hold the balance.
- > Make it easier by allowing players to lie on the floor to make the letter.
- > **Stage 3:** Change the group number, e.g. call out "1 player make the letter L" or "3 players make the letter H."
- > Use different locomotor movements to move around e.g. hopping, skipping, jogging.

Teaching Style:

- > Provide **one on one coaching** during game.
- > Use **visual aids** to support your coaching such as large print outs of the letters.
- > Use appropriate **physical contact** to support players with balancing and to ensure safety.
- > **Pair players** with similar ability level and physical size.

Equipment:

- > Introduce a piece of equipment to avoid body contact if appropriate. For example, players can hold opposite ends of a scarf or bean bag instead of holding hands (if safe to do so).

Environment:

- > Ideally play indoors where there are no distractions to allow players to concentrate on balances.
- > If gym mats are not available, game can be played on a soft surface such as carpet (do not allow lifting).

ALTERNATE SPORTS & SKILLS

Use this game to develop balancing and movement skills for gymnastics.



SAFETY!

- > Consider whether removing shoes is required.
- > Balances need to be appropriate to ability level of players.
- > Play on soft surface or use gym mats.
- > Do not let players balance on their head.
- > Make sure players move out of the balance slowly (do not just let go).
- > If incorporating lifting into the game, use staff helpers to closely supervise and provide physical support where required.