

LEAPS

learning eating active play sleep



Locomotor Fundamental Movement Skills in Small Spaces

In some Early Childhood Education and Care settings, family homes and apartments, outside space is very limited, making active play and physical activity seem difficult. However, even in these small spaces there are many ways to be active, whether they are inside or outside.

Here are some ideas for practicing locomotor skills in small spaces:

Walking and Running

- Invite children to jog on the spot, jog with their knees up high, down low, etc.
- Jog on the spot fast, then slowly (A great song to sing with this game is "Running to the corner, running very fast, running to the corner, getting there at last, I'm puff, puff, puff, puff, puffing, I'm puffing a lot. I'm hot, hot, hot")
- Walk different ways, small steps/long steps, stopping and changing directions.
- Walk backwards, sideways (sidesteps) and forwards
- Walk and bounce a ball at the same time
- Walk over various tactile surfaces e.g. throw cushions and blankets on the floor and challenge children to walk over them.



Marching



The correct technique to demonstrate marching is: elbows creating right angles, arms swinging in a straight line close to sides of body, lifting knees high to create right angle at hip and knee. Encourage opposite arm to swing forward when leg is lifted.

Marching songs:

- "The Grand ol' Duke of York, he had 10 000 men, he marched them up to the top of the hill, and he marched them down again. And when they were up, they were up, and when they were down, they were down, and when they were only half way up, they were neither up nor down!"
- "The ants go marching two by two hoorah, hoorah, the ants go marching two by two, hoorah hoorah, the ants go marching two by two the little one stops to do up her shoe and they all go marching down, down to the ground, ground."

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Jumping



The correct technique to demonstrate and encourage children to adopt when jumping is: Jump, land on two feet with bent knees, arms in a motorbike handlebars form, look ahead.

- Jump over a rope, bean bag, soft toy, or other soft item on the ground.
- Jump in and out of hoops set up in a line, zigzag or circle. Vary the size of hoops and distance between.
- Jump up and down from a small step or box, ensuring safety and providing support (ie holding adult hand) if necessary.
- Jump backwards, sideways, forwards.
- Jump with feet landing close together or spread apart (shoulder width).
- Use a speed ladder and vary the distance between markers.
- Play opposites: Jump up, crouch down, jump forwards, jump backwards.

Songs to sing while playing jumping games:

- “Jump, jump, jump if you feel you want to, jump, jump, jump if you feel you can. Jump, jump, jump if you feel you want to, jump, jump, jump if you feel you can.”
- “Five little speckled frogs, sat on a hollow log, eating some most delicious flies (yum, yum). One jumped into a pool, where it was nice and cool, then there were four green speckled frogs (glub glub).....”
- Invite children to say the rhyme “Jack be nimble,” and when it comes to ‘jump’ they jump over a pretend candlestick in front of them (could be a bean bag, rope or other soft item). “Jack be nimble, Jack be quick, Jack jump over the candlestick.”
- “Five little monkeys jumping on the bed, one fell off and bumped his head”
- “Jack in the box”

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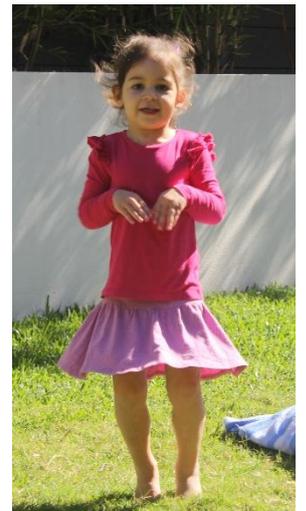
Games that lend themselves to playing in small spaces:

- Hide and Seek
- What's the Time Mr Wolf?
- Duck Duck Goose
- Stuck in the Mud
- Ring around the Rosy

Play the Animals Game

Read a book or sing a song about animals and when each animal is mentioned ask the children to move like that animal. This can also be played like "Simon says".

- Horse: Gallop with one foot ahead of the other and push off with the rear foot
- Kangaroo Jump: Place hands like kangaroo paws. Move using small jumps.
- Elephant Walk: Walk heavily, using your arms as a trunk, make elephant noises.
- Dinosaur stomp: stomp around being a dinosaur with heavy feet.
- Bird fly: run on your tip toes with arms spread out flapping like a butterfly.
- Duck: waddle and quack!
- Monkey: run with arms swinging from side to side and make monkey sounds
- Crab: walk sideways, crouched down
- Worm: Wriggle and squirm
- Stork/Flamingo: balance on one leg
- Ask children to suggest animals and how they would move



Use any animal rhymes or songs you know but you could start with:

- "Here comes Brumby Jack, bringing the horses down the track, hear him sing as he moves along, keep them together safe and strong."
- "The Little Grey Ponies"
- "Elephants Balancing"
- "Five speckled Frogs"

References:

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