



# Skipping

Skipping is a combination of a step and a hop on the same foot followed immediately by a step and hop on the opposite foot. Skipping requires coordinating the alternate use of both sides of the body, making it a challenging locomotor skill for young children.

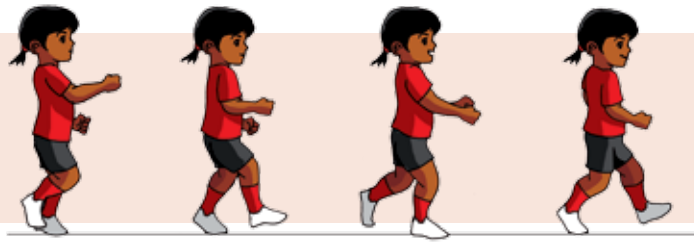
The challenge also lies in its continuous but unrhythmic movement pattern where a long spring is followed by a light hop. Hands usually 'fly' out from the sides during the step and hop. Children must often be able to hop one or two steps before they are ready to attempt the skipping movement.

Many children launch subconsciously into a skipping movement during free play when they are happy and delighted. Skipping is also a common movement in many children activities and dances (e.g. Skip to My Lou).

# Developmental Phases

## Skipping

### Initial



- One-footed skip. Movement appears unsynchronised due to awkward step-hop action.
- Double hopping or double-stepping occurs sometimes.
- Exaggerated stepping action.
- Ineffective use of arms.

### Transition



- Effective coordination of step and hop but rhythm and pace not always consistent.
- Rhythmic use of arms to help movement.
- Exaggerated upward lift during hop.
- Flat-foot landing.

### Mature



- Rhythmic weight transfer throughout, shifting body weight alternately between left and right legs to provide balance.
- Rhythmic use of arms in light swinging motion.
- Lower upward lift during hop.
- Toe-first landing.

### Approximate Age of Development (in years)

Initial	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Transition	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Mature	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

# Teaching Strategies

## Skipping

### What to do if your child...



Right Step,  
Hop



Left Step,  
Hop



Right Step,  
Hop



Left Step,  
Hop

#### ... needs practice in coordinating the skipping movement?

- Hold your child's hand and skip together, providing verbal and visual cues: "Right step, hop, Left step, hop..."



Step, hop,  
step, hop

#### ... is unable to balance himself?

- Get your child to use a wall for support by placing his hand against the wall, and to follow your verbal cues of "Step, hop, step, hop..."

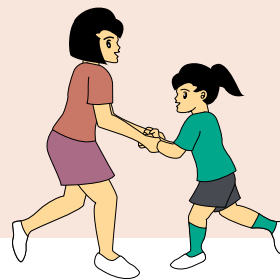


#### ... has poor skipping rhythm?

- Sing songs that provide rhythm for skipping, e.g. "Skip to my Lou..."

#### ... needs support to skip continuously?

- Hold hands with your child and skip together in a circle (provides support for each other during the hop phase).



# Variations

“Can your child skip...?”

<b>How the body moves</b>	<b>Force/Effort</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Flow</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• as if flying in the air</li> <li>• as if carrying a heavy bag</li> <li>• merrily and lightly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• quickly and then slowly</li> <li>• to the sound of a tambourine</li> <li>• fast when going straight and slow around a hoop</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• on the sound of the tambourine and freeze on the drumbeat</li> <li>• with hands close to body</li> <li>• waving a scarf</li> </ul>
<b>Where the body moves</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Direction/Pathways</b>	<b>Levels/Extensions</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• and turn around on the spot</li> <li>• with his friends but without touching anyone</li> <li>• around the coloured shapes at the playground</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• three steps forward and three steps back</li> <li>• clockwise and then anti-clockwise</li> <li>• following the outline of a triangle</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• and touch his raised knee</li> <li>• as if reaching up to touch the clouds</li> <li>• as if going under a low bridge</li> </ul>
<b>With whom/What the body moves</b>	<b>Self (body parts)/People</b>		<b>Objects</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• and high-five you</li> <li>• beside you</li> <li>• holding your hand and going around in a circle</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• over bean bags on the floor</li> <li>• and touch the balloons hanging overhead</li> <li>• passing a scarf from one hand to the other</li> </ul>

## COMBINATIONS

- As if flying in the air when he hears the tambourine, and freezes when he hears the drum
- Turning around clockwise and then anti-clockwise, and touching his raised knee with his hand

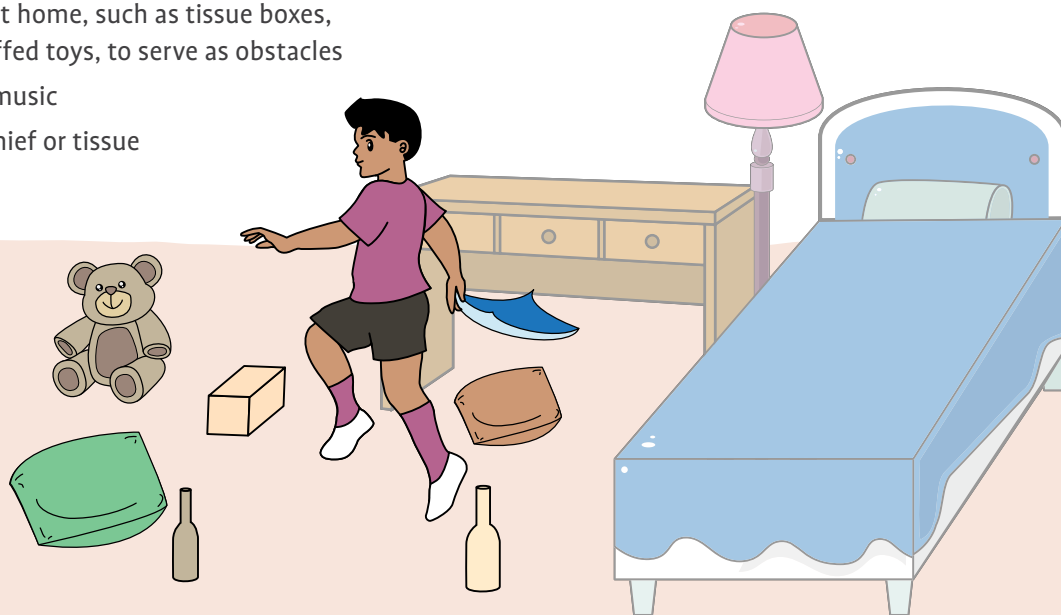
# Activity 1

## Skipping

### LOCOMOTOR SKILLS

#### WHAT YOU NEED

- Objects found at home, such as tissue boxes, cushions or stuffed toys, to serve as obstacles
- Tambourine or music
- Scarf, handkerchief or tissue



#### HOW TO PLAY

- Randomly place different objects within the play area. Have your child skip around, avoiding the obstacles.
- Get your child to skip to the beat of the tambourine you play or music you put on.
- Give your child a scarf, handkerchief or tissue. As he skips, he must pass the item to and fro between his left and right hands. This will help his arms swing, for maintenance of balance and for height during take-off.



- Challenge your child with another variation to this activity:

Variation	Action
Change of music	Skip to you, and pass you the scarf, handkerchief or tissue
Next change of music	Skip to you, and retrieve the scarf, handkerchief or tissue
Music stops	Your child must freeze

#### BE AWARE

- If your child is just learning to skip, get him to step-and-hop on the spot before progressing to skipping around.
- Remind your child to use the same foot for each step-and-hop movement, and to alternate feet for consecutive step-and-hop movements.

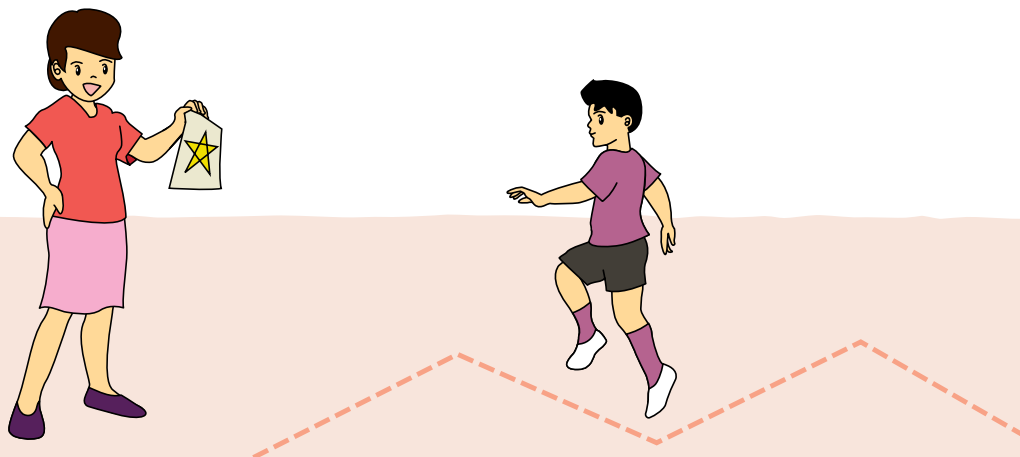
# Activity 2

## Skipping

### LOCOMOTOR SKILLS

#### WHAT YOU NEED

- A string



#### HOW TO PLAY

- Tape the string in a zig-zag path that your child has to skip on.
- You will stand at one end of the string and when your child skips towards you, you will hold up a picture card showing either a star, crayon or rocket.
- Your child has to stop in front of you and demonstrate what is being flashed.

A crayon	Stand tall, hands at the sides
A star	Jump with hands and legs straddled, arms lifted overhead
A rocket	Feet together, hands lifted skywards and palms facing each other