



## FUNDamentals Activities Reducing Contact and Shared Equipment

### Week 1: Getting Started

**Welcome and Introductions:** Athletes should not enter the gym more than 5 minutes before the program start time.

**Warm-Up:** Have athletes do stretches such as touch your toes, touch the ceiling, wiggle arms and legs, and move neck and ankles. Have athletes sit in a circle, 6 feet apart or stagger athletes throughout the gym, all looking forward to see the coach.

**Coach Says:** Similar to Simon Says, ask the athletes to copy your movements and assume different positions. Encourage them to perform actions that require balance, running, moving side to side, crawling, and jumping. Keep the athletes in their warm-up locations to ensure physical distancing.

**Obstacle Course:** Set up a series of cones, hoops, and ropes and demonstrate the course for the athletes. Do not use activities like beanbag toss into buckets etc. – try to eliminate activities where athletes touch items with their hands. Instead, have the athletes jump into hoops, balance on balance beam, skip on one foot, side step, step up onto the block etc. Only one athlete will run through this course at a time, the others will stand off to the side, 6 feet apart from one another.

**4 Corners:** Place a different colored cone in each corner of the gym. Stagger the athletes around the gym and call out one of the cone's colours. All athletes must run to that corner of the gym. Switch up the colour and the way in which the athlete should get to that corner. Ex: Yellow - skipping, Blue - side stepping, Red - leap frogging etc.

**Free Play:** Free play will have to be eliminated until equipment sharing is permitted. If coaches desire, they can assign a different type/colour of ball, or piece of equipment to each athlete during a free play time, but athletes must ONLY touch their item.

**Cool-Down Stretching:** Have athletes sit in a circle, 6 feet apart, or stagger athletes around the room and have them face forward so that they can see the coach at the front of the room.

- Bird: stand on one leg for balance then switch to the other
- Dog (downward): stretch leg up as at a fire hydrant
- Cat: on hands and knees with arched back
- Butterfly: sitting with feet together - flap wings (knees)
- Frog: squat
- Tree: tall tree, stretching up; bent tree, bend left and right
- Wilted flower: bend over with legs straight
- Scratching back: one elbow up

**Collect all Equipment:** If an athlete was assigned their own piece of equipment, ensure everything is collected and washed/disinfected before putting it away.

**Good-Bye and See Everyone Next Session**



## Week 2: Introduction to Athletics (Running)

**Welcome and Introductions:** Athletes should not enter the gym more than 5 minutes before the program start time.

**Warm-Up:** Have athletes do stretches such as touch your toes, touch the ceiling, wiggle arms and legs, and move neck and ankles. Have athletes sit in a circle, 6 feet apart or stagger athletes throughout the gym, all looking forward to see the coach.

**Follow the Leader-Crazy Style:** Have the athletes follow you around the space as you zigzag, move in circles, and go from straight to curved lines (space the athletes out 6 feet apart from each other).

- Ensure that you are moving in a variety of styles of locomotion, including fast, slow, sideways, hopping, and crawling. If the athletes are interested, have them take turns as the leader.

**Shuttle Relay:** Place 2 sets of cones approximately 20 metres apart.

- Split teams of at least 4 between the two rows of cones.
- Each athlete (one at a time) walks/runs around the second cone and then goes to the back of the line. Athletes should not be tagging hands once their turn is completed.
- Talk about starting/stopping commands: Visual - hand signal, Auditory - bell or electronic signal
- Review a few times, each with a different type of locomotion - walk, crawl, run, hop, side-shuffle, skip.
- Ask athletes what they thought was the fastest way to get someplace.

**Safe Landings:**

- Use balance beam set about 5 centimetres high (a gym bench is perfect for this).
- Explain that when you land after you jump, it can hurt your legs if you don't absorb the landing correctly.
- Demonstrate by touching with the balls of your feet first, then your heels, then bending your knees.
- Have the athletes practice slow motion by starting on the balls of their feet and slowly going through the landing motion.
- Then introduce a higher ledge for them to step/hop off of to practice the landing.
- If there is time, ask them to try two-foot hops.

**Throwing:** Start by asking in what sports something is thrown. Stagger the athletes around the room (6 feet apart from each other), each in front of a bean bag.

- Ask athletes to throw the bean bag into a hoop (by whatever means they want).
- Make sure they wait until everyone is finished throwing and then they retrieve together.
- Explain different ways of throwing and have everyone try a few times before switching to trying a two-hand overthrow, underhand throw, and overhand throw.

**Cool Down - Stretching:**

- Bird: stand on one leg for balance then switch to the other
- Dog (downward): stretch leg up as at a fire hydrant
- Cat: on hands and knees with arched back
- Butterfly: sitting with feet together - flap wings (knees)
- Frog: squat
- Tree: tall tree, stretching up; bent tree, bend left and right
- Wilted flower: bend over with legs straight
- Scratching back: one elbow up

**Collect all Equipment:** If an athlete was assigned their own piece of equipment, ensure everything is collected and washed/disinfected before putting it away.

**Good-Bye and See Everyone Next Session**



## Week 3: Athletics (Jumping)

**Welcome and Introductions:** Athletes should not enter the gym more than 5 minutes before the program start time.

**Warm-Up:** Have athletes do stretches such as touch your toes, touch the ceiling, wiggle arms and legs, and move neck and ankles. Have athletes sit in a circle, 6 feet apart or stagger athletes throughout the gym, all looking forward to see the coach.

**Follow the Leader-Crazy Style:** Have the athletes follow you around the space as you zigzag, move in circles, and go from straight to curved lines (space the athletes out 6 feet apart from each other).

- Ensure that you are moving in a variety of styles of locomotion, including fast, slow, sideways, hopping, and crawling. If the athletes are interested, have them take turns as the leader.

**Shuttle Relay:** Place 2 sets of cones approximately 20 metres apart.

- Split teams of at least 4 between the two rows of cones.
- Each athlete (one at a time) walks/runs around the second cone and then goes to the back of the line. Athletes should not be tagging hands once their turn is completed.
- Talk about starting/stopping commands: Visual - hand signal, Auditory – bell or electronic signal
- Review a few times, each with a different type of locomotion - walk, crawl, run, hop, side-shuffle, skip.
- Ask athletes what they thought was the fastest way to get someplace.

**Jumping for Distance:** Start by explaining the key techniques for jumping far.

- -Bend knees quickly before jumping.
- Ask athletes to try jumping without bending their knees first... it works better if you do!
- Use arms to reach high in the sky while jumping up - reach for the pot of gold in the tree.
- Place small cones a short distance away from the athletes and then ask if they can jump to the cone. Give each athlete their own cone and their own place to stand in the gym.
- Move the cones progressively farther apart to challenge (cones or the small balance beam can also be used.)

**Throw for Distance/Accuracy:**

- Tape hoops to the wall 1 or 2 metres off the ground.
- Have athletes stand 1 metre in front of a hoop.
- Explain the 'Push' (chest-pass)
- Use two hands, ball at chest, elbows pointing out to the side (to their neighbors).
- Rock back onto back foot and push ball as stepping forward onto front foot.
- Try a few times to get in hoop; if easy, move athletes back 1 metre or 2 according to progression. Ensure athletes do not share equipment – athletes should each be using their own ball.
- Duplicate with two-hand overhead throwing and ask them to move back progressively until they cannot throw it far enough to hit the wall.

**Cool Down - Stretching:**

- Bird: stand on one leg for balance then switch to the other
- Dog (downward): stretch leg up as at a fire hydrant
- Cat: on hands and knees with arched back
- Butterfly: sitting with feet together - flap wings (knees)
- Frog: squat
- Tree: tall tree, stretching up; bent tree, bend left and right
- Wilted flower: bend over with legs straight
- Scratching back: one elbow up

**Collect all Equipment:** If an athlete was assigned their own piece of equipment, ensure everything is collected and washed/disinfected before putting it away.

**Good-Bye and See Everyone Next Session**



## Week 4: Athletics (Throwing)

**Welcome and Introductions:** Athletes should not enter the gym more than 5 minutes before the program start time.

**Warm-Up:** Have athletes do stretches such as touch your toes, touch the ceiling, wiggle arms and legs, and move neck and ankles. Have athletes sit in a circle, 6 feet apart or stagger athletes throughout the gym, all looking forward to see the coach.

### Running Countdown:

- All athletes start at one side of the gym, along the wall. When the Coach says 'GO' and counts loudly to 10, all of the athletes have to run to the other side of the gym and stand at the opposite wall. Anyone that doesn't make it to the other side before the coach counts to 10, has to stand with the coach and help him/her count.
- Coach then says 'GO' and counts to 9. Any athletes that don't make it, help the coach and fellow athletes count.
- Game continues with coach counting to 8, 7, 6 and so on until no athletes are left running.

### Obstacle Course Relay:

- Set up cones and short hurdles in a 15 to 20 metre course that gets them to use hopping, running, and jumping.
- Change the course a few times in order to provide progression activities such as higher jumps, longer runs, and two jumps in a row.
- Make the teams even-numbered and have caregivers participate to add to the fun.

### Throwing Competition:

- Have athletes line up about 5 metres from the throwing line, which is 3 to 5 metres from the wall. Tape hoops to wall.
- The athlete takes a throw, runs to the back of the line and then the second athlete runs up to the throwing line, and so on.
- See which team is the first to get 10 bean bags into the hoop.
- Have a rematch or move throwing line further away or closer to the wall, depending on skill level.

### Cool Down - Stretching:

- Bird: stand on one leg for balance then switch to the other
- Dog (downward): stretch leg up as at a fire hydrant
- Cat: on hands and knees with arched back
- Butterfly: sitting with feet together - flap wings (knees)
- Frog: squat
- Tree: tall tree, stretching up; bent tree, bend left and right
- Wilted flower: bend over with legs straight
- Scratching back: one elbow up

**Collect all Equipment:** If an athlete was assigned their own piece of equipment, ensure everything is collected and washed/disinfected before putting it away.

### Good-Bye and See Everyone Next Session

#### Special Olympics Alberta

#3, 12122 68 St. NW, Edmonton, AB T5B 1R1 Tel 1.800.444.2883

[www.specialolympics.ca/alberta](http://www.specialolympics.ca/alberta) Email [info@specialolympics.ab.ca](mailto:info@specialolympics.ab.ca) Social Media @SpecialOAlberta

Created by the Joseph P. Kennedy Jr. Foundation for the benefit of persons with intellectual disabilities





## Week 5: Introduction to Soccer (Kicking)

**Welcome and Introductions:** Athletes should not enter the gym more than 5 minutes before the program start time.

**Warm-Up:** Have athletes do stretches such as touch your toes, touch the ceiling, wiggle arms and legs, and move neck and ankles. Have athletes sit in a circle, 6 feet apart or stagger athletes throughout the gym, all looking forward to see the coach.

**Follow the Leader-Crazy Style:** Have the athletes follow you around the space as you zigzag, move in circles, and go from straight to curved lines (space the athletes out 6 feet apart from each other).

- Ensure that you are moving in a variety of styles of locomotion, including fast, slow, sideways, hopping, and crawling. If the athletes are interested, have them take turns as the leader.

**Introduction to Soccer:** Explain what the game of soccer is - that it is played inside and outside, and introduce a soccer ball.

**Dribbling:** Explain that dribbling is controlling the ball with the feet and is the skill that allows you to move the ball around the field.

- Demonstrate moving the ball forward with one foot and have each athlete follow your movements.
- Switch to two feet.
- Set out 3 cones and have the athletes line up one behind the other and move around each pylon with their feet. Ensure that all athletes are 6 feet apart from one another and that they are all using their own soccer ball. Once they reach the end of the pylons, have them go to the back of the line.
- Try to have them keep the ball no further than 1 metre ahead of them. Try to discourage them from kicking the ball far ahead.

**Passing:** Introduce the concept of passing and explain that it is important to pass in order for everyone to have fun and to play better as a team.

- Demonstrate with a volunteer how to pass, emphasizing using the inside of the foot.
- Pair athletes up about 2 to 3 metres apart and have them practice passing back and forth. Only feet can touch the balls, no hands.
- Increase the distance for advanced athletes.

**Introduction to Shooting:** Explain that goals are scored by shooting the ball into the net.

- Demonstrate a proper kick bringing the foot backwards, using the inside of the foot, and following through towards a target.
- Line up the athletes about 2 to 3 metres away from the wall and have each practice kicking a ball. If adjustments are required, provide further demonstrations.
- If the athletes progress quickly, set up pylons in the shape of a net and have them target shots between pylons.



**Cool Down - Stretching:**

- Bird: stand on one leg for balance then switch to the other
- Dog (downward): stretch leg up as at a fire hydrant
- Cat: on hands and knees with arched back
- Butterfly: sitting with feet together - flap wings (knees)
- Frog: squat
- Tree: tall tree, stretching up; bent tree, bend left and right
- Wilted flower: bend over with legs straight
- Scratching back: one elbow up

**Collect all Equipment:** If an athlete was assigned their own piece of equipment, ensure everything is collected and washed/disinfected before putting it away.

**Good-Bye and See Everyone Next Session**



## Week 6: Soccer (Running)

**Welcome and Introductions:** Athletes should not enter the gym more than 5 minutes before the program start time.

**Warm-Up:** Have athletes do stretches such as touch your toes, touch the ceiling, wiggle arms and legs, and move neck and ankles. Have athletes sit in a circle, 6 feet apart or stagger athletes throughout the gym, all looking forward to see the coach.

### Red Light, Green Light

Scatter the athletes throughout the gym and explain the rules of the game. When the Coach yells 'green light', the athletes can run around the gym (staying at least 6 feet apart from their fellow athletes). When the Coach yells 'red light' all of the athletes have to freeze.

### Recap from Last Session and Introduction:

- Explain the game again and go over dribbling, passing, and shooting.
- Ask them to explain what they have learned.

**Around the World:** Set out 4 or 5 cones with a coloured bean bag or ball placed on the top of each to form a large circle. Explain that each cone represents the colour on the top of the cone.

- Have the athletes dribble a soccer ball inside the circle until you shout out a colour. Each athlete then dribbles the ball to the colour you have indicated and dribbles around the cone before going back into the middle of the circle.
- To increase the difficulty, call out 2 colours at a time and have athletes dribble around two cones before going back into the middle of the circle.
- Ensure the athletes are spread a part and stay 6 feet away from each other. If the circle is too crowded with all athletes together, create two circles and divide the athletes into groups. Call a different colour for each group to avoid crowding.

### Circle Passing:

- Set athletes up in a large circle.
- Explain the importance of passing and using team members.
- Have athletes pass a ball to other athletes in the circle.
- To progress the activity, add another ball or place an athlete in the middle who tries to stop a pass from reaching a team member.
- Only feet can touch the ball, no hands.

### Keep Your Side Clean:

- Divide the athletes into two groups and set up a dividing line in the middle of the gym.
- Send each group to an opposite side of the dividing line.
- Provide each athlete with a ball. If there are not enough balls, divide the balls evenly per side.
- Instruct the athletes to kick their balls onto the other team's side while trying to keep their side clean of balls.
- You then blow the whistle or yell 'stop'.
- Count the balls on each side; the side with the fewest balls wins.
- Play a few times to allow the athletes lots of opportunity to kick the soccer balls.
- Remind athletes to use the inside of their feet to kick the ball properly.
- Only feet can touch the ball, no hands.

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**Shooting on Net:**

- Explain that the basic idea of soccer is to kick the ball into the net of the opposing team.
- Set up nets using pylons or cones.
- In pairs, encourage the athletes to kick the ball towards the opposing net and to pass to their teammates.
- Ensure that each athlete has a chance to kick and pass the ball.
- Do not worry about goalies or have a volunteer play in the net.
- Ensure only feet touch the ball, no hands.

**Cool Down - Stretching:**

- Bird: stand on one leg for balance then switch to the other
- Dog (downward): stretch leg up as at a fire hydrant
- Cat: on hands and knees with arched back
- Butterfly: sitting with feet together - flap wings (knees)
- Frog: squat
- Tree: tall tree, stretching up; bent tree, bend left and right
- Wilted flower: bend over with legs straight
- Scratching back: one elbow up

**Collect all Equipment:** If an athlete was assigned their own piece of equipment, ensure everything is collected and washed/disinfected before putting it away.

**Good-Bye and See Everyone Next Session**



## Week 7: Advanced Soccer (Running and Kicking)

**Welcome and Introductions:** Athletes should not enter the gym more than 5 minutes before the program start time.

**Warm-Up:** Have athletes do stretches such as touch your toes, touch the ceiling, wiggle arms and legs, and move neck and ankles. Have athletes sit in a circle, 6 feet apart or stagger athletes throughout the gym, all looking forward to see the coach.

### I spy with my little eye:

- Place different coloured floor markers, bean bags, cones etc. all over the floor.
- Pick an athlete and have him/her call out the name of an object that is visible. Then everyone races to the object by walking, running, or crawling. Instead of having all athletes run to the same object, call out the athletes' name and the name of the object they should find. Ex: Benny, blue beanbag, Lucy, red cone etc. This way not all athletes are running together.

### Recap from Last Session and Introduction:

- Explain the game again and go over dribbling to review what they have learned.
- Ask them to explain what they have learned.

### Dribbling Relay:

- Divide athletes into 2 teams, both standing in a line behind a cone. Ensure athletes are standing in line at least 6 feet apart from each other.
- Place another cone about 7 metres away from the 2 teams.
- Explain that the object of the game is for each athlete to dribble the ball down to the cone and around it and then dribble back and pass it to the next athlete in the line.
- Allow each athlete to first run the relay and then add the soccer ball.
- After completing the relay, the athlete can sit down.
- The team whose athletes complete the relay first wins.
- To progress the activity, move the cone farther down the gym or add an additional cone that must also be dribbled around before an athlete can dribble the ball back to his next teammate.
- Only feet can touch the ball, no hands.

### Passing to Score:

- Explain the importance of passing. Stress looking where they are passing.
- The objective is to have the athletes pass the ball to each other until it reaches the athlete at the front who then shoots into a net or between two cones for a goal.
- Set up a net at one end of the gym and set the athletes up in a zigzag formation.
- Explain that each athlete must pass to the next athlete in front of him/her.
- The ball then moves through each athlete and, after receiving the ball, the front athlete shoots it into the net.
- The athlete who shoots the ball into the net then moves to the back and starts the process again with each athlete moving up a spot.
- Continue until each athlete has had a chance to shoot into the net.
- To progress the game, include an additional ball.
- Remember: only feet can touch the ball, no hands.

**Soccer Bowling:**

- Set up a line of cones using as many as possible.
- Provide each athlete with a soccer ball.
- Explain that the object of the game is to shoot the soccer ball and try to knock down the cones.
- Have them take turns shooting at the cones until all have been knocked down.
- To progress the activity, move the cones further away or have the athlete run into the ball and shoot it rather than standing still and shooting.

**Shooting on Net:**

- Explain that the basic idea of soccer is to kick the ball into the net of the opposing team.
- Set up nets using pylons or cones.
- In pairs, encourage the athletes to kick the ball towards the opposing net and to pass to their teammates.
- Ensure that each athlete has a chance to kick and pass the ball.
- Do not worry about goalies or have a volunteer play in the net.
- Ensure only feet touch the ball, no hands.

**Cool Down - Stretching:**

- Bird: stand on one leg for balance then switch to the other
- Dog (downward): stretch leg up as at a fire hydrant
- Cat: on hands and knees with arched back
- Butterfly: sitting with feet together - flap wings (knees)
- Frog: squat
- Tree: tall tree, stretching up; bent tree, bend left and right
- Wilted flower: bend over with legs straight
- Scratching back: one elbow up

**Collect all Equipment:** If an athlete was assigned their own piece of equipment, ensure everything is collected and washed/disinfected before putting it away.

**Good-Bye and See Everyone Next Session**



## Week 8: Introduction to Basketball (Catching)

**Welcome and Introductions:** Athletes should not enter the gym more than 5 minutes before the program start time.

**Warm-Up:** Have athletes do stretches such as touch your toes, touch the ceiling, wiggle arms and legs, and move neck and ankles. Have athletes sit in a circle, 6 feet apart or stagger athletes throughout the gym, all looking forward to see the coach.

### Running Countdown:

- All athletes start at one side of the gym, along the wall. When the Coach says 'GO' and counts loudly to 10, all of the athletes have to run to the other side of the gym and stand at the opposite wall. Anyone that doesn't make it to the other side before the coach counts to 10, has to stand with the coach and help him/her count.
- Coach then says 'GO' and counts to 9. Any athletes that don't make it, help the coach and fellow athletes count.
- Game continues with coach counting to 8, 7, 6 and so on until no athletes are left running.

### Introduction to Basketball:

- Explain that basketball is a team sport played on a basketball court with 2 nets.
- Explain that the objective of the game is to move the basketball from your end of the court to the opposing team's end by passing to teammates or dribbling the ball.
- A point is scored when the basketball is thrown into the opponent's hoop. Be sure to show the athletes what the hoop is.
- Explain that teamwork is essential and that the main components of basketball are dribbling, passing, and shooting. Explain that these three elements will be the focus of the next 2 sessions.

**Bouncy Ball:** Introduce the concept of bouncing or dribbling so that the athletes become familiar with a basketball and how it bounces.

- Each athlete has a basketball and practices dropping the ball and catching it with two hands after it has bounced off the floor.
- Have athletes try bouncing and catching with 1 hand.
- Have athletes try to bounce the ball off the ground twice in a dribbling manner before stopping.
- See how many times athletes can bounce the ball before losing control.
- No athletes should be sharing basketballs.

**Coach Says:** You are the coach and have athletes follow your instructions. Keep things moving by asking them to hop on 1 leg, 2 legs, run, walk, crawl forwards or backwards, and swing arms. Be creative and let someone else be 'coach' to make the activity more fun. Ensure that all athletes are 6 feet away from one another.

**Shooting to Yourself:** Shooting is a vital skill to learn in order to play basketball. The following is an introduction to shooting basics.

- Introduce shooting by explaining that it is the means by which a player scores. It is important to simply allow the athlete to have success throwing a basketball into the air and developing a feel for the motion of shooting.
- Provide each athlete with a basketball.
- Explain the two-hand shot first, which has the athlete holding the basketball at chest level, both hands

behind and a bit underneath the ball, bending knees, and thrusting the ball forward or into the air.

- Progress with the one-hand shot.
- Show the athletes the proper technique for a one-hand shot:
- Bring the ball to a shooting position that includes holding the ball so that the shooting hand is behind the ball and a bit underneath with the non-shooting hand.
- Bend knees and lift elbows.
- Release the ball by snapping the shooting hand down and rolling the ball off the fingertips.
- A good animal analogy is to turn your hand into a gooseneck. As the fingers snap, the hand and arm form looks like a goose.
- Practice the technique of shooting into the air or at the wall.

### **Cool Down - Stretching:**

- Bird: stand on one leg for balance then switch to the other
- Dog (downward): stretch leg up as at a fire hydrant
- Cat: on hands and knees with arched back
- Butterfly: sitting with feet together - flap wings (knees)
- Frog: squat
- Tree: tall tree, stretching up; bent tree, bend left and right
- Wilted flower: bend over with legs straight
- Scratching back: one elbow up

**Collect all Equipment:** If an athlete was assigned their own piece of equipment, ensure everything is collected and washed/disinfected before putting it away.

**Good-Bye and See Everyone Next Session**



## Week 9: Basketball Skills

**Welcome and Introductions:** Athletes should not enter the gym more than 5 minutes before the program start time.

**Warm-Up:** Have athletes do stretches such as touch your toes, touch the ceiling, wiggle arms and legs, and move neck and ankles. Have athletes sit in a circle, 6 feet apart or stagger athletes throughout the gym, all looking forward to see the coach

**Butt Kicks, Knee Taps, and Karate Kicks:** This follow- the-leader activity introduces the ABCs of athletics in a fun way that also warms up muscles used for basketball.

- Butt Kicks: have athletes walk around the gym at varying speeds trying to kick their own butt with the back of their foot.
- Knee Taps: walk around the gym at varying speeds bringing the athletes' knees as close to the chest as possible as each leg raises.
- Karate Kicks: walk around the gym at varying speeds and, with each step, have the athletes kick their legs out in a karate kick fashion.
- Have fun with this activity and be sure to move at different speeds and perhaps make some noise.

**Recap:** Quickly review the concept of basketball and the skills of dribbling, passing, and shooting from the previous session's activities.

**Obstacle Dribbling:** The idea is to introduce movement and dribbling accuracy.

- Give each athlete their own basketball and start by having the athletes bounce a ball with two hands off the ground then move to one hand. Encourage them to bounce the ball as many times as possible without stopping or losing control of the ball.
- Have the athletes try walking in a straight line while bouncing the ball. Set up cones on either side in order to create a lane.
- Move the cones to create an obstacle course so the athletes are required to dribble or bounce the ball around the cones. Play follow the leader or "Simon Says" while dribbling.
- To progress the activity, add more cones or other items to be dribbled around or have the athletes dribble in a circle around the last cone.
- Always encourage the athletes to dribble on their side rather than in front of them to avoid hitting their shoes.

**Wall Ball:** The idea is to teach athletes about the movement of a basketball when bounced; it also helps with receiving.

- Provide each athlete with a basketball.
- Have them stand about 5 metres from the wall.
- Demonstrate how to pass the ball by bouncing it on the ground, letting it hit the wall, and then catching it as it bounces back.
- To progress the activity, move farther back from the wall or add tricks such as bounce the ball then clap your hands, then catch the ball or spin around and catch the ball.
- Encourage the athletes to have fingers spread apart but hands together when catching and to always keep their eyes on the bouncing ball.



**Going for the Big Hoop:** Athletes practice what they learned from the previous shooting session, but incorporate a large Hula Hoop as the basket in order to work on shooting for accuracy.

- Review the shooting tips from the previous session that look at holding the ball in a shooting position, bending knees, extending hands, and, if possible, making the goose neck.
- Take the activity one step further by asking athletes to keep their heads facing the target, in this case a volunteer holding a Hula Hoop.
- Demonstrate shooting the ball through the Hula Hoop and encourage the volunteers to try to lower and raise the hoop to ensure that the athlete shoots the ball through the hoop.
- To progress the activity, try shooting from a farther distance or raising the height that the volunteer is holding the hoop.
- If there is a basketball net that can be lowered, try using it after the first activity is complete.

**Fun Game:** For athletes to conceptualize how the skills work in a game environment, play a very simple game using volunteers with Hula Hoops as nets or lowered basketball nets.

- Set volunteers 8 to 10 metres apart to form a basketball court
- Divide the athletes into 2 teams.
- Explain that the idea is to dribble the basketball to the opposing team's net and try to shoot the ball into the hoops for points. Each athlete will use their own ball and will not pass to one another (coaches can explain that in a real game they would pass to their teammates but due to physical distancing, we will not be playing with passing).
- Do not focus too much on rules, but more on fun and working as a team.
- Provide lots of encouragement and ensure that all athletes have the opportunity to play with the basketball during the game.

#### **Cool Down - Stretching:**

- Bird: stand on one leg for balance then switch to the other
- Dog (downward): stretch leg up as at a fire hydrant
- Cat: on hands and knees with arched back
- Butterfly: sitting with feet together - flap wings (knees)
- Frog: squat
- Tree: tall tree, stretching up; bent tree, bend left and right
- Wilted flower: bend over with legs straight
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**Good-Bye and See Everyone Next Session**



## Week 10: An Introduction to Softball (Striking)

**Welcome and Introductions:** Athletes should not enter the gym more than 5 minutes before the program start time.

**Warm-Up:** Have athletes do stretches such as touch your toes, touch the ceiling, wiggle arms and legs, and move neck and ankles. Have athletes sit in a circle, 6 feet apart or stagger athletes throughout the gym, all looking forward to see the coach.

**Coach Says:** You are the coach and have athletes follow your instructions. Keep things moving by asking them to hop on 1 leg, 2 legs, run, walk, crawl forwards or backwards, and swing arms. Be creative and let someone else be 'coach' to make the activity more fun. Ensure that all athletes are 6 feet away from one another.

### Introduction to Softball:

- Explain that softball is a team sport where innings are played and teams play both on the "field" (defense) and "at bat" (offense).
- Explain the various skills that include catching, hitting, throwing, and running, which will be practiced over the next 2 sessions. Explain the equipment used in softball, including the ball, bat, and, if available, a baseball glove. Note: gloves will not be used in the 2 sessions.
- Softball is a fairly complex sport so try to use very basic language. There is no need to introduce winning and losing.

**Running the Bases:** Explain that running fast and to a base in softball is important. The concept is to have athletes become accustomed to running the bases in the appropriate order.

- Start by running around the gym once slowly and then a bit faster a second time.
- Set up a baseball diamond by placing mats (bases) numbered mats 1 to 4, with 4 being home plate.
- Line up the athletes and explain that each time you blow the whistle, the front athlete runs to first base. When the whistle blows the second time, the athlete on first runs to second base and the next athlete in line runs to first base. If you have enough volunteers, place one on each base to ensure the athletes run to the correct base and do not take off too early.
- The activity continues until each athlete has had a chance to run to all four bases.
- The activity can be progressed by speeding up the whistle blows.
- Ensure that when an athlete crosses the 4 bases - everyone cheers to acknowledge he has made it home and scored a run.

**Hit the Target:** Athletes try to hit a target in order to work on throwing accuracy.

- Provide each athlete with a ball that can easily be thrown with 1 hand. Beanbags can also be used.
- Set up athletes in a horizontal line about 3 metres apart.
- About 3 to 4 metres in front of the line, set up as many objects as you can. Try to use items that can fall over when hit.
- Explain that the concept of the game is to knock down all of the objects by throwing their balls at them.
- To ensure safety, start at the beginning of the line and have each athlete throw one at a time.
- Once everyone has thrown a ball, have them run and collect their balls in order to play again.
- To progress the activity, move the athletes farther back from the objects and ask them to throw the balls in a number of ways such as underhand and overhand.
- Tips for teaching throwing for accuracy include standing with the non-throwing shoulder facing the

target; and ensuring that the athletes throw the ball over the foot on their non-throwing side and try to look at the target while throwing.

**Introduction to Hitting:** Explain the concept of hitting and that it is important because it allows a team to score. Demonstrate swinging a bat.

- Line up athletes 3 metres away from the batting stand.
- Start by setting a larger ball on the stand and demonstrate hitting it off.
- Allow each athlete to swing at the ball on the stand until they hit it. (For safety reasons, always ensure that athletes not batting are at least 3 metres away.)
- Keep the activity moving by having enough balls on hand so that time is not taken running after the balls that have been hit. Ensure you sanitize the bat after each athlete has held it.
- Once everyone has had an opportunity to hit, a volunteer can collect at the balls. Do not let athletes handle the balls without them being sanitized.
- Run through the activity a few times.
- Tips: two hands on the bat, right hand over left, feet shoulder- width apart, knees bent, and feet facing the direction of the field
- The activity can be adapted by using a larger or smaller ball on the stand and using a paddle to start the activity to ensure each athlete can hit the ball. Then move on to the foam bat.

**Cool Down - Stretching:**

- Bird: stand on one leg for balance then switch to the other
- Dog (downward): stretch leg up as at a fire hydrant
- Cat: on hands and knees with arched back
- Butterfly: sitting with feet together - flap wings (knees)
- Frog: squat
- Tree: tall tree, stretching up; bent tree, bend left and right
- Wilted flower: bend over with legs straight
- Scratching back: one elbow up

**Collect all Equipment:** If an athlete was assigned their own piece of equipment, ensure everything is collected and washed/disinfected before putting it away.

**Good-Bye and See Everyone Next Session**



## Week 11: Softball Skills Continued

**Welcome and Introductions:** Athletes should not enter the gym more than 5 minutes before the program start time.

**Warm-Up:** Have athletes do stretches such as touch your toes, touch the ceiling, wiggle arms and legs, and move neck and ankles. Have athletes sit in a circle, 6 feet apart or stagger athletes throughout the gym, all looking forward to see the coach.

### I Spy with My Little Eye:

- Place different coloured floor markers, bean bags, cones etc. all over the floor.
- Pick an athlete and have him/her call out the name of an object that is visible. Then everyone races to the object by walking, running, or crawling. Instead of having all athletes run to the same object, call out the athletes' name and the name of the object they should find. Ex: Benny, blue beanbag, Lucy, red cone etc. This way not all athletes are running together.

**Recap:** Review the skills that were practiced the session before and ask the athletes what they remember.

- Quickly go over running, throwing, and hitting.
- Introduce catching.

### Throw and Catch:

- Utilize the parents/caregivers and ask them to practice throwing and catching with their athlete. Either assign each duo with their own ball or ask them to bring one from home.
- Be sure to work on proper throwing technique while looking at the target. Throws can be underhand or overhand depending on the athlete's ability.
- For receiving the ball, work on extending arms as the ball approaches, use both hands, close hands as the ball is received, and bring the ball towards the body after it has been caught.
- To progress the activity, add another ball or work on throwing the ball higher into the air or closer to the ground.

**Hit and Run:** This activity allows athletes to work on hitting the ball and incorporating running to the base after making contact with the ball.

- First review the hitting tips from the previous hitting session and start by simply taking turns hitting off a tee. Disinfect the bat after each athlete has touched it.
- Set up the baseball diamond again and, if possible, place a volunteer at each base.
- After each athlete has the chance to hit the ball off a tee, incorporate hitting the ball and running to first base.
- As soon as the next athlete hits the ball off the tee the athlete on first base then runs to second base and the hitter runs to first.
- Continue this until each athlete has had the opportunity to hit at least twice.
- Progress the activity by slowly pitching to athletes with the ability to hit a moving object. A large ball can also be used to make hitting a moving object easier.

**Softball Relay:** The relay should incorporate each of the learned softball skills - running, catching, throwing, and hitting.

- Divide the group into two teams.
- Set up the space in the shape of a baseball field with bases 1 to 4.
- This relay starts with each athlete taking a turn to run all 4 bases, with lots of cheering for their 'home run'.
- Once each athlete has completed their 'home run', they will take turns to complete the obstacles at each base. One at a time, the athletes will run to first base. Once there, they will have to do 10 jumping jacks.
- Upon arrival at second base, the athlete must do 'high-knees' for 10 seconds.
- When the athlete reaches third base, they walk across the balance beam and jumps a set-up hurdle. Both the hurdle and balance beam are included in the Fundamentals Tool Kit.
- As soon as the athlete completes the balance beam and jump stations, they run as fast as he can to home plate. Ensure that as each athlete reaches home plate, there are lots of cheers.
- The softball relay can be completed as many times as required and each activity can be adapted to meet the skill level of each athlete.
- If athletes bring their own equipment, the coach can incorporate throwing and catching skills at each base.

**Cool Down - Stretching:**

- Bird: stand on one leg for balance then switch to the other
- Dog (downward): stretch leg up as at a fire hydrant
- Cat: on hands and knees with arched back
- Butterfly: sitting with feet together - flap wings (knees)
- Frog: squat
- Tree: tall tree, stretching up; bent tree, bend left and right
- Wilted flower: bend over with legs straight
- Scratching back: one elbow up

**Collect all Equipment:** If an athlete was assigned their own piece of equipment, ensure everything is collected and washed/disinfected before putting it away.

**Good-Bye and See Everyone Next Session**



## Week 12: Fun Day

**Welcome and Introductions:** Athletes should not enter the gym more than 5 minutes before the program start time.

**Warm-Up:** Have athletes do stretches such as touch your toes, touch the ceiling, wiggle arms and legs, and move neck and ankles. Have athletes sit in a circle, 6 feet apart or stagger athletes throughout the gym, all looking forward to see the coach.

**Fun Day:** Explain that the purpose of Fun Day is to promote participation, not competition. At the end of the session, athletes are awarded ribbons. The 'ceremony' mimics a competition presentation, but everyone receives the same ribbon. Ensure that the athletes are cheered on during the events. Each event can be done one-at-a-time or all at the same time in a station-style format if space permits.

**Event 1 - Track and Field Bonanza:** Athletes utilize the skills learned in the first 4 sessions in a mini track event.

- Divide athletes into two groups.
- Using the full length of your space, set up cones to divide the space in two. In each section, design an obstacle course that requires athletes to sprint, jump, and throw. Have them sprint for 10 metres, jump over 2 hurdles, and then throw a ball into a garbage can from a variety of distances. Ensure each athlete is using their own assigned ball.
- As soon as the first athlete in line finishes, the next athlete starts.
- Continue until all of the athletes have finished.
- The first team with everyone finished and sitting down wins.
- Perform as many times as possible.
- Remember to stress finishing not winning and ensure applause after each athlete and each team completes the course.

**Event 2 - Mini Soccer:** The game takes place in a small space that allows each athlete an opportunity to dribble and shoot the ball using the skills developed in the soccer sessions.

- Set up a mini soccer field by creating 2 nets with cones.
- Divide the athletes into two groups. Use volunteers if space permits.
- Play soccer, always encouraging the athletes to dribble and pass the ball as much as possible.
- Only feet can touch the ball, no hands.
- Do not keep score but cheer for goals.

**Event 3 - Mini Basketball- Fun Game:** For athletes to conceptualize how all the skills work in a game environment, play a very simple game of basketball with Hula Hoops as nets or lowered basketball nets.

- Divide the athletes into two teams and have them stand on either side of the gym.
- Explain that the idea is to dribble and shoot the basketball to the opposing team's net. Explain that in a real game, they are supposed to pass to teammates, but in order to eliminate the sharing of equipment, they will all dribble and shoot with their own basketball.
- Focus more on fun and working as a team than on rules.
- Provide lots of encouragement and ensure that all athletes have the opportunity to play with the basketball during the game.

**Event 4 - Home Run Derby:** This fun and exciting game allows athletes to show off their softball skill and gives them the chance to hit and run.

- Set the space up in the design of a baseball diamond.
- Explain that everyone except for the hitter plays the “field” and tries to throw the ball after it has been hit to home plate and before the runner can run around all of the bases (no throwing will occur).
- The ball can be hit off a stand or a caregiver can slowly pitch the ball, depending on the athlete’s ability. Make sure the bat is sanitized after each athlete, or ask the athlete to bring their own household item to strike the ball with (i.e. bat, tennis racquet, pool noodle, wooden spoon etc.)
- Allow each athlete to have a chance at hitting and running the bases.
- Place a caregiver to catch the ball as it is thrown to home plate.
- If an athlete does not make it all around the bases after hitting a home run, he/she can stop at a base and run when the next hitter has hit the ball.
- Remember to encourage athletes to run as fast as they can. Do not allow athletes to throw the ball back in as only the volunteer should be handling the ball.
- Always cheer as each athlete hits the ball and arrives at home plate.

**Cool Down - Stretching:**

- Bird: stand on one leg for balance then switch to the other
- Dog (downward): stretch leg up as at a fire hydrant
- Cat: on hands and knees with arched back
- Butterfly: sitting with feet together - flap wings (knees)
- Frog: squat
- Tree: tall tree, stretching up; bent tree, bend left and right
- Wilted flower: bend over with legs straight
- Scratching back: one elbow up

**Collect all Equipment:** If an athlete was assigned their own piece of equipment, ensure everything is collected and washed/disinfected before putting it away.

**Good-Bye and See Everyone Next Session**

**Additional modifications to consider:**

- If possible, run the program outdoors in a park, parking lot, school field etc.
- Ask parents to bring their own equipment and give household item suggestions (ex: rolled up socks for throwing, balancing on head, kicking/bowls or Tupperware for buckets, obstacles etc.)
- Give families equipment to keep for the season to eliminate the spreading of germs