



Special Olympics  
Young Athletes

# Session 3

## SKILLS FOCUS:

- HOPPING
- KICKING
- BALANCE



## Equipment Required:

- An open playing area
- Selection of cones
- Soft balls for each athlete
- Pop up goals (Optional)
- Spot markers
- Obstacle course equipment
- Parachute
- PECS Cards (Optional)

This project is being run by **Special Olympics Ireland** in collaboration with the **School of Health and Human Performance in Dublin City University**.

Each Session is  
**45 minutes** in length.

At the end of the session plan you will be asked to **tick off the activities you managed to complete each week.**



**Special  
Olympics**  
Ireland



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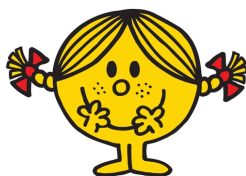
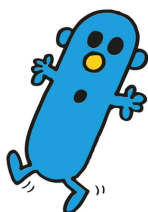
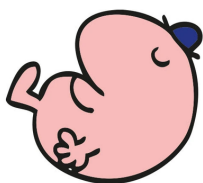
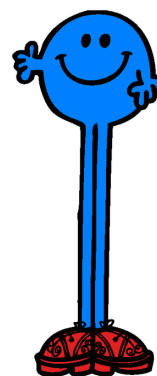
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# Warm Up - Mr and Mrs Men

## Description of Activity

Invite athletes to move freely around the playing area using the movements suggested by the Coach. The coach demonstrates the activity as they call out the Mr/Mrs Men. Each Mr/Mrs Men are repeated 2-3 times during the game:

- Mr Tall - walking on tippy toes arms reaching towards the sky
- Mrs Bouncy - jumping up and down on two feet
- Mr Speedy - running around the open space
- Mrs Skippy - skipping around the open space
- Mr Small - crouch down on hunkers and walking small
- Mrs Lazy - lie down on the ground and pretend to sleep
- Mr Yoga - challenge athletes balance by standing on one leg
- Mrs Straight Line - walking heel to toe on the line, hands on hips



## Skills in Focus

Run  
Balance  
Skip  
Jump

## Duration

5 minutes

## Equipment

- An open playing space
- PECS cards (Optional)

## Variations

Ask the athletes to suggest a Mr / Mrs Men and the whole group has to carry out the action suggested.

## Observations

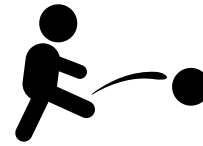
During this activity, look at the athletes movements when they are balancing to see how long they can hold their single leg stand. Can the athletes walk for 6 steps heel to toe on the line? If athletes are struggling spend a longer amount of time on the balance activities.

# Try to ... - Kicking (Recap week 2)

## Description of Activity

This activity encourages the exploration of different techniques that introduce the skill of kicking through commands. The coach invites athletes to spread out in the open area with a soft football or other soft ball and complete the tasks individually. Athletes are instructed to watch the coaches demonstration and listen to the their commands.

- The coach will call 'Try to kick the ball... as hard as you can', followed by different commands, the coach will also do the movement as they command.
- The athletes must recreate this movement.
- Commands include - Kick the ball .... as soft as you can, moving your arms fast, from a standing position with no leg swing, with your arms by your side, by running up to the ball fast and swinging your leg, by running up to the ball and not swinging your leg back. Remember to use the coaching cues below.



**Skills in Focus**  
Kick

## Duration

5 minutes

## Equipment

- An open playing space
- Soft ball for each athlete
- Pop up goals (Optional)
- PECS cards (Optional)

## Variations

If athletes are performing the movements quite well and demonstrating proficiency in the skill, let the athletes try to score a goal into a pop up net 1-2 times at the end of the activity.

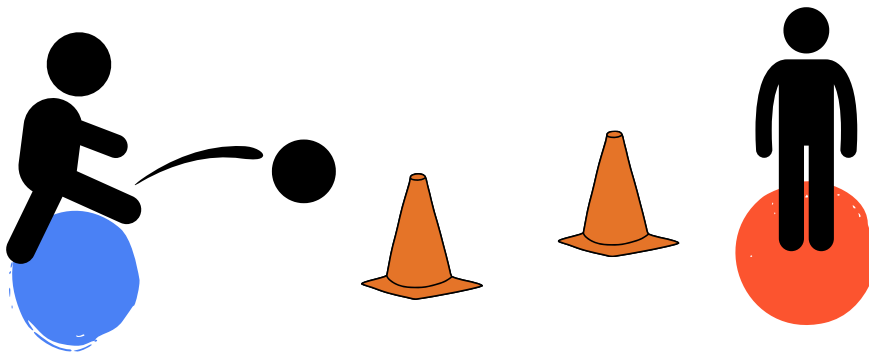
## Coaching Cues

- *Big step, big kick* - Gets athletes to focus on taking an elongated stride prior to making contact with the ball and swinging the kicking leg back.
- *Shoe laces to the ball* - Encourages athletes to bring their kicking leg forward fast, making contact with the ball using the shoe laces or instep of the foot.

# Through the Gate- Kicking

## Description of Activity

Arrange athletes in pairs with one ball per pair. Each athlete stands on a spot facing their partner who is also standing on a spot a few meters away. Set up a gate between each pair using two cones. Athlete A attempts to kick the ball to athlete B through the gate. How many successful kicks through the gate can each athlete get? Ask a volunteer to help athletes keep track. Coaches to reinforce the kicking coaching cues below during this activity of shoe laces to the ball and leg ready to pull the trigger.



**Skills in Focus**  
Kick

## Duration

5 minutes

## Equipment

- An open playing space
- Spot markers for each participant
- Football or similar for each pair
- PECS cards (Optional)

## Adaptations

- To make this activity easier or harder, move the athletes / pairs closer (easier) or farther away (harder) from each other.
- Ask a parent or volunteer to partner with an athlete for this activity.

## Coaching Cues

- *Big step, big kick* - Gets athletes to focus on taking an elongated stride prior to making contact with the ball and swinging the kicking leg back.
- *Shoe laces to the ball* - Encourages athletes to bring their kicking leg forward fast, making contact with the ball using the shoe laces or instep of the foot.

# Learn to Hop - Hopping

## Description of Activity

Athletes find a space in the open playing area. Coach demonstrates the skill of hopping on one leg to the athletes and asks them to join in. Coach uses the two coaching cues for the hop below. Athletes get the opportunity to practise hopping in a variety of different ways, using the following prompts:

- Hop on the spot
- Hop forwards
- Hop backwards
- Hop sideways
- Hop as quietly/noisily/quickly/slowly as possible
- Hop as far as you can for distance



**Skills in Focus**

Hop

## Duration

7 minutes

## Equipment

- An open playing space
- Spot markers for each participant
- PECS cards (Optional)

## Adaptations

Ask a parent or volunteer to assist athletes with this activity by holding their hand for extra balance and support while hopping.

## Coaching Cues

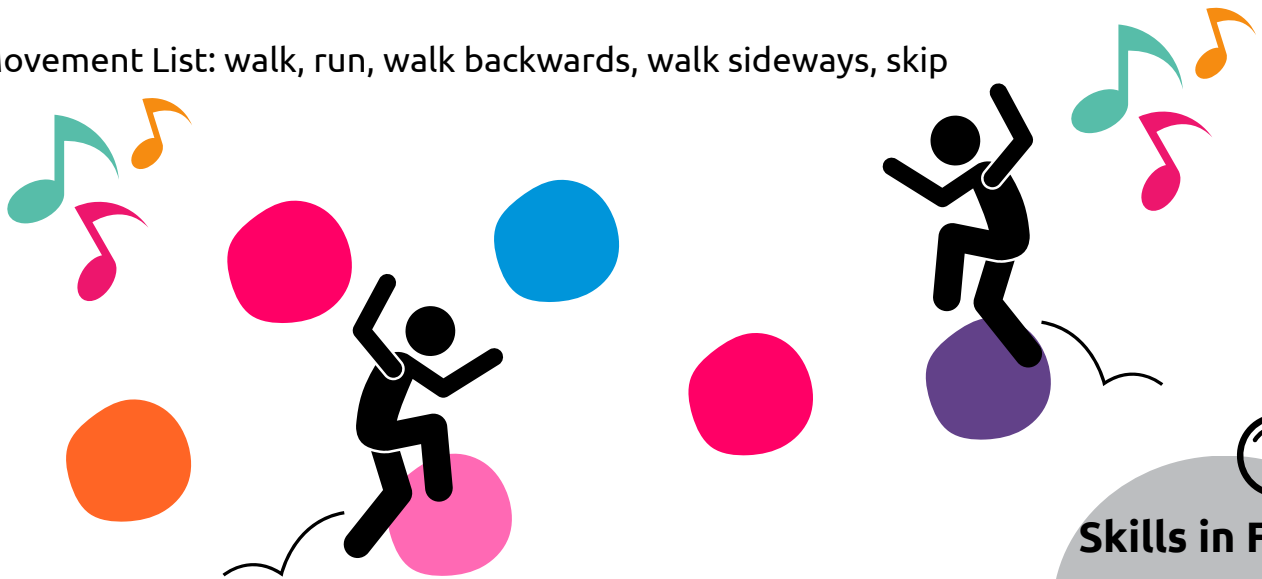
- *Flamingo hop or Stand on one leg and jump* - Encourages athletes to keep the foot of non-hopping leg behind.
- *Count your hops* - Encouraging athletes to try and complete four consecutive hops to reinforce the movement.

# Musical Spots - Hopping

## Description of Activity

Set out spot markers or cones for each athlete in an open playing area. Play music and invite athletes to move through the area following a variety of instructions (see movement list below). When the music stops, athletes find a spot marker and practice hopping on one foot until the music starts again.

Movement List: walk, run, walk backwards, walk sideways, skip



### Skills in Focus

Hop  
Run  
Skip

## Duration

8 minutes

## Equipment

- An open playing space
- Spot markers for each participant
- Music
- PECS cards (Optional)

## Adaptations

- To make this activity easier or harder, shorten or lengthen the amount of time the music is paused for.
- Ask a parent or volunteer to assist athletes with this activity by holding their hand for extra balance and support while hopping.

## Coaching Cues

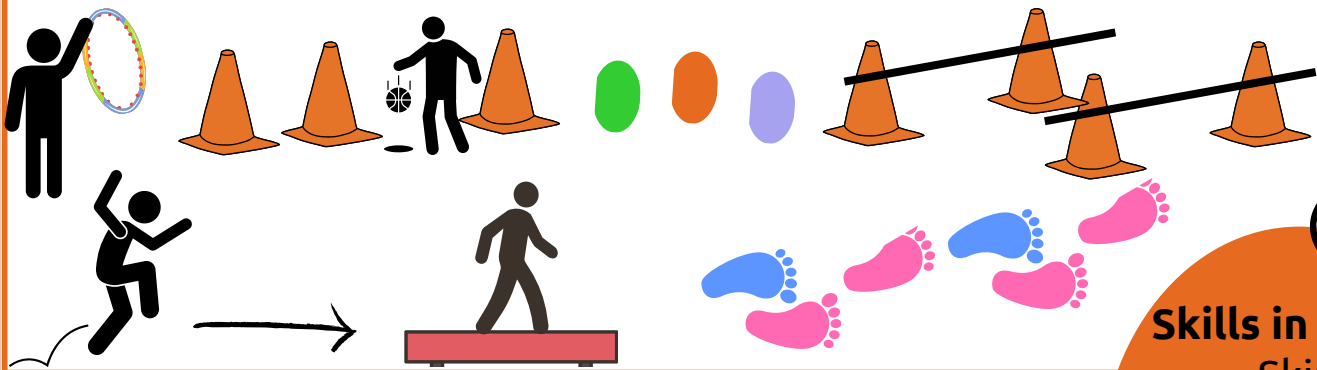
- *Flamingo hop or Stand on one leg and jump* - Encourages athletes to keep the foot of non-hopping leg behind.
- *Count your hops* - Encouraging athletes to try and complete four consecutive hops to reinforce the movement.

# Obstacle Course

## Description of Activity

Athletes take turns to complete the obstacle course which targets and reinforces a range of different fundamental movement skills.

- Skip for 1-2 meters
- Walk across the balance beam and hold a single leg balance at the end of beam
- Hop scotch, alternating two foot jump and single leg hop using plastic feet
- Two foot jump over the hurdles. Keep bar low to encourage athletes to jump
- Balance on stepping stones
- Dribble basketball in and out between the cones and shoot at a target (hula hoop held up by a coach / volunteer)



### Skills in Focus

Skip  
Balance  
Hop  
Jump  
Crawl  
Dribble

## Duration

10 minutes

## Equipment

- An open playing space
- Balance Beam
- Plastic Feet
- Hurdles (Cones and poles)
- Balance Rocks
- Cones
- Basketballs
- Hula Hoop

## Adaptations

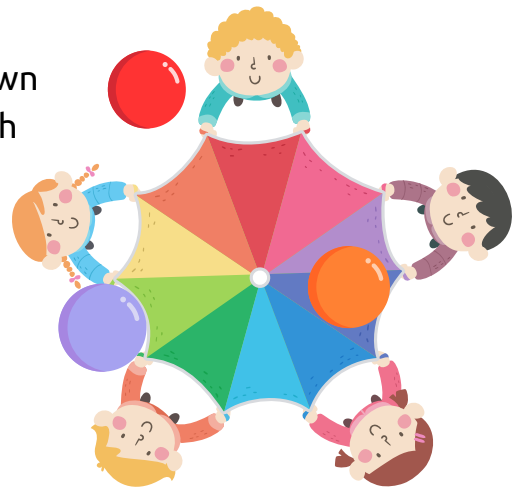
- Use different equipment to make the course easier or more challenging depending on the athletes ability.
- Tell athletes a story as part of the obstacle course, e.g. that they are trekking through the jungle or have landed on another planet that they are exploring.

# Cool Down - Parachute Activity

## Description of Activity

The coach and volunteers open up the parachute and invite athletes to find a space and hold onto the handle. The coach starts by asking athletes to move the parachute slowly up and down, then really fast up and down. This is repeated a couple of times. Volunteers help throw some soft balls into the middle of the parachute and the athletes move the parachute to make the balls fly into the air.

After a few minutes when all of the balls are thrown from the parachute, all the athletes lie underneath and take deep breaths to relax before the session finishes. Volunteers and parents move the parachute gently up and down.



## Duration

5 minutes

## Equipment

- An open playing space
- Parachute
- Soft balls
- PECS cards

## Variations

- *Merry-Go-Round:* Have athletes turn sideways and hold onto handle with their left hand. Everyone walks in a circle to create a merry-go-round. Get athletes to march, skip or hop in a circle.
- *Mushroom:* Have all athletes hold onto the parachute, raise the handle above their heads and then pull it down quickly so everyone is underneath forming a 'mushroom'. Repeat this a few times.





# Session 3

## SKILLS FOCUS:

- HOPPING
- KICKING
- BALANCE



**Please circle the activities you completed in Session 3:**

Warm Up

Kicking Skill

Kicking Game

Hopping Skill

Hopping Game

Obstacle Course

Cool Down

## Session Notes

**What went well:**

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**What didn't work as well:**

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**Targets for next session:**

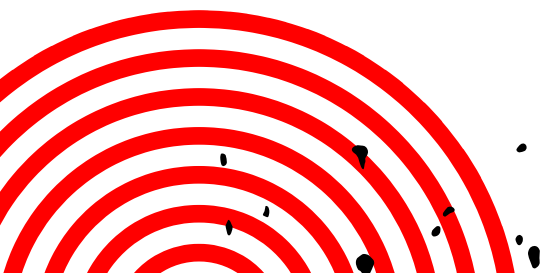
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# Session 3

## VIDEO LINKS



**To view a demonstration of each activity  
and game outlined in Session 3,  
please click on the relevant link below:**

### **Mr and Mrs Men Warm Up video**

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/19IPpEPqTxOq2YroWiOgKmuT9Z2kT-wz5/view?usp=sharing>

### **Try to... Kicking video**

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/15pr80jx0leKo2DmslaLx5Edlgo4fSw4r/view?usp=drive\\_link](https://drive.google.com/file/d/15pr80jx0leKo2DmslaLx5Edlgo4fSw4r/view?usp=drive_link)

### **Through the Gate Kicking video**

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1oZKQu6ddnDNe7vzzpMnuBv6O3LNOxMWV/view?usp=drive\\_link](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1oZKQu6ddnDNe7vzzpMnuBv6O3LNOxMWV/view?usp=drive_link)

### **Learn to Hop video**

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1oB4V1LNot3lvZcJzjBjzEOz6aaHCADAI/view?usp=drive\\_link](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1oB4V1LNot3lvZcJzjBjzEOz6aaHCADAI/view?usp=drive_link)

### **Musical Spots video**

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/17-XXVjkAvMKMkSBiagmxB8sGei\\_GJNBM/view?usp=drive\\_link](https://drive.google.com/file/d/17-XXVjkAvMKMkSBiagmxB8sGei_GJNBM/view?usp=drive_link)

### **Obstacle course video**

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ahgx9bsR0Zz7K3VCW5-0TEeJO3GFP5sd/view?usp=drive\\_link](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ahgx9bsR0Zz7K3VCW5-0TEeJO3GFP5sd/view?usp=drive_link)

