



CHILDREN'S GAMES AND SKILL BUILDING EXERCISES

Teaching children to skateboard is giving the gift of a healthier life through sport involvement. This gift will be well received if as it is unwrapped it comes in an exciting package. A well-led and animated lesson will engage a child to be motivated and excited to come back year after year.

TEACHING TIP Group dynamics will be well established if you take time to set the stage with a fun intro game

GET TO KNOW YOU GAMES

AGE	GAME	DESCRIPTION OF GAME
6+	Names Juggle	Toss a ball while giving your nickname or the nickname of the person to whom you are tossing the ball
	Skateboarding Nicknames	Have group sit in a circle. Have everyone think of a trick that starts with the first letter of their first name, for example, Ollie Oliver or Kick flip Kevin. Have the person on your left start the process by saying a skateboarding trick and their first name. The second person says the first person's animal and name and then says their information.
	Web of Likes	Gather students in a circle sitting around you on the floor. Start by telling the students a skateboarding trick you like. Then ask "who else likes...? Then gently roll a skateboard to a student who answers that they do and then they get a turn to say "My name is ...and I like...trick" continue on... Soon students have created a giant web of likes and discovered some common interests and love for skateboarding.
	Skater 'Name' Game	To get to know students and to help them get to know one another, have each student state his/her name and favorite skater that begins with the same first letter as their name. For example: "Hi, my name is Scott, and I like Steve Caballero."
	Human Bingo	Make a sheet of paper with a grid on it. In every square write something different like, "someone who is wearing blue" or "someone who is learning to skateboard." Have the kids go around and try to fill as many boxes possible.
	Big Wind Blows	Arrange students into a circle with yourself in the middle. They say "A big wind blows for anyone who..", and then says a characteristic that is true about him/herself, such as "has a skateboarding helmet." Everyone who shares that trait must get up and find a new seat. It cannot be where they were sitting. While this is happening, the person who was in the middle finds a seat, and a new person in the middle. The next person continues, coming up with a different characteristic.

The NSCP SKATZ Program recognizes that young children need to develop fundamental skills in order to lay a foundation of movement skills or physical literacy to prepare for learning skateboarding. These activities are geared to meet the needs of children and youth at their developmentally appropriate age.

TEACHING TIP Keep in mind the age appropriateness of the games your leading. You will have a captive audience if you do this well! Remember that you are helping to develop competency in movement and sport skills young children need to develop fundamental skills in order to lay a foundation of movement skills or physical literacy to prepare for learning skateboarding. These activities are geared to meet the needs of children and youth at their developmentally appropriate age.

FUNDAMENTALS GAMES

GAMES THAT PROMOTE FUNDAMENTAL MOVEMENT SKILLS SUCH AS BALANCE, PUSHING, RUNNING, CHANGING DIRECTION, JUMPING, TWISTING, WHEELING, THROWING AND CATCHING		
AGE	GAME	DESCRIPTION OF GAME
GAMES TO HELP STUDENTS GET FAMILIAR WITH THEIR EQUIPMENT		
6 - 9	Skateboard Sale	Have the children pile their skateboards in an orderly pile. Time them to find their board and skate to their starting point.
	Helmet Hug	Have students form two teams. Each team has to run or skate to designated team member some distance away and help him or her put on their helmet properly. One finger between chin strap and chin.
	Knees & Elbows	Teams run relay and put elbow and kneepads. 1 st team completely “padded up” wins.
	Shoe Games	Get the students to play games in their skateboarding shoes to make sure they fit properly and comfortably. The instructor becomes the leader and has students copy his movements. Example movements the students would be doing on their boards, for example, jump, lean back and forward, jump, rock from heels to toes. This will help students be familiar with the feelings they will experience on their boards.
	Simon Says	Instructor describes an action. Students perform the action if the directions are preceded by “Simon says” Replace Simon with the name of the Instructor.
FUNDAMENTAL SKILLS OF STANCE AND BALANCE		
6+	Fox and Hound	The instructor is the fox and the students are the hounds. The hounds chase the fox. Begin on flat terrain and then move to low ramps.
6 - 12	Ball Toss	Instructor tosses a medium size softer ball to each student as they balance on their skateboards. Students then toss the ball back to the instructor while maintaining their balance.
	Healthy Snacks Patch	Students reach down to pick up an imaginary healthy snacks and shout out their choices while balancing on their skateboard.
	Partner Pull Up	Students group in pairs and stand back to back. They link arms and lowering and raising themselves together as a team. This is done without skateboards.

6 - 12	Balance in Stance	Students try to maintain balance while changing their body position from standing tall to getting low on the skateboard. (Learning about centre of gravity)
	Lean into It – Follow the Leader	Lean forward, backward, side to side, bending knees, left, right, centre, while on the skateboard. Try having them ride with flexed legs and then stiff legs. Give everyone an opportunity to be the leader. Ask questions about the contrast in the way they feel with the flexed and stiff legged riding experiments.
	Tight Rope Walker	Have students balance on their boards while moving (sponge or glove, etc.) on their head and keep it from falling off. Try it stationary first before moving.
	One Footed Flamingo Balance	Balance on 1 foot, Jump up and down on the board

ON THE ROLL – SKILL OF WHEELING

All ages	Preparing to Wheel	Have beginner students stand on the skate board at first, and swing back and forth. That will give them the idea of moving. Once they are comfortable with that, have them roll along the skate park floor leaning on their toes to turn in, leaning on their heels to turn out.
	Dual Riders Push and Roll	One student leads and the other follows. Have the tag team switch taking turns being the leader.
	Roller Coaster Riding	Once they are confident on the flat surface, it's time to try low ramps. Remind the students that it will feel a little like a roller coaster as they become accustomed to the ramps and rolling.
	Nerf	Give each child a nerf football and have them practice throwing it into a box while rolling on their skateboard.
	Bean Bag Boogie	Have each student take a beanbag and try to toss it into a bin at the top of a bank, kick turn and ride back down.

LEARNING THE SKILL OF PUSHING

All ages	Pitch and Ride	Have one skater ride by a partner and when passing gently grab his or her hands and move them across in front of themselves. Once your partner is moved to the other side of you, he/she repeats and the opposite partner gets moved across in the same way.
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PUSHING TIPS

Goofy: you push your board with your left foot, and your right foot is in front.

Regular: you shove your board along with your right foot, and your left foot is in front.

Some people skate mongo, which is when they push with their front foot. It is not recommended. It's what ever you are most comfortable with.

PUSHING MONGO - DISADVANTAGES

- Both feet must be adjusted to set up for a trick. This can also be true for someone who rides properly, but it takes longer if you ride mongo.
- While pushing most of your weight and body are behind the board making it harder to control. It's like you're chasing the board, not riding it.

PUSHING MONGO - THE ADVANTAGE

1. Less setup time because your front foot is already very close to the needed position.
2. More control because your weight is centered over the board and reacts to movements of your whole body.
3. It is easier to push faster and less speed is lost because the setup time it faster.

BALANCE AND TURNING

TICK-TACK

The “Tick-tack” is sort of a trick, but is mostly a way to turn sharper than just leaning in or out.

This is how you do it: Center your back foot on the tail [right foot if you are regular, left foot if you are goofy], and put your front foot about 3/4 up the deck [although once you are good at this, you might want to put your front foot farther down the board {like 1/2 way} to get an added spin and more speed.] Now apply slight pressure to your back foot and the nose of the skateboard will rise into the air. Next, move the nose either left or right [by moving your body, and it doesn't matter which way you turn] and stop the pressure on your back foot. Then you should make the nose drop. Repeat this process, alternating which way you turn [example: nose movement: left, right, left, right]. That will help you gain speed, turn sharp, and say “Wow! I can do a ‘trick!’”

6 – 9	Tic Tac Putt Putt	Have each child practice tick-tacks at slow speed, then gradually increase speed to experience the turning. Once you can tick-tack, you can extend the arc out to a 90-degree turn, and then push it further to a 180 degrees.
	Care Bear Stare	Kids can have a difficult time understanding that they need to turn their bodies and not just their arms, so when explaining the turns tell them to do a Care-Bear stare with their stomachs depending on which way they're turning.
	Push and Turn	Focus on right turns, then left, then add cones to perform both directions smoothly.
	Simon Says	Instructor describes an action. Students perform the action if the directions are preceded by “Simon says” Replace Simon with the name of the Instructor
	Animation	The instructor asks the students for a suggestion of object or animal or person to have them imitate the style. The rest of the group has to guess what object/person/animal.
6 - 12	Jump Rope Waves	Long rope set up in wave like pattern – skateboarders practice turning along it
	Pylon Parade	Set up an obstacle course of pylons and have the students practice turns around them

FUNDAMENTAL SKILL OF JUMPING – PREPARING FOR OLLIES

All Ages	Find Your Foot	Place a piece of carpet remnant on the skate park floor or tape a large piece of paper to the floor. Have each student jump to land on it. This can help determine if they are “regular footed” or “goofy footed”
	The Stair Test	Stand at the bottom of the step, or a set of stairs. Begin to walk up them naturally. Which foot did you use to step up the first stair? That foot is more likely to be the foot that you should use as your leading foot when riding

6+	In and Out	Place one plastic hoola hoop per child on the floor or ground. Then invite the children to jump in and out of the hoop, all the way around. When the children are able to hop, invite them to hop in and out. (The best way to help your child learn to hop is to hold her hand and hop right alongside her.)
	Chinese Jump Rope/Yogi/Aerobic Exercise meets Cat's Cradle	Make traditional style yogis with elastics. Have the kids get into groups and jump yogi for practice quick start jumping. Jump rope - in, out, step on, in out, twist, out, twist, out, diamond, out, diamond, out. Looped around the ankles of 2 people while a third, stationed between them, jumps in and out and over and on.
	Jump Rope Jananigans	Give each child a jump rope and practice jumping rope <i>Crocodile-oh-my</i> <i>Croc croc croc</i> <i>Stay see mah ji-gga jigga jigga jock</i> <i>Flow flow flow flow flow</i> <i>One two three four</i> <i>Five!</i>
	Jump Rope Mississippi	'M' Sands for the inside of the two ropes. 'I' stands for the outside of the ropes. 'S' stands for straddling one side of the rope, then next. 'P' stands for stepping on the rope. So you would sing M-I-S-S-I-S-S-I-P-P-I When you complete this you are to raise the rope up to your knees then under your butt, waist, arm pits, neck and heaven.
	Bunny Hops	While on straight running on easy terrain, students hop up and down.
	Jump Downs	Have each student practice jumping form the side of one of the low-lying obstacles or ramps.
	Mexican Jumping Bean	Instructor and kids in a line. Instructor shouts "Taco Bell" and starts to jump. The rest of the group begins jumping until everyone has and then stop. Try this on the ground first and then on skateboards.
	Hopscotch for Health	Have students use chalk to draw

WATER WISE TEACHING TIP

Water is an essential nutrient.

Students should be encouraged to drink water to quench their thirst. When students are actively skateboarding they will often forget to drink water. Remind them that they are already dehydrated if they are thirsty. Encourage them to bring a water bottle to the park for lessons and drink frequently especially if during hot weather.

Water helps maintain muscle tone and keeps skin healthy. It is important to drink plenty of water before, during and after skateboarding to replenish the fluids the body loses through sweating. Although pop and fruit flavoured drinks and punches contribute to fluid intake, they should be enjoyed in moderation.

ENDURANCE AND RUNNING

When working with your class, remember that not all activity / games need to occur on the skateboard. Endurance or skateboarding can be done with fun and active games on the skate park floor. This would also be a great time to bring in some of the healthy lifestyle information. Be sure to mention that the students are helping to build a healthy heart, healthy lungs and build up their aerobic capacity. This can help improve their skating.

6+	Colours	Witch, witch can I cross your ditch? Only if you are wearing the colour...
	Skateboarding Freeze Tag	The instructor is "it" and goes around tagging people. Once tagged a person must remain frozen in some kind of skateboarding pose until another unfrozen person touches and frees him/her.
9 - 12	Skateboard Relay	Divide group into teams. Teams race one another from one point to another. This can be done on or off skateboard.
	Skate to Skate Relay	Both teams begin at starting line with first person jumping on his/her board. He or she then skates a distance to tag another team member. The person who has been tagged then skates back to tag another member of their team.
	Surfer Paradise	Kids ride down lowest ramp and execute turn at the bottom pretending to be surfers
	Red Light Green Light	In this game, one person plays the "stoplight" and the rest try to touch him/her. At the start, all the children form a line about 15 feet away from the stoplight. The stoplight faces away from the line of kids and says "green light". At this point the kids are allowed to move towards the stoplight. At any point, the stoplight may say "red light!" and turn around. If any of the kids are caught moving after this has occurred, they are out. Play resumes when the stoplight turns back around and says "green light". The stoplight wins if all the kids are out before anyone is able to touch him/her. Otherwise, the first player to touch the stoplight wins the game and earns the right to be "stop light" for the next game. Can be played on or off skateboards.
LEARNING TO CHANGE DIRECTIONS AT VARIOUS SPEEDS		
6+	Hop Turns	Ask the students to begin a turn with a hop in the direction of the new turn.
	Where you Look is Where You Go	Holding a tennis ball in one hand point in that direction and look towards it while on your skateboard. Practice this without the skateboard to begin with.
	Lemonade	Lemonade, crunchy ice, Beat it once, beat it twice. (x2) Turn around, touch the ground, FREEZE.
	Tag With a Twist	A game of tag is a great way to get children to practice both running and dodging. To be sure the tagger is involved, gradually reduce the available area in which the children can play!
	Tag for Twos	Each person needs a partner. Set up an area of the skate park floor, but you have to be sure to have boundaries). One person in each pair will be it and the other person, the runner, will be chased by it. On the count of three the it in each pair must start chasing the runner. Here's the catch. You have to stay in the boundaries and you need to remember that all of the other its and runners are running around in the same space. Be careful not to knock into each other. After a few minutes, all running stops and everybody needs to switch partners. Gradually make the chase space smaller.
	Traffic Lights	For this game you'll need three large pieces of paper or cardboard – one red, one green, and one yellow. When you hold up the green paper, the children run. When you hold up the yellow, and change direction. At the sight of the red, they stop and wait. Start with walking until they get the hang of it. Then play it with any other locomotor skills they can perform.

SKATE is a game played a lot like basketball's HORSE. You can play with as many skaters as you want, but usually there are only two challenging each other. The skaters take turns trying to land tricks. Once one skater lands a trick, the other skater has to land the same trick, or he or she earns the first letter of the word SKATE. Once a skater spells out SKATE, that player loses. It's that simple.

There are plenty of variations to SKATE, however. Usually, SKATE is played on pure flatland (with no obstacles). However, it's OK to play in a skate park, in a parking lot using the rails and curbs, or whatever else your mind dreams up. Also, like in HORSE, some players like to play that a letter isn't earned until the first skater to land it "proves it". So, while playing, skater A (we'll call him Jackson) lands a kickflip.

Then player B (we'll call her Max) tries the kickflip and bails (does not complete the trick). Now, Max should earn a letter, but first Jackson has to pull off another kickflip without messing up. If he lands it, Max gets her letter. If he doesn't, Max doesn't get a letter, and now it's her turn to try and land a trick that will be hard for Jackson, and the game goes on. This makes games of SKATE last a lot longer!



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