

Striking with an Implement

Description

Striking and controlling a ball with an implement (racquet, stick or bat) can occur in many forms. As a result, its application to sports varies. For example, the horizontal striking pattern occurs in softball, while a more vertical pattern is found in golf, cricket and hockey. Many sports, (e.g. tennis, badminton) include striking in several planes, and share the same movement concepts as striking with the hand.



Applying movement principles

Stability: Balance or stability is achieved when your feet and/or legs are comfortably spread to provide a wide, stable base of support. Bending your knees will lower the centre of gravity to further increase stability. Balance is important to provide a secure base of support for the strike.

Production of force: More force is gained by increasing the distance of your backswing and cocking your wrist at the top of the backswing, (e.g. in golf). Straightening your arms as the bat/stick is moved towards the ball also adds force.

Accuracy: If you strike a ball in line with the ball's centre of gravity (middle) and at a right angle to the direction you want it to go in, the ball will travel in a straight line. If you hit the ball above or below the centre of gravity, the ball will spin away, losing distance and speed.

Absorption of force: To absorb the force of an incoming object, the force should be spread over a large surface area and for as long as possible. For example, in striking or trapping with an implement (bat or stick), a flat, angled surface is presented.

Learning cues

Striking with an implement (bat, stick or racquet)

- grip depends on the implement (refer to the 'Can you see ...?' section in specific activities)
- eye on the ball
- start with feet spread apart and knees flexed – shift weight from back to forward adjusting the swing
- contact made with the ball at the point of complete arm extension
- follow through in the direction of the swing

Trapping/blocking with an implement

- move body directly in the path of the ball
- wide base of support
- present a large surface for trap/block, (e.g. implement presents a flat, angled surface)
- eye on the ball until contact is made
- body 'gives' on contact

Learning phases

Discovering phase

Children at this phase find it difficult to make the implement contact the object. The focus for this phase is on exploring striking with a variety of implements (bats, sticks) and stationary objects (large and small balls). The following are some of the characteristics of striking and controlling an object with an implement for this learning phase.

Striking with an implement

- feet tend to be stationary
- body tends to face the direction of the ball, and there is no trunk rotation
- force of the strike comes from the straightening of bent joints

Trapping/blocking with an implement

- difficulty getting in line with the object
- body is stiff and there is no 'give' with the ball as it makes contact

Developing phase

Children at this phase demonstrate more consistency in striking and controlling an object with an implement. The focus for activities in this phase is on practising striking a rebound ball or a tossed ball, striking in a desired direction (accuracy) and varying the force (speed) applied to it (distance). The following are some characteristics of this learning phase.

Striking with an implement

- body is side on to strike
- weight shifted forwards, before the point of contact with the ball
- force of the hit comes from the combined extension of flexed joints, and combined trunk and body rotation

Trapping/blocking with an implement

- movements lack fluidity, and are poorly timed and sequenced
- eyes don't track the ball
- children 'give' with the ball and can trap a rolled ball

Consolidating phase

Children at this phase consistently apply the skills of striking and controlling an object with an implement in a variety of changing contexts, moving into different positions to play a shot or to control a ball in varying directions and force. The following are some characteristics of this phase.

Striking with an implement

- body is side-on, with the weight on the back foot
- children shift their weight forwards as the ball is moving towards you
- strike with a complete straightening of arms like a long arc – in either a horizontal or a vertical pattern

Trapping/blocking with an implement

- eyes track the ball
- body 'gives' on contact
- children can trap objects approaching from a variety of levels, angles and speeds

Overview

Learning phase	Activity name	Movement skills/concept	Suggested group size	Suggested space	Page
Discovering	Exploring Short Implements	Bouncing, balancing and striking a ball with a short implement (racquet/bat) while moving, space awareness (levels and pathways) and relationships.	1	Hard area	298
	Racquet Relays	Bouncing and striking a ball with a bat/racquet while running.	4	Hard area	299
	Dribble Fun	Controlling a small ball with a long implement (hockey stick), space awareness (pathways and direction) and different speeds.	1	Hard or grass area	300
	Having Fun with Hockey	Controlling a ball with a long implement (hockey stick), pushing and hitting a stationary ball, space awareness, body awareness, time and energy and relationships (with others).	1	Hard or grass area	301
	Hitting Off a Tee	Striking a stationary ball off a tee, relationships (with others), time and energy.	4	Large open grass area	303
	Spot On	Striking a stationary ball at a stationary target.	4	Large open grass area	304
	Exploring Striking with a Long Implement	Striking with a long implement (golf club), in different directions and speeds, body awareness and relationships (with objects).	1	Large open hard or grass area	305
Developing	Bus stop	Trapping a moving ball, dribbling with a long implement (hockey stick), changing speed and direction.	2-3	Level hard or grass area	306
	Trap Pass Follow	Trapping and passing with a long implement (hockey stick) and running.	4	Level hard or grass area	307
	Compasses	Ball control and dribbling with a long implement (hockey stick), varying direction and speed.	1	Hard or grass area	308
	Target the Area	Striking a ball to a stationary target, underhand serve, and judging distance.	4-5	Hard area	309
	Call Ball	Striking a ball up in the air, judging flight path and moving under ball to receive it.	5	Hard or grass area	310
	Another Go	Striking off a tee into space, running and fielding a small ball.	4	Hard or grass area	311

Learning phase	Activity name	Movement skills/concept	Suggested group size	Suggested space	Page
Developing	French Cricket	Blocking and directing a rolling ball into space, rolling a ball to a stationary target.	5-6	Hard or grass area	312
	Rocket Range	Striking a stationary ball for accuracy, and fielding a ground ball.	4	Large grass area	313
	Line Strike	Striking a stationary ball with long implement (cricket bat) for distance and accuracy, and fielding a ball.	4-5	Large grass area	314
	Square Passing	Striking with a long implement (hockey stick), passing and moving, space awareness and relationships (with others).	2-3	Level or grass area	315
	Chair Ball	Striking with a long implement for accuracy and trapping/controlling a ball.	5-6	Level grass or hard area	317
	Target Golf	Striking a stationary ball with a long implement (golf club) varying distances, and accuracy.	3-4	Hard or grass area	318
Consolidating	Racquet Square	Underhand serve, striking with a short implement (bat/racquet) to target, and receiving a ball.	5-6	Hard area	319
	Caught Out	Underhand striking, fielding and catching.	8-10	Hard area	320
	Around the World	Striking a moving ball with a short implement (racquet/bat), space and body awareness.	6	Hard area with a net	321
	Wall Ball	Striking (forehand and backhand), receiving a ball, space awareness and relationships (with objects and others).	2	Hard area with a wall	322
	Break the Line	Striking for distance with a long implement, receiving a ball and space awareness.	8+	Large grass area	323
	Scatterball Rounders	Striking a stationary ball with a long implement (hockey stick, cricket bat, softball bat off tee, golf club), into open space, varying distance and direction.	2-5	Large open area	324
	Golf Fun	Striking a stationary ball with a long implement (golf club, hockey stick) to targets at various distances, accuracy.	1-2	Large open area	325
	One Goal	Passing and striking with a long implement (hockey stick), intercepting or tackling, space awareness and relationships (with others).	3	Level grass or hard area	326

Learning phase	Activity name	Movement skills/concept	Suggested group size	Suggested space	Page
Consolidating	Three Times Two	Passing and striking with a long implement (hockey stick), striking for accuracy, attack and defence skills, dribbling, trapping and tackling, space awareness and relationships (with others).	6	Level grass or hard area	327
	Six Against Six	Passing and striking with a long implement (hockey stick), dribbling, trapping, striking for accuracy, attack and defence strategies, space awareness and relationships (with others).	12	Level grass or hard area	328

Discovering Striking with an Implement

Exploring Short Implements

Movement skills/concepts

Bouncing, balancing and striking a ball with a bat/racquet, space awareness, (levels and pathways), and relationships.

Set-up

Racquets, padder tennis bats, small balls/balloons, hoops.

In a defined hard area, children spread out with a ball and racquet/bat each.

Activity

Can you ...?

- put your racquet on the ground and pick it up
- balance the ball on one side of the racquet
- balance the ball and move around
- without changing grip, balance the ball on the other side of the racquet
- hit the ball up to head height with palm up/down, then alternating palm up/down
- try the above with the other hand
- hit the ball up moving forwards/backwards/sideways/along specified lines and in a circle
- hit the ball up 10 times without letting it hit the ground
- using the racquet bounce the ball on the ground standing still/running

In pairs, who can ...?

- drop the ball and hit it a short distance for your partner to catch
- drop the ball and hit it to bounce to your partner
- hit the ball backwards and forwards with a partner
- find a wall and take alternate hits against it
- hit the ball backwards and forwards over a net/bench/rope
- continue the above while facing side on to the direction of your hit
- continue the above alternating forehand and backhand

Can you see ...?

- eyes on the ball
- 'shake hands grip'
- swing straight back, weight on back foot
- swing forward transferring weight onto front foot
- following through in the direction of the hit

You could ask ...

Which activities were easy/hard?

What makes the activity easy/hard?

Variations

Vary the type of implement: Try different racquets, bats, balls and shuttlecocks, modifying activities to suit.

Are all the children involved?

Racquet Relays

Movement skills/concepts

Bouncing and striking a ball with a bat/racquet while running.

Set-up

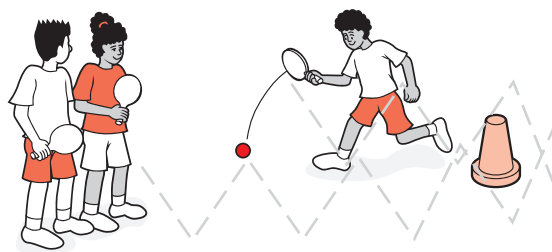
Hard area with a start line, a return line about 3 metres away and a marker 10 metres away.

Racquets/bats, small balls, markers/cones.

Each group of four children stands one behind the other, with a racquet/bat each and a ball for the group, behind a start line.

Activity

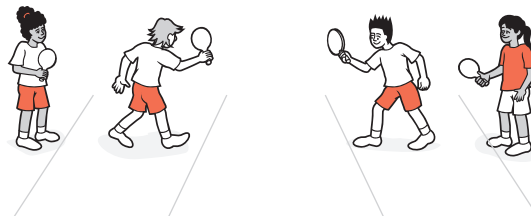
From the start line, the first player runs and bounce dribbles the ball around the marker and back to the return line. They then stop and bounce hit the ball to the next player in line.



Now each group changes position. Two players stand at each end, with a ball and a neutral space between. The front player at each end bounce dribbles to the neutral space, stops, hits the ball across to the other player, then bounce dribbles back to the waiting player.

Can you see ...?

- eyes on the ball
- swinging with whole arm
- wrist up



You could ask ...

Where do you aim to bounce the ball when you are moving forwards?

How will you make it easy for the player to receive the ball at the neutral zone?

Variations

Vary action: Bounce the ball on the racquet instead of dribbling.

Vary hit: Designate backhand or forehand.

Vary type of implement/object: Use a shuttlecock, a table tennis bat and ball, or a hockey stick and ball.

Dribble Fun

Movement skills/concepts

Controlling a small ball with a long implement (hockey stick), space awareness (pathways and direction) and different speeds.

Set-up

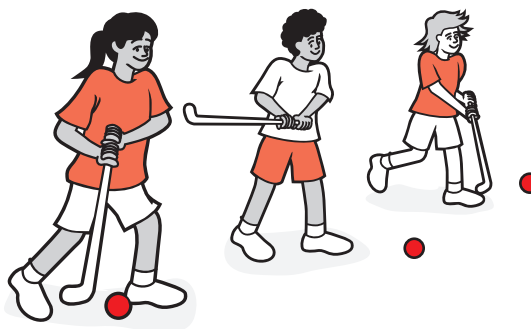
Hockey sticks, small balls, markers.

Children are freely spaced in a defined grass or hard area, each with a hockey stick and ball.

Activity

'Can you ...?'

- move the ball with your stick and keep it close to you while standing still/walking/jogging
- stop the ball and then continue
- change direction
- dribble along a line
- change speed without stopping
- dribble in circles, squares, zigzags, etc
- stop and turn in different ways



Can you see ...?

- keeping the ball close
- touching the sides of the ball
- balance and control
- control before speed
- trapping – angle stick down, head over ball

You could ask ...

How do you best control the ball with the stick?

What part of the stick do you use to control the ball?

How do you use your stick to stop the ball dead?

Variations

Dribbling pathways: Set out cones in different shapes, (e.g. triangle, circle, zigzag), dribble in a given direction, forward, reverse, in and out of the cones.

Vary speed: On a signal, change speed.

Vary equipment: Carry out above activities with hand/foot dribbling.

Praise
dominates

Having Fun with Hockey

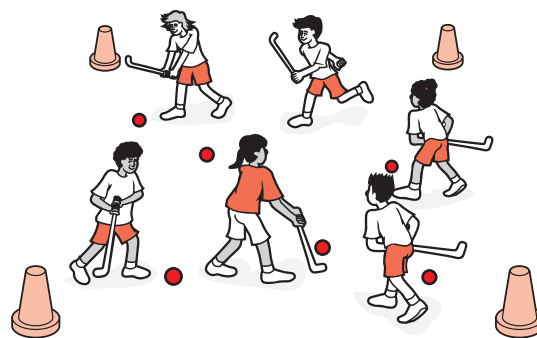
Movement skills/concepts

Controlling a ball with a hockey stick, pushing and hitting a stationary ball, space awareness, body awareness, time and energy, and relationships (with others).

Set-up

Small balls, (e.g. soft/tennis balls), hockey sticks, markers/cones.

Children are spread out in a defined level grass or hard area, each with a stick and ball.



*Be safe with
equipment*

Activity

Who can ...?

- push the ball a short distance, follow and stop it
- push the ball to a space, stop it, then push it to another space in a different direction
- push the ball as softly/firmly/quickly as you can
- push the ball in different pathways (forwards, backwards, in a straight line, in a circle)
- push the ball with jerky/smooth movements
- hit the ball with everyone else, when all are facing the same way

In pairs with a stick each and one ball, can you ...?

- push the ball gently to each other
- move back, approximately 5 metres apart, and see how many pushes you can do in 30 seconds
- hit the ball to each other
- put a marker between you and push/hit the ball at the marker
- push/hit the ball to your partner, then move to a new place to receive the return

Can you see ...?

Pushing

- hands apart, left hand on top
- low stance with stick on ball
- transfer of weight from back to front foot and follow through

Hitting

- hands together with left hand on top
- eyes on ball and easy swing
- left shoulder pointing in direction of ball
- hitting bottom half of ball and follow through

NB: Remember ball can only be hit with flat side of stick.

You could ask ...

What are some important safety rules we need to have for this activity?

What is the difference between a push and a hit in hockey?

Variations

Vary equipment: Use different implements, (e.g. golf club or cricket bat).

Accuracy: Include a variety of stationary targets for the children to aim for by either pushing or hitting the ball.

Hitting off a Tee

Movement skills/concepts

Striking a stationary ball off a tee, relationships (with others), time and energy.

Set-up

Softball bat or bat shapes, small balls, batting tees, markers.

Batting tees are spread out along a line in a defined grass area.

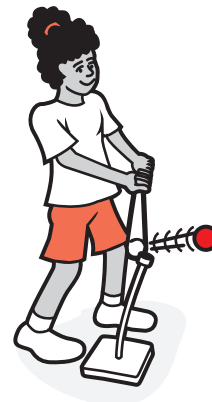
A group of 4 children is at each tee, with a bat and three balls.

Activity

One person in the group is the batter; the other three are the fielders.

In turn, the batter hits the three balls:

- in the direction of the fielders
- in different directions
- for distance
- between two markers
- along the ground
- to the same place



Can you see ...?

- gripping the bat with both hands
- standing side on slightly behind the tee, bat back, hands level with the shoulders
- taking a small step forwards and swinging the arms while rotating the body
- following through

You could ask ...

Which activities did you enjoy?

What do you like about striking a ball off a tee?

Variations

Extend skills: As skill level improves, try the same activities with the ball lobbed for the batter to hit on the full.

Spot On

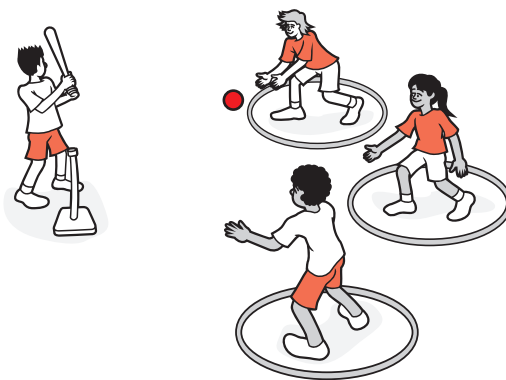
Movement skills/concepts

Striking a stationary ball at a stationary target.

Set-up

Batting tees (cricket or softball), bats or sticks, small balls, hoops.

In each group of four, a batter stands at the tee and the others are fielders in hoops spread in front of the tee in a large grass area.



Activity

As the batter hits the ball off the tee, they name the fielder they are hitting to. That fielder must keep one foot in the hoop and attempt to field the ball.

The batter scores a point if the fielder is successful. The batter has three turns, then changes roles with a fielder.

Can you see ...

- gripping with hands together
- back swing, hands level with the shoulder (softball bat)
- step and swing
- following through

You could ask ...

How can you ensure the fielder is successful in fielding the ball?

Variations

Toss ball: Skilled players can hit a moving ball, (e.g. toss the ball up and hit, or hit a slow-pitched ball or bowl).

Vary equipment and skill: Use a golf club or hockey stick.

Exploring a Long Implement

Movement skills/concepts

Striking with a long implement (golf club) in different directions, at different speeds and towards a stationary target, relationships (with objects) and body awareness.

Set-up

Golf clubs, a variety of small light (foam or plastic) balls, hoops, a variety of objects for targets (targets suitable for wall include masking tape, chalk marks and suspended hoops; possibilities for the ground include bins, seats/chairs/trees, playground equipment and markings).

Children are spread out in a hard or grass area with a wall.

If inside, have mats on the ground to protect the floor.

Activity

Children have a club each and a variety (about five) of small lightweight balls. They practise the following tasks:

- swing the club back and forth like a pendulum, scuffing the grass/mat – check there is no one behind you or in front of you
- stand approximately four giant steps away from a hoop, stand beside your ball and swing your club (pendulum motion) to see how many balls you can get into a hoop
- find a space approximately four giant steps away from a wall or fence, stand beside the wall/fence and strike the ball so that it travels to the wall/fence; if it comes back to you, stop it before you hit it again
- strike the ball to the wall, so that it goes along the ground, and then try to hit it in the air
- see how many times you can hit the range of targets on the wall, fence or ground

Can you see ...?

- having a go
- being safe – enough space to swing stick
- seeing others
- standing side on to target
- knees bent

You could ask ...

What makes the ball go along the ground?

What makes the ball go up in the air?

Variations

Vary skill and equipment: Strike the ball with feet/hand(s), softball/cricket bats or hockey sticks.

*Children lead
the activity*

Developing Striking with an Implement

Bus Stop

Movement skills/concepts

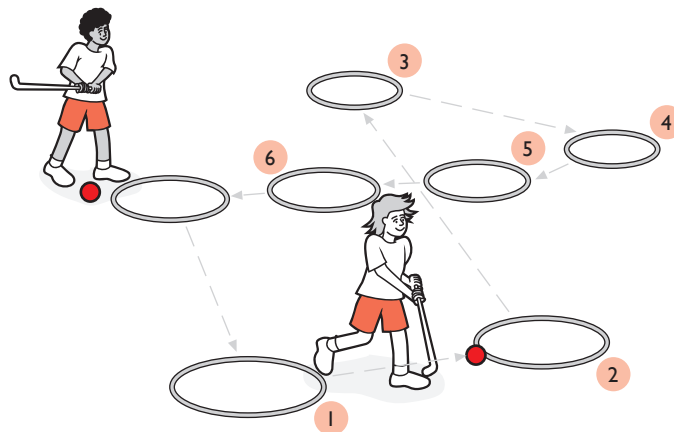
Dribbling with a long implement, trapping a moving ball, stick, changing speed and direction.

Set-up

Hockey sticks and small balls, hoops/chalk.

Groups of two–three, with one ball per group and one stick per player.

A course (level grass or hard surface) is marked out with hoops or chalked circles, which function as 'bus stops' and are numbered in order.



Activity

In each group, each player in turn dribbles the ball around the course, stopping on each bus stop.

How quickly can you do it?

Can you see ...?

- controlling the ball with the implement
- placing stick over the ball to stop it

You could ask ...

How will you position your body to stop the ball?

How will you position your stick to stop the ball?

Variations

Vary equipment: Try hand or foot dribbling.

Vary Set-up: Put a ball at each bus stop. When players get to a bus stop, they exchange their ball with the one that is there and move on to the next bus stop. The second player starts when the first reaches bus stop 3.

Trap Pass Follow

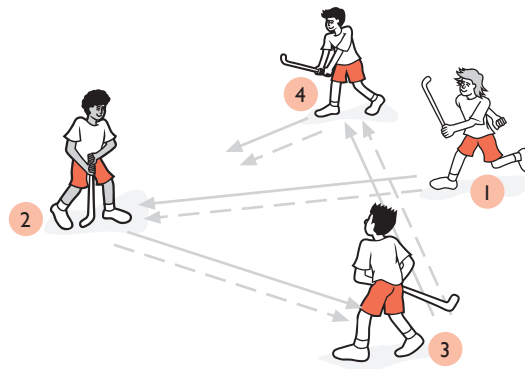
Movement skills/concepts

Trapping and passing with a long implement (hockey stick) and running.

Set-up

Hockey sticks and small balls.

Each group of four stands in free formation in a level grass or hard area, each with a stick. One player with a ball.



Children
modify activity
to increase
challenge

Activity

In each group, the player with the ball passes it to another player, then follows the ball to that position. The receiver traps the ball, passes it to another player and follows. This process continues until all players have received a pass. The last player then passes to the first and they continue passing in that pattern.

Can you see ...?

- eyes on the ball
- moving to the ball
- soft contact

You could ask ...

How will you use your stick to trap the ball?

Where will you pass the ball to the next player?

Variations

Vary direction: Pass both ways around the pattern.

Vary equipment: Start a second or third ball.

Vary pattern: After passing, move anywhere to a new position.

Compasses

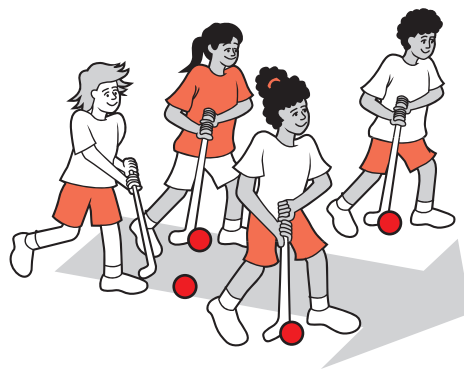
Movement skills/concepts

Ball control, dribbling with long implement (hockey stick), varying direction and speed.

Set-up

Hockey sticks and balls.

Children, with a hockey stick and ball each, are freely spaced in a grass or hard surface area, with four straight boundaries named 'north', 'south', 'east' and 'west'.



Activity

When a direction is called, players dribble that way until the next call. Change the call frequently.

Can you see ...?

- seeing the ball, seeing others
- moving to space
- adjusting hands, feet or the stick to push ball in direction called

You could ask ...

How will you use your hands, feet or the stick to move the ball in the direction called?

Variations

Vary directions: Use nautical terms – ahead, astern, port and starboard.

Expand directions: Name the corners north-west, south-east, south-west and north-west to increase the number of directions to call.

Change equipment and skill: Try hand/foot dribbling with a large bouncy ball.

Target the Area

Movement skills/concepts

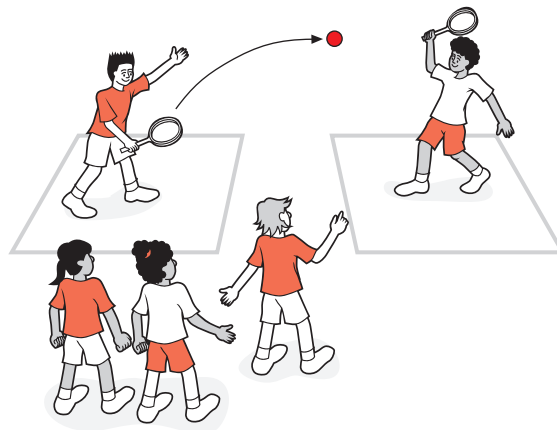
Striking a ball with a short implement (bat/racquet), underhand serve, and judging distance.

Set-up

Racquets/bats, balls.

Teams of four–five, with two rackets and one ball per team.

In a hard area, each team works within two target areas about 5 metres apart.



Activity

A player stands at each target area, a third player is designated umpire and the other team members wait. The player with the ball drop serves to the opponent's court and the opponent plays it back on the first bounce. A player who misses the ball and opponent's court places the bat on the ground and becomes the umpire. The umpire joins the waiting line, and the next waiting player picks up the bat ready to receive a serve.

Can you see ...?

- quick positioning of feet for forehand or backhand
- eyes on ball
- full backswing and following through

You could ask ...

How will you hit the ball so it will bounce in the square?

What will you do to get in position to return the ball?

Variations

Extend skills: As skill develops, reduce the size of the targets and/or increase the distance between them.

Vary team organisation: Play doubles, taking alternate hits.

Vary equipment and skill: Use a table tennis bat and ball or shuttlecock.

Call Ball

Movement skills/concepts

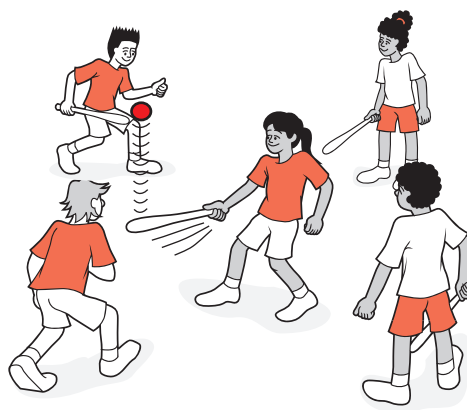
Striking a ball up in the air, judging flight path, and moving to receive a ball.

Set-up

Bats/racquets, small balls.

Children in groups of five, with one bat each and one ball per group, form a circle in a hard or grass area.

Children
modify activity
to increase
success



Activity

One person stands in the middle of a circle, hits the ball straight up in the air and calls out the name of another person in that group.

The named person runs to the middle, hits the ball up in the air before it touches the ground and calls out another person's name. Meanwhile, the caller moves to the outside of the circle, taking the place of this named person.

How many hits in a row can your group do?

Can you see ...?

- eyes on ball
- keeping bat flat – flat surface
- moving quickly to get in position

You could ask ...

Where should you position yourself to hit the ball up?

How will you keep the ball up in the air?

Variations

Vary skill: Use striking with hand(s).

Vary difficulty level: Increase or decrease, the size of the circle.

Another Go

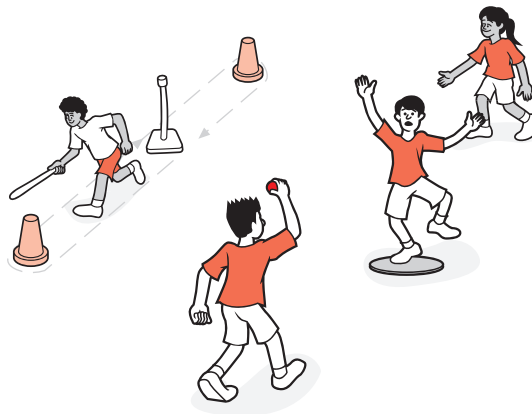
Movement skills/concepts

Striking off a tee, running and fielding a small ball.

Set-up

Batting tees, small balls, choice of implement (hockey stick/cricket or softball bat), markers, hoops.

Each group of four has: a bat, ball, tee, hoop and marker; one batter and three fielders, including one base player, who is standing inside a hoop.



Activity

The batter hits the ball forward of the tee, and then must run round the marker and back before the base player holds the ball with a foot in the hoop and calls 'Stop'.

If the batter cannot score a run or hit the ball, the next player has a turn at batting.

If the batter scores a run, they have another turn but now must score two runs. Continue to add a run each turn until the batter is unsuccessful.

Can you see ...?

- gripping with hands together
- standing side on to tee, feet apart, relaxed
- step and swing
- following through

You could ask...

Where will you aim to hit the ball to give you more time to run round the marker?

Variations

Include underarm pitch: As skill develops, batters may toss the ball up and hit it, or hit a slow-moving ball,, (e.g. slow pitch, roll or bowl).

French Cricket

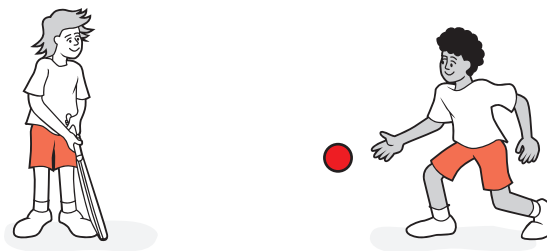
Movement skills/concepts

Blocking and directing a rolling ball into space and rolling a ball to a stationary target.

Set-up

Bats/sticks, small soft balls.

Groups of five–six, with a bat and ball per group in a defined hard or grass area.



Are the children enjoying the activity?

Activity

The player with the bat stands in the centre of a circle made up of the other players. The player with the ball bowls underarm to try to hit the batter on the legs. The batter must keep their legs still while the ball is bowled.

If the batter hits the ball, the player fielding the ball has the next bowl. The batter has a maximum of five turns.

If the bowler is successful in hitting the batter on the legs, the bowler becomes the batter.

Can you see ...?

- keeping the bat vertical, tip of the bat at feet
- turning to face the next bowler

You could ask ...

How will you swing your bat to block the underarm ball?

Variations

Vary skills: The batter may move to a new spot after hitting, but must stop as soon as the ball is fielded.

Rocket Range

Movement skills/concepts

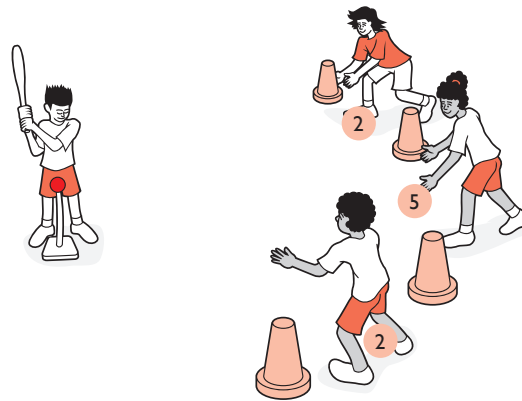
Striking a stationary ball for accuracy and fielding a ground ball.

Set-up

Markers, tees, small soft balls and softball bats.

Groups of four: one batter and three goalkeepers. Each player has a bat/stick and each group has a ball.

In a large grass area, four markers are spaced out in a line in front of a batting tee to form three goals.



Activity

The batter attempts to hit the ball through the goals. The middle goal is worth five points and each outside goal is worth two points.

The goalkeepers try to stop the ball with their bats/sticks before it goes through a goal. The batter attempts to score as many points as possible in five hits.

Can you see ...?

- side on to direction of hit
- hands together, relaxed swing
- step in direction of hit
- following through

You could ask ...

How will you try to hit the ball into the five-point goal?

Variations

Vary difficulty level: Adjust the distance and size of the goals to match skill.

Vary the implement: Use a cricket bat and small tee, golf club or hockey stick with the ball on the ground.

Line Strike

Movement skills/concepts

Striking a stationary ball with a long implement (cricket bat) for distance and accuracy, and fielding a ball.

Set-up

Cricket bats, small balls in container, tees or foam blocks, spray-paint/marker dust/chalk and cones, markers.

Groups of approximately four–five: one as batter and the rest as fielders, including one keeper.

Extending out in a funnel shape from a batting mark, pairs of markers are placed at set intervals.

Activity

The batter hits a ball between markers, and scores runs for the distance gained.

Fielders attempt to keep the score as low as possible and return the balls to the keeper. Caught balls do not score. Batter has five hits. Runs per hit are added together to give a total score. Rotate players.



Children
lead activity
and modify
to increase
challenge

Can you see ...?

- side on to direction of hit
- straight backlift
- stepping front foot beside ball
- vertical bat
- following through

You could ask ...

To strike for distance, what do you need to adjust in your striking action?

Variation

Vary implement: Use a softball tee and bat, hockey stick or golf club.

Lob ball: Instead of a tee, have a player drop the ball for the hitter or lob the ball to the hitter.

Other striking skills: Include kicking, punting and striking with the hands.

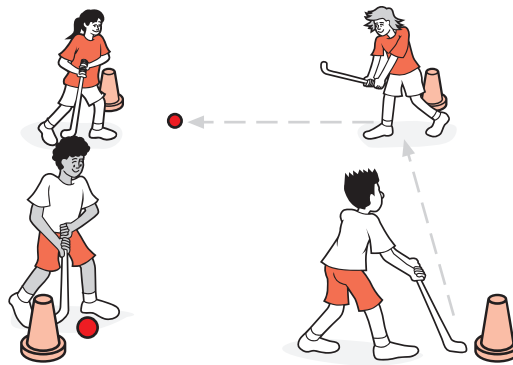
Square Passing

Movement skills/concepts

Striking with a long implement (hockey stick), passing and moving, space awareness and relationships (with others).

Set-up

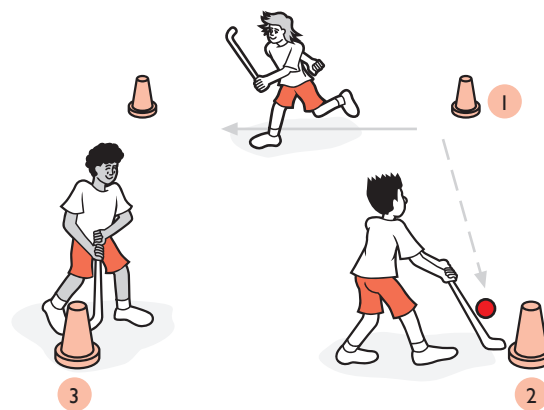
Hockey sticks, small balls. Two activities in a level grass or hard area.



Activity 1

Each group of four stands in a square formation: one player is the leader, two others have a ball, all have a stick.

One player with a ball pushes/hits it to the leader, who passes it to the player without the ball. The other player with a ball then passes to the leader who passes to the player without a ball. Continue, alternating the passes. Change the leader.



Activity 2

Each group of three works in a square defined by four markers. All players have a stick and each stands beside a marker. One of the players has a ball.

Player 1 pushes/hits to Player 2, then runs in the opposite direction to the vacant marker. Player 2 controls the ball, hits to Player 3, then runs in the opposite direction to where Player 1 started. Player 3 continues by hitting to Player 1.

Can you see ...?

- stopping the ball dead before passing
- wide grip for push, closed grip for hit
- shoulder pointing in direction of target
- eyes on ball
- low stance for push, easy swing for hit
- safe hitting and control throughout

You could ask ...

Why is it important to stop the ball dead before you pass?

What do you need to do to ensure that you pass in the intended direction?

Variations

Vary distance of markers: Place markers closer for pushes, further apart for hits.

Vary ball: Strike or throw a large ball.

Chair Ball

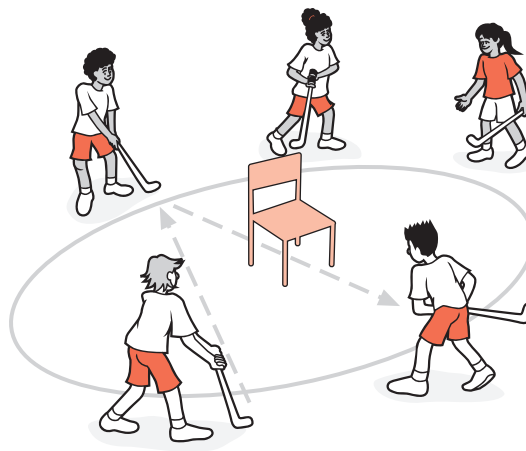
Movement skills/concepts

Striking a stationary ball with a long implement for accuracy, and trapping/controlling a ball.

Set-up

Long implement (hockey stick, golf club), small balls and chairs.

In a level grass or hard area, each group of five–six, each with a stick or club, stands in a circle with a chair in the centre.



*As a teacher/
coach, join
in with your
group*

Activity

One player with the ball tries to push/hit the ball under the chair. The player who stops the ball must pass to another player, who then has a shot at the chair. The sequence of stopping, passing and shooting continues.

How many goals can you get in a set time?

Can you see ...?

- control before passing
- eyes on the ball
- contacting the ball with only the flat side of the implement

Variations

Vary area: Adjust the size of the circle to suit skill level and chosen action (pushing or hitting).

Add role: A goalkeeper stands in front of chair to stop goals – pushing only.

Target Golf

Movement skills/concepts

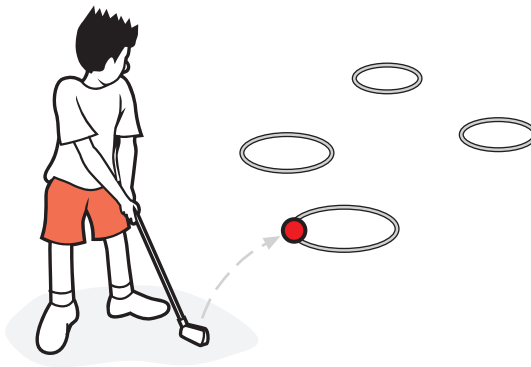
Striking a stationary ball with a long implement (golf club) with accuracy.

Set-up

Golf clubs, small plastic balls and a variety of targets: small and large hoops, cones/ markers, buckets, bins, boxes.

Targets, each with points allocated to it, are set out at varying distances from the striker, in a defined grass or hard area.

Small groups of three–four, with a club for each player.



Activity

In turn, players hit five balls, scoring points if the ball hits or lands in the target. The aim of the game is to get the highest possible score.

In the next round, players aim to increase their score.

Can you see ...?

- hitting under the ball for short distance
- hitting behind the ball for longer distance
- following through in the direction of target

You could ask ...

Which targets were the easiest to hit? Why was this?

Which targets did you aim for? Why was this?

How did you adjust your swing for targets close to you and for those furthest away?

Variations

Vary aim: Achieve the score of 21 with the fewest hits possible.

Vary skill: Use beanbags and throwing, soccer ball and kicking, softball bat and ball, and striking off a tee.

Consolidating Striking with an Implement

Racquet Square

Movement skills/concepts

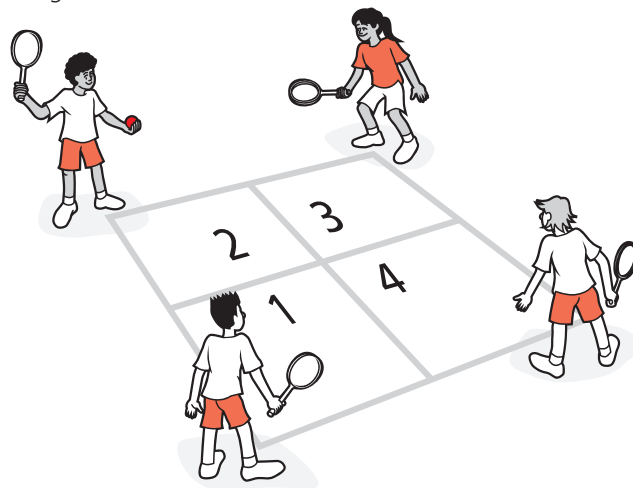
Underhand serve/strike with a short implement (bat/racquet) to target, and receiving a ball.

Set-up

Racquets/bats, balls.

A large square in a hard area is divided into four, with a semicircle in one corner (square 1) as a service area.

Each group of five–six has a player with a bat/racquet at each square; the other players are waiting.



Activity

The player at square 1 drops the ball in the service area and hits to any other square. The next player lets it bounce and hits to any square. When a ball misses a square, the player who hit it gives their racquet to the next waiting player, who joins in at square 4 while the other participating players move towards square 1 to fill the gap. The player at square 1 then serves.

The ball must be hit upwards at all times.

Can you see ...?

- side on to hit
- eyes on ball
- repositioning with every hit

You could ask ...

What should you do to get ready to receive the ball when it comes into your square?

Variations

Vary area and equipment: Divide the square with four benches to act as nets, and increase the size of the squares.

Introduce umpire: Use a waiting player as an umpire.

Vary skill: Strike with the hand(s).

Caught Out

Movement skills/concepts

Underhand striking with a short implement (racquet/bat) fielding and catching.

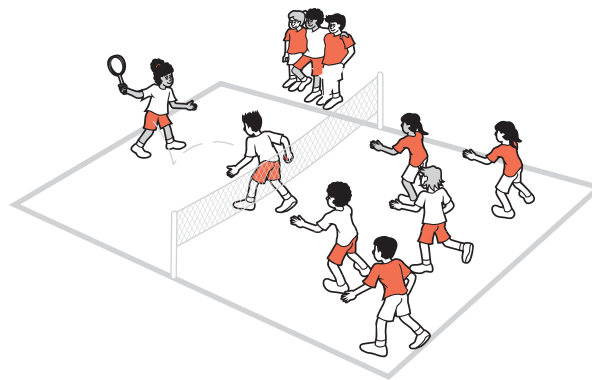
Set-up

Racquet/bat, small ball.

A hard court with a net or neutral space.

Two teams of four–five players each: one team batting and the other fielding.

Are all
children
involved?



Activity

A feeder from the batting team lobs the ball to the first batter, who attempts to hit it into the opponents' court to score a point. If unsuccessful or if the ball is caught on the full, the batter is 'out'. The batting team continues hitting in rotation, including the feeder, for a set number of outs (five–six).

The other team then starts its innings. Play an even number of innings.

The feeder will need to duck to avoid being hit.

Can you see ...?

- side on to direction of hit
- transferring weight from back to front foot
- contacting the ball slightly in front of the body

You could ask ...

What will you do to avoid the ball going out or being caught on the full?

Variations

Vary rules: Score two 'outs' for a catch on the full and one 'out' for a catch on the first bounce.

Vary equipment: Play on a table tennis table, with the hitter bounce serving and scoring a run for any ball that hits the other end of the table then hits the floor.

Around the World

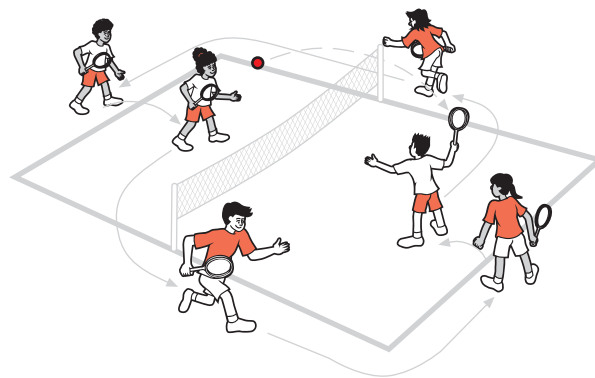
Movement skills/concepts

Striking a moving ball with a short implement (racquet/bat), space and body awareness.

Set-up

Racquets/bats, small balls.

Group of six: three players at each end of a court with a net.



Activity

The first player serves, then runs round the outside of the court to wait at the other end.

The player who receives the ball hits it, then runs to the other end.

How many hits can you do before someone makes an error?

Can you see ...?

- side on to hit
- full backswing and following through

You could ask ...

What will you do to ensure the person receiving your pass is able to hit it?

Variations

Vary equipment: Use a shuttlecock, play on a table tennis table.

Vary rules: A player can make two hits before moving to the other end.

Vary skill: Strike with the hand(s).

Wall Ball

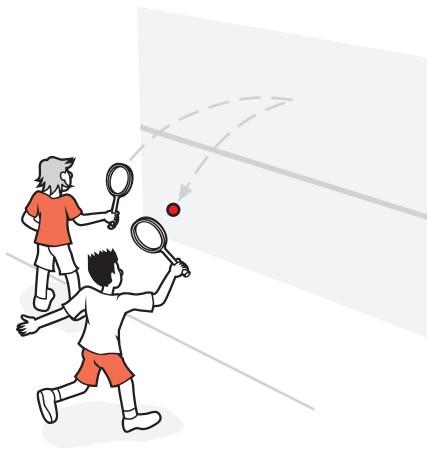
Movement skills/concepts

Striking (forehand and backhand), receiving a ball and relationships (with objects and others).

Set-up

Bat or racquet, small ball.

Children in pairs, with a racquet/bat each and one ball, face a wall with a line on it that is 1 metre high. They stand behind a line that is 1 metre from the wall (marking the 'no volley' zone).



Activity

The object of the game is to hit the ball against the wall, above the line, so your opponent is unable to return it. Partners alternate hits, and the ball may be returned either after one bounce or before the bounce. No one can enter the 'no volley' zone to hit the ball.

Can you see ...?

- moving feet to get into receiving position
- eyes on ball
- following through

You could ask ...

When was it the hardest to return the ball?

How will you use this information to decide on where you will hit the ball on the wall?

Variations

Vary the rules: In a cooperative activity, try to keep the rally going for as long as possible. In a competitive activity, try to make it hard for partner to return the ball. A point is scored if partner misses the return. Points scored only when you serve.

Break the Line

Movement skills/concepts

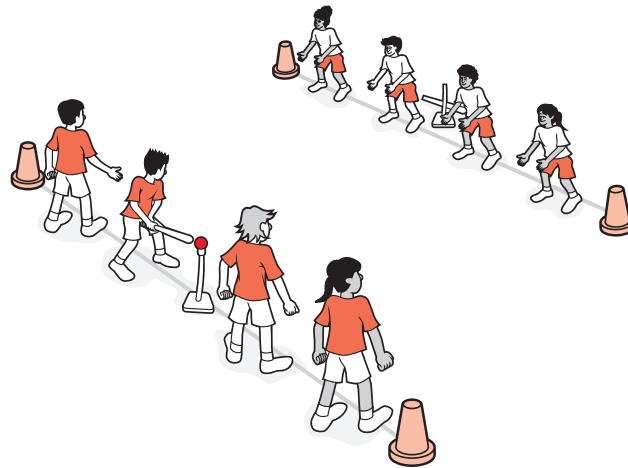
Striking for distance with a long implement (softball hit off tee, hockey or cricket hit off a low tee), receiving a ball and space awareness.

Set-up

Tees, balls and bats, markers.

In a large grass area, two parallel lines have markers on each end and each line has a tee in the centre.

Two teams of four: each team is spaced between the markers along one line.



Are all
children
involved?

Activity

Each team in turn tries to hit the ball across the opponents' line between the markers. Opponents attempt to stop or field the ball. A point is scored if the ball crosses the opponents' line between the two markers. The ball must hit the ground between the lines. Hits are alternated between teams.

Can you see ...?

- stepping in to hit the ball
- relaxed swing for hitting off the tee

You could ask ...

How will you hit for distance?

How will your team stop the ball crossing your line?

Variations

Vary skill and equipment: Try striking with the feet (e.g. kicking a ground ball).

Scatterball Rounders

Movement skills/concepts

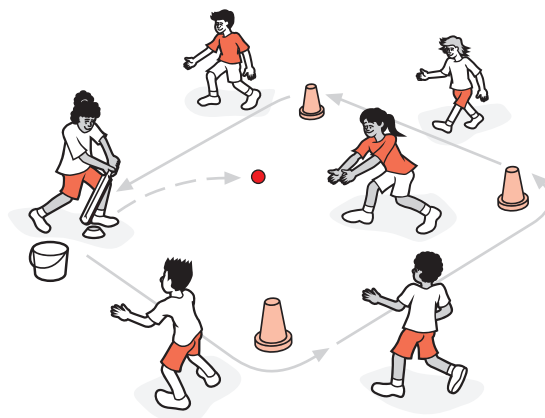
Striking a stationary ball with a long implement (hockey stick, cricket bat, softball bat off tee, golf club), into open space, varying distance and direction.

Set-up

Choice of long implement (softball bat, cricket bat, golf club, hockey stick), cones or markers, choice of small ball and a bin.

A diamond set out with the tee as a home base and three markers as the others. A container with three balls in it beside the tee.

Are children thinking and playing?



Activity

The batter strikes the three balls in quick succession in front of the line, then runs around the bases until all three balls are back in the bucket. Each base passed counts as one point. Meanwhile, the fielders return the balls to the bucket as quickly as possible and call 'Stop' when all balls are returned.

Can you see ...?

- relaxed grip and swing
- swing through centre of ball
- standing side on
- following through

You could ask ...

Batting team: Where will you hit the ball to give you more time to run round the bases?

Fielding team: Where will you stand in the field so that you can field the ball quickly?

Variations

Softball: As skill develops, batters may toss the ball up and hit it, or hit a slow-pitched ball.

Cricket/hockey: Batters may hit an underarm roll or a bowled ball.

Golf Fun

Movement skills/concepts

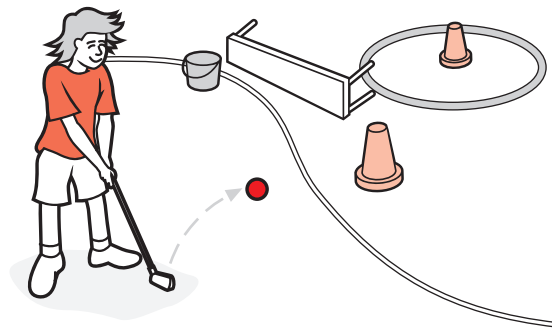
Striking a stationary ball (golf club, hockey stick) to targets at various distances, accuracy.

Set-up

Golf club and small plastic ball for each child, hoops and other targets as 'holes', cones or markers.

Holes (hoops/targets) are placed around a large open defined area, with two markers/cones indicating the start of each one.

Children play individually or in pairs.



Activity

This game is like golf. For each hole, children aim to land the ball inside a hoop, or hit target, using a minimum number of hits. Keep a count of your score for each hole, adding together for a total score.

If playing in pairs, children alternate hits.

Can you see ...?

- hitting under the ball for short distance
- hitting behind ball for long distance
- following through in direction of shot

You could ask ...

How many strikes do you think it will take to complete the hole?

How will you vary your strike for targets a long way away and for targets closer to you?

Variations

Vary equipment: Use beanbags, frisbees, soccer balls.

Vary rules: Add hazards, like ropes for a sand bunker or buckets for a water hazard, and add a point to the score if the ball lands in a hazard or goes out of bounds.

One Goal

Movement skills/concepts

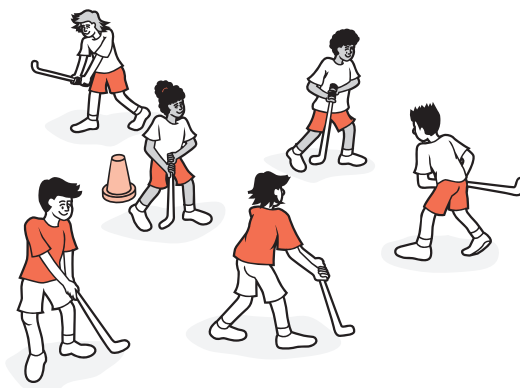
Passing and striking with a long implement (hockey stick), intercepting or tackling, space awareness and relationships (with others).

Set-up

Hockey sticks, balls, markers, team bands/bibs.

Two even teams of approximately three children each.

Markers are set up as a goal in the middle of a level grass or hard area.



Activity

Each team is given one side of the goal to score from.

One team starts with the ball on its side at a distance from the goal and attempts to score. If the other team intercepts/tackles successfully, its players work together and move the ball around to their side to try to score.

After a goal is scored, the non-scoring team restarts from its side.

Can you see ...?

- safety
- eyes up, looking around
- quick passing
- ball kept on ground

You could ask ...

What are some of the team strategies you will use on attack/defence?

Variations

Vary rules: Play a continuous game, where there is no stopping after a goal.

Three Times Two

Movement skills/concepts

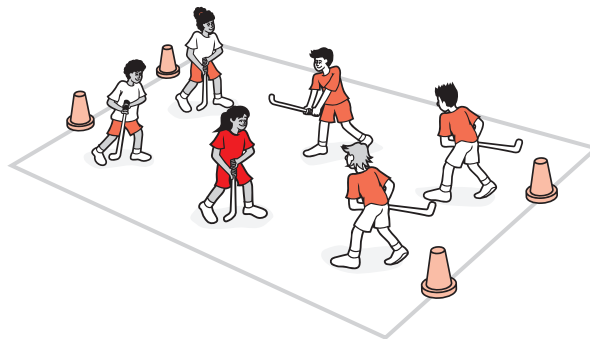
Passing and striking with a long implement (hockey stick), striking for accuracy, trapping and tackling, space awareness and relationships (with others).

Set-up

Hockey sticks and small balls.

A defined level grass or hard area with a goal at each end.

Three teams of two: one team defending each goal, and an attacking team.



Activity

The attackers start from the centre and attack one goal. If they score or the ball crosses the goal line or the defenders gain possession, the defenders take the ball to the centre and attack the other goal. The previous attackers take over the defence of the vacated goal.

Can you see ...?

- use of space
- quick passing and moving

You could ask ...

How will you and your partner work together in this fast-reaction game?

Variations

Vary rules: Do not take the ball back to the centre to restart. The new attackers start from the goal line.

Six Against Six

Movement skills/concepts

Passing with a long implement (hockey stick), dribbling, trapping, striking for accuracy, space awareness and relationships (with others).

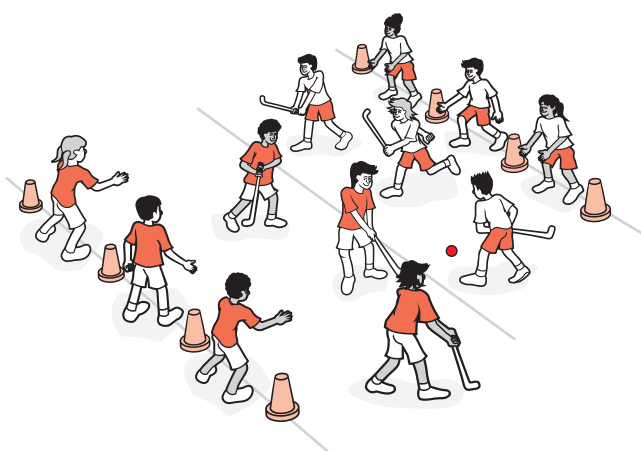
Set-up

Markers, hockey sticks and small balls.

Two teams of six: three are 'goalies' and three are 'rovers'.

In a level grass or hard area, markers divide a goal line at each end into three goals.

For safety, use
no-contact
rules for
tackling and
dribbling



Activity

One team starts with the ball at the centre and the rovers try to score a goal in any of the opponent's three goals. On the opposing team, the rovers try to intercept while the goalies aim to stop goal attempts. After a goal is scored, the non-scoring team takes the ball from its goal line. When a ball is intercepted, the other end is attacked. Change goalies and rovers after about 3 minutes.

A goal can only be scored along the ground.

Can you see ...?

- quick passing
- use of space
- teamwork

You could ask ...

To defend all the goals, will your team play one-on-one or cover space?

How will you work as a group to make defending hard for your opponents?

Variations

Vary skill: Use large balls and striking with the feet (e.g. soccer). Increase/decrease goals and/or field size.

Vary rules: Adjust area to suit skill, have only four goals (one in each corner), have four rovers and introduce a second ball.