

Animal Walk

Inside or out, encourage your child to slither like a snake, hop like a frog, gallop like a horse, or walk like a bear on all fours.

Skills developed: hopping, galloping

Keep the Balloon Up

Outdoor on a calm, windless day or inside, have your children use their hands or one hand. How long can they keep the balloon off the ground?

Skills developed: volleying, striking

Digging for Treasure

Whether it's an inside or outside sand table or sandbox, kids love to dig for treasure. Hide small toys like plastic dinosaurs, small cars, or marbles, and let your child release their inner pirate as they search for booty!

Skills developed: lifting and lowering objects, object manipulation

Run Away From the Monster

Kids love a game of chase, especially with a parent or other adult they trust. A game of running from a "scary" monster will involve much squealing with delight.

Skills developed: running, dodging, agility

Simon/Simone Says

While the rules are simple, the options for movement are endless. Simon can have kids jumping like a kangaroo, standing as tall as a house, making funny faces, standing on one foot, or waving their hands over their heads.

Skills developed: multiple depending on the leader's actions (jumping, balancing, hopping, etc.)

Hopscotch

A favourite with kids of all ages, hopscotch is a game that can be played inside or out. Inside, use painters tape on the floor to pattern your own board and use buttons, rolled up socks or beanbags instead of rocks. Outside, use chalk to make a court and use rocks or the chalk itself as a marker. The rules are simple and the game can be played alone or with friends.

Skills developed: hopping, throwing

Ball Kicks

Balls are a staple for so many games and activities. Using different types and sizes of balls have your child see how far they can kick, or play goalie in front of a wall or fence and see if your child can kick the ball past you.

Skills developed: kicking

Balance Beam

Using an actual gymnastics beam isn't the only way for a child to learn balance skills. Indoors, use painters tape to make a straight line on the floor. Encourage your child to walk forwards, backwards, and sideways. Outdoors, use a plank of wood, a rope, or make a line with chalk for the same activity. When your child masters a straight line, add semi-circles or zigzags to add a bit more of a challenge.

Skills developed: balancing

Dance Party

Indoors or outdoors, turn up the music, use lights or decorations for ambiance, and let your kids twist, macarena, floss, dance like their favourite animal, or freestyle their way to fun.

Skills developed: agility, balance, coordination

Bubble Play

Ideally an outdoor activity, use various sizes and types of bubble wands and have kids blow their own bubbles or blow them yourself and have kids chase and pop them.

Skills developed: agility

Ride a Bike

Whether it's a tricycle, a balance bike, a bike with training wheels, or a two-wheeler, kids love to zoom around under their own steam.

Skills developed: balancing

Fill the Bucket Water Game

Provide your child with a cup and two buckets (one smaller, one larger). Place the smaller bucket a short distance from the larger bucket and fill the larger bucket with water. Have your child scoop water from the larger bucket and fill the smaller one. To make the game more challenging, put small holes in the cup or have your child dance as they move from bucket to bucket.

Skills developed: agility, balancing

Paper Airplanes

There are so many ways to make paper airplanes at home. Throw them inside or outside and see how high they can fly, how far they can fly, or if your child can throw them through an object such as a hula-hoop.

Skills developed: throwing

Avoid the Shark

Cover your living room floor (the shark-filled ocean) with foam floor tiles or towels (taped to the floor with painters tape) and have your child jump from one to the next without being nabbed by a shark.

Skills developed: jumping

Bean Bag Toss

Beanbags are an easy-to-grip and throw item for kids. Indoors or out, have kids throw them into targets such as laundry baskets or hula-hoops.

Skills developed: throwing

Egg and Spoon

For this ultimate hand-eye coordination and balance game, give kids a spoon and have them balance a hard-boiled or plastic egg from one point to another either indoors or out. How quickly can they go? Can they dance as they move?

Skills developed: balance, coordination

Ribbon Sticks

Tie a length of ribbon to the end of a stick or baton, watch as your children dance, and swirl their ribbons in the air.

Skills developed: agility

Pillow Walk

Set up a line of couch, throw, or bed pillows on your floor, and have your child walk from one end to the other. It may sound easy but their balance will be challenged!

Skills developed: balancing

Bean Bag Balance

Have your child balance a beanbag on their head and walk from one point to another without dropping it. As they master the walk, move the points further apart or make the course a bit more challenging by adding zigzags or circles, or objects around which they have to manoeuvre.

Skills developed: balancing

Bubble Wrap Jump

Bubble wrap is not just for packing fragile objects. Purchase a roll of wrap and on an inside day, have your child jump and pop to their heart's content.

Skills developed: jumping, agility

Helicopter

Turn a jump rope around in a circle low to the ground while your child hops over it without touching it. Be prepared to be the jumper when your child wants to turn the rope too!

Skills developed: jumping, agility

Obstacle Course

Indoors or out, let your imagination run wild as you set up an obstacle course for your child. Have them crawl under tables, climb over chairs, jump over ropes, hop from cone to cone, crawl through a cardboard box, jump through a line of hula hoops, throw a family of stuffed animals into a laundry basket, etc. etc.

Skills developed: agility, balance, coordination

Catch

Children learn to catch at different rates but working with them on the skill can begin with throwing them a balloon or a soft object such as a rolled up pair of socks or a light ball will be less intimidating than a heavy or small ball. Start by standing close to your child and as they master the catch, move further away.

Skills developed: catching

Long Jump

Just how far can your child jump? Challenge them indoors by having them jump on lines made by painters tape on the floor or outdoors on grass or in the sand.

Skills developed: jumping

Yoga

Kids can learn all kinds of yoga movements at this age.

Skills developed: balancing

Music Parade

Whether you have traditional instruments or pots and pans, kids love to make noise.

Skills developed: agility, coordination, object manipulation

Action Songs

Sing together or find recordings of songs that have kids moving their bodies in different ways. Hokey Kokey, Shake My Sillies Out, I'm A Little Teapot, and Zoom, Zoom, Zoom are all examples of fun ways to get kids moving and shaking to sing along songs.

Skills developed: agility

Colour Run

On a driveway, colour four areas (draw circles or squares) with different colours of chalk. Call out a colour and have your child run to that coloured area. Continue to call out different colours in varying order.

Skills developed: running

Hide and Seek

Children can hide either themselves or objects such as their stuffed animals in this favourite game played by kids around the world.

Skills developed: agility

Limbo

How low can you go? A fun game indoors or out, use your imagination when it comes to using objects under which your child must go under without their hands touching the floor. Objects could include a pool noodle, a broom, or a rope.

Skills developed: balancing