

Movement cues and progressions



Building movement from simple to complex

Every type of movement that we make begins as simple movements that gradually become more complex. This complexity can be formed in the performance of the movement itself by acquiring smoother, more coordinated motion or by combining multiple movement patterns together. An example of this is skipping. Skipping is a step, then a hop. Step, hop, step, hop, step, hop and so on. A step and a hop by themselves are simple movements, but combining them creates an off rhythm bilateral movement that takes time to become proficient at.

Movement cues

In order to establish a strong foundation with these basic movements, there are simple cues and reminders that we can provide to the learner, and some of these are listed below:

Running – bring a chip (relaxed hands so you do not break the chip) from your hip to your lip (keeps elbows tracking backwards and not sideways).

Jumping – sit on the toilet / motorcycle (ankles, knees and hips bent, hands out in front of you). For older children, this can be the *athletic stance*.

Catching – arms out in front of you, hands together (provides a target for the thrower and gets hands in position ready for the catch which increases likelihood of success).

For more proficient catchers:

Catching an object below your belly button – fingers pointing low to your toes/pinkies together

Catching an object above your belly button – fingers pointing high to the sky/thumbs together

Throwing – point your finger (from the non-throwing hand) at your target (creates lateral position to target allowing for rotation of trunk to generate force and stops over-rotation resulting in more accurate throw).

For younger throwers:

Throwing poem – Stand side on, make a star, point your finger, throw it far!

Complex movement patterns

Simple movements are combined as we develop competence and begin to show more complexity in our movement patterns and agility. For example, the skills of galloping (keeping the same lead foot while moving forward) and side stepping (keeping the same lead foot while moving laterally) combine to give us dodging, deking and agility skills. Continuing to encourage movers of all ages to work on these skills is important. For younger learners we can play games and invoke the thoughts of animals and how they move, whereas older learners can do the same movements using agility ladders, cones and other more age appropriate techniques. Developing the awareness of knowing where our feet are and the ability to move them quickly to other positions builds our strength, proprioception and skill while reducing the chance of injury.