Object Control Skills

Object control skills require your child to control an object using a part of the body or using an implement. There are two types of object control skills:

- **Propulsive** – sending an object away (e.g. throwing, kicking, striking, batting)
- **Receptive** – receiving an object (e.g. catching, dribbling a ball, receiving a shuttlecock)

Propulsive skills are easier because your child is in control of the object that he sends away. In contrast, receptive skills require perceptual and coordination skills to move one’s body into position to receive the oncoming object.

In daily living, as well as in many games and sports, there is often a need for both propulsive and receptive skills (e.g. catching a tossed pillow and passing it on or receiving a shuttlecock and sending it back).

Object control skills include:

- **Throwing**
  - Underarm Rolling
  - Underarm Throwing
  - Overarm Throwing
  - Two-handed Throwing
- **Catching**
- **Kicking**
- **Dribbling with Foot**
- **Striking**
  - Overarm Striking
  - Two-handed Sidearm Striking
- **Bouncing**
- **Dribbling with Hand**
- **Dribbling with Long Implement**
Underarm rolling is a fairly easy propulsive skill for your child. A good underarm roll involves stepping forward with the foot opposite to the ball-hand (hand holding the ball). This is followed by bending of the knees as the ball-hand swings forward in a downward arc to release the ball. Underarm rolling is used in games such as bowling, bocce and lawn bowling.

Your child will enjoy rolling activities because it is fun to release an object and watch it travel, especially if it topples other objects (e.g. bowling pins or targets).
Developmental Phases

Underarm Rolling

**Initial**
- Feet apart.
- Hands hold ball on both sides with palms facing each other.
- Arms straighten, swinging backward-forward.
- Trunk is bent at waist. Body straightens up upon release of ball.
- Eyes on ball.

**Transition**
- One foot steps forward. One hand is on top of ball and other on bottom.
- Arms on opposite side of forward foot swing backward-forward.
- Limited knee-bend.
- Eyes alternate between ball and target.
- Arms swing forward as ball is released between knee and waist level.

**Mature**
- One foot steps forward. Ball held in hand on opposite side of forward foot.
- Ball-hand swings backward, then forward. Knees bend and body weight transfers from back to front foot during swing.
- Ball is released smoothly at or below knee level.
- Eyes on target throughout.

**Approximate Age of Development (in years)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Initial</th>
<th>Transition</th>
<th>Mature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Teaching Strategies

Underarm Rolling

What to do if your child...

... is unstable when rolling from a standing position?
- Get your child to sit down and roll underarm.
- Get your child to sit with legs straddled, then roll the ball towards the target with both hands.

... is not rolling ball far or with force?
- Get the child to stand with feet shoulder-width apart.
- Bend knees, lower body, swing hands and release the ball with both hands.
- Progress to rolling with one hand when your child is able.

... needs cues for the rolling sequence?
- Place a marker or footprint on the floor to indicate where your child should step. Give step-by-step cues: “Step, swing, bend, and roll”.
- Cues can be verbal or written on word cards. If latter, pin up on wall at your child’s eye level.

... needs practice in the rolling movement?
- Use colourful bottles/empty beverage cartons as targets. Number the targets with permanent markers.
- To prevent the ball from rolling far off at random, place the targets against a wall.
- Create lanes (using ropes/benches) as a guide for your child.
**Variations**

“Can your child roll a ball underarm...?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How the body moves</th>
<th>Force/Effort</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Flow</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>with a strong backswing</td>
<td>slowly/quickly</td>
<td>as if it is a heavy bowling ball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>that is light (beach ball)/heavy (basketball)</td>
<td>forward and have his partner chase it</td>
<td>from a stationary position</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>with both hands</td>
<td>so that it travels smoothly on the ground</td>
<td>after taking three steps</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Direction/Pathways</th>
<th>Levels/Extensions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>between two rows of cones</td>
<td>to the left/right</td>
<td>standing tall like a pole</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>between two lines on the floor</td>
<td>to hit a moving object coming towards/going away from him</td>
<td>from different body positions (sitting/kneeling/feet apart/feet together)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to hit the wall on the opposite side of the room</td>
<td>backward</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Self (body parts)/People</th>
<th>Objects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>to a partner nearby/at a distance</td>
<td>through the legs of a chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>through his partner’s straddled legs</td>
<td>through a paper tunnel (a holed-out cardboard box)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with hands straightened out</td>
<td>to hit cones placed at a distance away</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**COMBINATIONS**

- Through his partner’s straddled legs from different body positions
- To hit some targets at the end of the room from a stationary position
Activity 1
Underarm Rolling

WHAT YOU NEED

• Two chairs
• A ball

HOW TO PLAY

• Create a goal post by placing two chairs against a wall, a distance apart from each other. You are the goal keeper, your child the roller.
• Position the roller three giant steps away from the goal post. The roller must roll the ball towards the goal, using the one-handed underarm roll. The goal keeper must stop the ball, using his bare hands only, no kicking is allowed.
• Switch roles and repeat the activity.
• Challenge your child by positioning him (roller) further and further away from the goal.
• Challenge him by re-positioning the goal such that the ball has to pass under the two chairs.

BE AWARE

• Place cut-out footprints on the floor to show your child how to step forward with his opposite foot. This will help him maintain his balance.
• With increased distance between your child and the goal, ask your child to swing the ball back and forth before he releases the ball. This will help him generate momentum and force for the roll.

• Ensure that the play area is free of obstacles to prevent collisions, especially when your child changes directions.
Activity 2
Underarm Rolling

WHAT YOU NEED
• Empty boxes
• Two balls
• Recycled materials, such as empty bottles or toilet rolls, to serve as markers

HOW TO PLAY
• Create a mid-line with two recycled materials. Arrange empty boxes along this line.
• Sit facing your child, with the boxes between both of you.
• Roll the balls to bump the boxes away from each other.
• The side with fewer boxes after two minutes wins!

• Challenge your child to repeat the activity standing up. Stand five big steps away from the mid-line, and do not move from your respective points during play.
• Remind your child that he can only roll his ball to push the boxes away from himself and towards you, his opponent.

BE AWARE
• Help your child to see that the ball must roll on the ground, whether players are sitting or standing.
Underarm throw, like the underarm roll, involves a backward-forward swing of the hand to release an object – a ball in the case of the former and any object in the latter.

Unlike the underarm roll where the release is low and close to ground level, the release of the underarm throw can be at any angle or level depending on the purpose of the throw (e.g. whether it is to land an object near or far).

Underarm throws help your child make perceptual judgments on distance, space and the release strength. The developmental phases of underarm throwing are similar to those of underarm roll.
Teaching Strategies
Underarm Throwing

What to do if your child...

... needs to develop judgement for distance and strength of throw?
- Place three containers of different heights and shapes at different distances.
- Get your child to throw bean bags or rolled up socks into each, starting with the one closest to him.

... needs to develop awareness of different strength required for throwing different objects?
- Get your child to practise throwing different objects (e.g. small stuffed toys, rolled up socks/towels, bean bags, frisbees).

... needs cues for the throwing sequence?
- Place a footprint marker on the floor to indicate where he should step.
- Give step-by-step cues: “Step, swing, throw and point” for your child to follow accordingly.

... needs to develop awareness of different strength required for throwing at different levels?
- Get your child to practise throwing to hit different targets (e.g. quoits, stuffed toys), for different purposes (e.g. to land far or near) and at different levels.

Approximate Age of Development (in years)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
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<tbody>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mature</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>7</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## Variations

“Can your child throw an object underarm...?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How the body moves</th>
<th>Force/Effort</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Flow</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• as far as possible (e.g. to end of room)</td>
<td>• slowly/quickly</td>
<td>• without moving his free hand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• to hit a near/far target</td>
<td>• after two or three backswings</td>
<td>• swinging his free hand in opposition to his ball-hand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• using his dominant/non-dominant hand</td>
<td>• after he make two jumps</td>
<td>• standing inside a hoop</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Where the body moves</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Direction/Pathways</th>
<th>Levels/Extensions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• to land over/in between the lines</td>
<td>• to the left/right</td>
<td>• so that it ‘draws’ a rainbow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• to land on targets placed at different distances</td>
<td>• upward</td>
<td>• upward near/far</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• to hit bottles hanging overhead</td>
<td>• at an angle close to/at a distance from the ground</td>
<td>• at waist level</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>With whom/What the body moves</th>
<th>Self (body parts)/People</th>
<th>Objects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• with left/right hand</td>
<td>• such as a face towel or a pair of rolled up socks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• for it to touch his partner’s legs</td>
<td>• into a basket/box placed near/far on a chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• to land on/near his partner’s thrown object</td>
<td>• to hit a rolling ball</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### COMBINATIONS
- Gently but quickly without moving his free hand
- Upward from a seated position for it to land on his left
Activity 1
Underarm Throwing

WHAT YOU NEED
- Newspapers, rolled up to make rings
- A chair

HOW TO PLAY
- Together with your child, roll up newspapers and tape them together to form rings. Invert a chair so that its four legs are pointing upwards.
- Position your child a distance away from the chair. Get him to throw the newspaper rings, aiming for any of the legs of the chair.
- Challenge your child to repeat the activity by standing further away from the chair.

BE AWARE
- Teach your child to aim. Ask him to pick one leg of the chair, and to keep his eyes fixed on that leg while he is throwing the ring.
- Make sure your child straightens his arms as he throws the rings. This will help with the accuracy of his throw.

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT
- Your child can look around the house for objects to aim at with his newspaper rings.
Activity 2

OBJECT CONTROL SKILLS

WHAT YOU NEED
- A sheet of “mahjong” paper
- Small and soft objects suitable for throwing, such as stuffed toys, erasers or small pillows

HOW TO PLAY
- Lay a sheet of “mahjong” paper on the floor. Draw a 3x3 grid (“Tic-tac-toe” grid) on it.
- Play “Tic-tac-toe” on it with your child. Use small objects found at home as markers to throw on your chosen space on the grid.
- Challenge your child by increasing the distance between the thrower and the “mahjong” paper.

BE AWARE
- For younger children who may not know how to play “Tic-tac-toe”, you can put an item in each grid square and simply get them to aim at the items, one at a time.
- Encourage your child to lift and straighten his arms before releasing the object. This will help with the accuracy of his throw.

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT
- In place of the “mahjong” paper, you can use foam mats to form the 3x3 grid. You can even use the floor tiles in your home.
The overarm throw, also known as the overhand or overhead throw, is a skill most commonly used in sports for throwing far and for making quick accurate passes. Variations of the overarm throw are used in many athletic field events, in throwing and catching activities, and in ball games (e.g. basketball, netball).

Most children will not instinctively know how to throw overarm efficiently. To reach the mature phase of the skill, they need a variety of fun and engaging practice opportunities.
Developmental Phases
Overarm Throwing

**Initial**

- Throw resembles a push. Movement is limited to the front of body and only the elbow is used to push the object.
- Fingers are spread out at the point of release.
- Body remains straight with little or no trunk-shoulder rotation.
- Legs are straight and stationary.

**Transition**

- During preparation, the throwing arm swings and brings the ball to the head level.
- Body rotates slightly towards throwing side.
- Foot on the same side as throwing arm steps forward.
- During the throw, arm swings high over shoulder with body leaning forward.
- Throwing arm reaches forward and downward after ball is released.

**Mature**

- During preparation, throwing arm swings backward and upward.
- Elbow moves close to ear level, leading the throw.
- A forward step is taken with the foot opposite the throwing arm.
- During the throw, body rotates to face forward and body weight transfers from back to front foot.
- Elbow straightens before release, with throwing arm reaching forward and downward in follow-through.

**Approximate Age of Development (in years)**

<table>
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<th></th>
<th>1</th>
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<tr>
<td>Transition</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mature</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Teaching Strategies
Overarm Throwing

What to do if your child...

... is unable to throw far?
- Place two footprint markers, about shoulder width apart. Place a similarly colour marker in front of the foot opposite the throwing hand (ball-hand).
- Your child begins by standing on the pair of markers.
- Then, get your child to step forward with the foot opposite his throwing hand and throw the ball.

... is throwing too low?
- Set up a net about his height at a short distance away.
- Get your child to throw object over the line.
- Gradually move your child further away from net to increase the throw distance.

... is unable to throw with force?
- Place a cone in line with the footprint markers.
- Get your child to turn his belly button to face the cone when swinging his hand to the back. Then rotate his body to face the direction of the throw.

... needs to develop proficiency in the skill?
- Your child to engage in fun activities such as, “Hurry, Send The Presents Over” to allow them to practise overarm throw without the need to hit targets.
- Focus on the distance of the throw, then speed, and lastly, precision of throw.
**Variations**

“Can your child throw an object overarm...?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How the body moves</th>
<th>Force/Effort</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Flow</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• with/without a backswing</td>
<td>• quickly/slowly</td>
<td>• continuously as fast as he can</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• that is heavy/light</td>
<td>• standing still/following a short run</td>
<td>• like a robot with heavy arms</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• that is small/medium-sized</td>
<td>• continuously for 30 seconds</td>
<td>• standing on tiptoe like a flamingo</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Where the body moves</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Direction/Pathways</th>
<th>Levels/Extensions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• to the end of the court</td>
<td>• leaning forward/backward</td>
<td>• at a low/medium/high level</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• near/far or low/high</td>
<td>• to the left/right</td>
<td>• straight towards a wall</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• to hit targets (at different distances and heights)</td>
<td>• over a net</td>
<td>• upward to touch the clouds</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>With whom/What the body moves</th>
<th>Self (body parts)/People</th>
<th>Objects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• using his left/right hand</td>
<td>• such as a bean bag/quoit/hoop/towel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• keeping time with a group</td>
<td>• into the baskets/pails</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• when a signal to throw is given</td>
<td>• at a target on the wall</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**COMBINATIONS**
- Slowly without a backswing and standing on tiptoe on both feet
- To a partner standing in a hoop at a distance away, and then run to tag him before he releases the object
Activity 1
Overarm Throwing

WHAT YOU NEED

• Different targets, such as big numbers or letters
• Rope or tape, to mark a line on the floor
• Safe objects for throwing, such as balls, stuffed toys, erasers and small pillows or bolsters

HOW TO PLAY

• Stick different targets high up on a wall. This is to bring out the overarm action. Place a rope or tape in a line on the floor, about 10 steps away from the wall. Have your child stand behind this line. Get your child to toss various safe objects at the different targets on the wall.
• Specify a number or letter. Your child must aim at the corresponding target on the wall.

• Increase the throw distance by shifting the line further away from the wall.
• Challenge your child to achieve a goal such as complete hitting all the targets on the wall within 20 seconds.
• For older children, say a word. Your child must aim at the right targets on the wall to spell out the word.

BE AWARE

• Your child must select and aim at a specific target. His body should face the direction of the throw.
• Use cut-out footprints to prompt your child to step forward with his foot on his non-throwing side. This will help his body rotate in the direction of throw, and allow him to transfer his body weight between his front and back feet.
Activity 2
Overarm Throwing

WHAT YOU NEED

- Recycled papers or newspapers, crumpled into balls

HOW TO PLAY

- Help your child explore different ways of throwing a “ball”.

  Ways to throw a ball
  - Over the shoulder
  - Under the leg
  - Toss while standing, catch on sitting

- With five “balls” on each side, stand 10 steps from each other. Try hitting each other’s toes with your respective “balls” without moving around.

  • Increase the challenge by allowing movement. Both parent and child can move around without going into the centre zone. Child has to aim, throw and avoid being hit – all at once!

BE AWARE

- Stand a distance away from each other. When throwing, aim at each other’s toes. This will ensure elbows are raised to ear level, necessary for the overarm-throwing action.
Two-handed Throwing

The two-handed throw is commonly used when young children have to handle a larger-sized ball as this movement allows them a better grip of the ball. They tend to use the two-handed overhead throw or two-handed forward toss from waist level, before mastering the two-handed chest pass.

The two-handed overhead throw is used in games like soccer (throw-in from sideline) and basketball, while the chest pass is commonly used in basketball and netball.
Developmental Phases
Two-handed Throwing

**Initial**
- Feet stationary. Ball is held high near the head with both hands/elbows slightly bent.
- During the throw, body leans backward before flexing forward.
- Arms straighten and ball is released high by both hands.
- No weight transfer during the throw.

**Transition**
- Feet stationary. Ball is held near to chest with bent elbows pointing downward.
- During throw, body leans slightly backward before arms are straightened and ball is released.
- Little or no weight transfer during the throw.

**Mature**
- Feet stationary. Ball is held with fingers spread around it. Elbows are bent and held just below shoulder level (winged outward).
- One foot steps forward to initiate the throw.
- During the throw, arms are pushed out strongly at chest level, transferring force from shoulder to arms to hand.
- Legs are slightly bent to absorb force and weight transfers to front foot as ball is released.

**Approximate Age of Development (in years)**

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</tbody>
</table>
Teaching Strategies
Two-handed Throwing

What to do if your child...

... is not throwing far?
- Place two foot markers, about shoulder width apart. Place another marker in front (either foot) for your child to step forward. Use verbal cues: “Step and push”.
- Child to practise stepping forward with left and right foot to develop versatility with both feet.

... has difficulty throwing with force?
- Place a marker/target on wall at your child’s chest level. Get your child to stand a short distance away and throw to hit target.
- Gradually move your child further from wall to increase throw distance.

... needs practice to throw with accuracy?
- Hang a hoop at your child’s chest level. Get your child to stand a short distance away and throw a ball through the hoop.
- Gradually move your child further from the wall to increase the throw distance.

... needs motivation to practise the skill?
- Stack drink cans (or place plastic bottles) on a table top. Get your child to stand a distance away and throw to knock cans over.
- Gradually move your child further from the table to increase the throw distance.
## Variations in

“Can your child throw a ball with two hands...?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How the body moves</th>
<th>Force/Effort</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Flow</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>as if pushing a rock away</td>
<td>quickly/slowly</td>
<td>as if feet were glued to the floor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>with/without bending at the waist</td>
<td>straight ahead/upward to ‘draw’ a rainbow</td>
<td>smoothly with a forward step and follow through</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>gently as if handling an egg</td>
<td>with a short/long forward step</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Where the body moves</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Direction/Pathways</th>
<th>Levels/Extensions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>clockwise in a group</td>
<td>straight and forward</td>
<td>at medium/high level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>through a hoop and into the basket</td>
<td>overhead</td>
<td>downward so that it bounces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>to hit targets (at different distances and height)</td>
<td>over a line</td>
<td>from a seated position</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>With whom/What the body moves</th>
<th>Self (body parts)/People</th>
<th>Objects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>to a friend nearby/far away</td>
<td>into a basketball net</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>when his friend tells him to throw</td>
<td>to hit a wall and catch the rebound</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>to a friend who calls his name</td>
<td>through a hoop hanging upright in front</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### COMBINATIONS
- A medium-sized ball quickly and smoothly with one forward step
- Through a hoop, hanging at chest level, to a friend on the other side of the hoop
Activity 1
Two-handed Throwing

WHAT YOU NEED
• A picture of your child’s favourite cartoon character
• A ball

HOW TO PLAY
• Stick a picture of your child’s favourite cartoon character on a wall, at your child’s chest level.
• Stand your child a distance away.
• Have him hold a ball with both hands as he throws it to hit different parts of the target.
• Get your child to hit the target at least 10 times within 20 seconds.

• Add in more cartoon characters and stagger them at various heights, not going beyond your child’s chest and head levels.
• Encourage your child to complete hitting all the targets within a specific time frame.

BE AWARE
• Ensure that your child fixes his eyes on the target.
• Remind him to step forward with one foot when throwing. This will help him maintain his balance.
Activity 2
Two-handed Throwing

WHAT YOU NEED

- A ball

HOW TO PLAY

- Stand five steps away while facing your child. Form a circle with your arms. Have your child throw a ball through the circle.

- Challenge your child with another dimension to the game. Anticipate your child’s throw, and use your knees to hit the ball before it goes through the circle. Get your child to try catching the returning ball.

BE AWARE

- Encourage your child to lift up both arms, and bend his elbows in front of his chest (like chicken wings). This will help him throw more forcefully.
Catching is an important skill in most ball games but is challenging for many young children, as the catcher is not in control of the speed of the oncoming object. The child has to track the object (keep his eye on it) and move his body and hands in response, before catching it.

The ‘avoidance tendency’ is common among younger children who instinctively turn their faces away or close their eyes to avoid being hit. For beginners, start with objects that are bright, light and travel slowly (e.g. scarf, stuffed toy, balloon).

This skill may need to be taught together with throwing skills.
Developmental Phases

Catching

**Initial**
- Both hands are held out straight, palms facing upward.
- Face turns away to avoid oncoming object or reflexive raising of arms and hands to shield head.
- Elbows extend for arms to trap object close to chest by ‘scooping’ it.

**Transition**
- Arms are bent in front of body, palms facing each other, thumbs pointing upward.
- Eyes may close as object travels towards arms.
- Hands make brief contact with object. Arms clasp object close to body due to poor timing.

**Mature**
- Eyes focus on and track the oncoming object.
- Elbows are bent and arms held relaxed at the sides or in front of the body.
- Arms and feet make adjustments according to the flight path of the oncoming object.
- Hands grasp object in a well-timed motion. Arms pull in upon contact with object to absorb its force.

**Approximate Age of Development (in years)**

<table>
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<tr>
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<td>Mature</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Teaching Strategies

Catching

What to do if your child...

... is unable to catch?
- Begin with objects that are colourful, soft and light (e.g. scarf).
- Allow your child to play with the object first before dropping it from a height for him to catch.

... turns face away or closes eyes when catching?
- Begin with objects that are colourful, soft and light (e.g. stuffed toys, rolled up towels).
- Allow your child to play with the objects first.
- Start by passing the object before tossing them to your child.

... is slow to react to oncoming objects?
- Cue the throw (“Ready? It’s coming!”) before tossing the object to your child.
- Count down with your child before tossing “five, four, three, two, one, catch!”
- Gradually shorten the intervals between cues to quicken your child’s response.

... needs to practise catching small objects?
- Get your child to practise tossing the object upward and catching it.
- Try placing the object on his shoe and have him kick it upward for him to catch.
- Gradually decrease the size of the object.
# Variations in “Can your child catch...?”

## How the body moves

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Force/Effort</strong></th>
<th><strong>Time</strong></th>
<th><strong>Flow</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>as softly as possible</td>
<td>quickly/slowly</td>
<td>while moving freely in the playing space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with arms straightened out like a robot</td>
<td>a soft toy you tossed, only after clapping twice</td>
<td>with one foot in a hoop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with different hand positions</td>
<td>as many balls as possible in 30 seconds</td>
<td>while running sideways</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Where the body moves

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Location</strong></th>
<th><strong>Direction/Pathways</strong></th>
<th><strong>Levels/Extensions</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>without colliding with anyone</td>
<td>an object coming from the front/side</td>
<td>while seated on the floor/chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>from different body positions (e.g. seated/kneeling/standing/running)</td>
<td>an object coming from above/below</td>
<td>while jumping up high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>an object that has bounced off a wall</td>
<td></td>
<td>with hands above his head</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## With whom/What the body moves

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Self (body parts)/People</strong></th>
<th><strong>Objects</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>when his friend shouts “Ready?”</td>
<td>a floating scarf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a towel he tossed using different parts of his body (e.g. elbow, knee, wrist)</td>
<td>a big soft teddy bear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a ball/bean bag tossed by a partner standing near/far</td>
<td>balloon with a rubber/small object stuffed inside</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## COMBINATIONS

- A scarf he tossed with different body parts other than his hands (e.g. elbows, wrists, knees, etc)
- Different objects with a hand/two hands, with arms straightened out while seated, when his friend shouts “Ready?”
Activity 1

Catching

WHAT YOU NEED

- Objects safe for throwing, such as stuffed toy, bean bag or a small pillow

HOW TO PLAY

- Stand a short distance away, while facing your child. Toss a small object back and forth between the two of you.
- If no one drops the object after five consecutive tosses, take a step back each and commence tossing again.
- Challenge your child with different ways to toss the object.

Ways to toss
- Toss with preferred hand, and catch with two hands
- Toss with other hand, and catch with two hands
- Toss with one hand, and catch with the same hand
- Toss with one hand, and catch with the other hand

BE AWARE

- Help your child understand that his hands should always be on standby. Position his palms to face upward and reach forward for easy catching.
- Train him to respond swiftly to the travelling object. He must not just stand on a spot and wait for the object.
Activity 2
Catching

WHAT YOU NEED
• A ball

HOW TO PLAY
• Have your child sit on the floor, alternating between a kneel-sit and a wide-sit.
  On the kneel-sit, he must toss a ball up. He must then get into the wide-sit position before catching
  the descending ball.
• Keep encouraging your child to toss the ball a little higher.
• Try other positions and movements.

Positions and movements
- Kneel-sit and toss the ball, then quickly stand up before catching the descending ball.
- Stand and toss the ball, then make a turn before catching the descending ball.
- Stand and toss the ball, then clap once before catching the descending ball.
- Gradually increase the number of claps before catching the descending ball. Determine the most
  number of claps your child can achieve without missing the descending ball.

BE AWARE
• Attach cut-out handprints on the ball. This will help your child understand that his fingers must always be kept around the ball for better grip and control of the ball.

SAFETY TIP
• This activity involves horizontal throwing. Hence, it should be done at spacious venues, such as playgrounds or parks.

Activity 2
Catching

WHAT YOU NEED
• A ball

HOW TO PLAY
• Have your child sit on the floor, alternating between a kneel-sit and a wide-sit.
  On the kneel-sit, he must toss a ball up. He must then get into the wide-sit position before catching
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SAFETY TIP
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Activity 3
Catching

WHAT YOU NEED
- Recycled bottles from shower gel, shampoo or mineral water
- A ball, small enough to be contained within the body of the bottle

HOW TO PLAY
- Together with your child, cut a recycled bottle in half, and decorate it.
- Have your child hold the bottle and a ball, one in each hand. Your child must toss the ball and catch it with the bottle while staying on the spot.

![Challenge your child by adding another action to this activity.](image)

Action sequence
- Walk while tossing and catching the ball.
- Toss the ball, let it bounce once, then catch it.

BE AWARE
- Your child must keep his eyes on the ball, and track its motion. This will allow him to anticipate the travel path of the ball, and shift the bottle to catch the ball.

![Ensure there are no fragile objects nearby during play.](image)
Activity 4
Catching

OBJECT CONTROL SKILLS

WHAT YOU NEED

• A pail or basket
• A soft ball

HOW TO PLAY

• Stand facing a wall, with your child beside you.
• Have your child hold a pail or basket. Bounce a ball against the wall. Your child must catch the ball with the pail or basket.
• Switch roles.

• Gradually increase the distance from the wall as your child’s throwing skill improves.

BE AWARE

• Your child must keep his eyes on the ball, and track its motion.
• He must then move swiftly into the oncoming path of the ball to catch it. This will let him practise quick feet movement.
In kicking, force is applied to an object with the foot. The skill requires good dynamic balance as the body weight needs to be balanced on one foot when the kicking foot is lifted off the ground during the kick. Kicking is used in soccer and other daily activities like kicking a stone out of one’s pathway.

Young children generally do ‘toe kicking’ (pushing the object with their toes) which does not get the object far. For force and distance, children need to kick with their in-step, which is the area on top of the foot where the shoelace is tied. Kicking with the inside of the foot (the area between the big toe and the side of the mid-foot) is also useful as it gives the kicker control of the object.
Developmental Phases

Kicking

Initial

- Body is upright and stationary, with arms either at sides or in front of the body for balance.
- Kicking leg swings backward during the preparatory phase.
- Forward swing is short and stops once the ball is kicked.
- Tends to kick with the toes (toe-kicking) or with the front of the foot.

Transition

- Body is upright, with arms either at the sides or in front of the body for balance.
- Kicking leg swings backward during the preparatory phase. Leg remains bent during the forward swing and straightens to contact with the ball.
- Tends to kick with toes or front of foot.

Mature

- Non-kicking foot is placed next to ball.
- Kicking leg swings back with high knee-bend before swinging forward to kick the ball.
- As the top of the foot (shoelace area) contacts ball, the arms swing in opposition to the legs to maintain balance.
- After the kick, the trunk bends forward slightly (follow-through).

Approximate Age of Development (in years)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<td>Transition</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mature</td>
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<td>8</td>
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<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Teaching Strategies

Kicking

What to do if your child...

... tends to kick with his toes?

- Tie a coloured ribbon/piece of cloth at the shoelace area of the shoes. Show your child how the ribbon (top of foot) should make contact the ball.
- Get your child to practise kicking from a stationary position.

... is not able to kick far and accurately?

- Provide a marker next to the ball and a target line some distance away.
- Give step-by-step cues for your child to step onto marker and kick: “Step, swing and kick”.

... needs to practise kicking independently?

- Put ball into a netting and tie the end to a long string/rope (adjust the length according to room space available).
- Tie the other end of the rope around a strong support (e.g. leg of a chair/pole/cone).
- Get your child to kick the ball, after which he only needs to pull the string to retrieve it and start again.

... needs to develop awareness of different strength required for kicking different objects?

- Get your child to practise kicking different objects (e.g. drink cans, plastic bottles, beverage cartons, shoeboxes).
- Kick the objects towards a wall to keep them contained within a space or tie a string/rope to the objects for easy retrieval.
# Variations in “Can your child kick...?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How the body moves</th>
<th>Force/Effort</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Flow</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>as light/hard as you can</td>
<td>and make the object go slowly/quickly</td>
<td>with a leg straightened out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>with his in-step (area on top of the foot where the shoelace is)</td>
<td>an object into the air before it reaches the wall/cone</td>
<td>with a knee bent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>with the inside of his foot</td>
<td>in slow motion</td>
<td>with arms next to his body</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<th>Where the body moves</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>from a stationary position</td>
<td>forward/backward</td>
<td>the ball high to make it travel in the air</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>to hit a target nearby/at a distance</td>
<td>diagonally</td>
<td>and make ball roll along the ground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and run to stop the ball</td>
<td></td>
<td>over a low obstacle/line</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>with his left/right foot</td>
<td>over the lines/cones at a distance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>to a partner who is walking towards him slowly</td>
<td>into a pail lying on its side</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>backward to a partner standing behind him</td>
<td>through the legs of the chair</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**COMBINATIONS**
- Hard with the in-step and make the ball travel at different heights to reach a partner standing at a distance between two cones
- After walking up to the ball so that it hits any of the two baskets in front of the wall
**Activity 1**

**Kicking**

**OBJECT CONTROL SKILLS**

**WHAT YOU NEED**

- Tapes
- A ball
- A rope

**HOW TO PLAY**

- Tie a ball with one end of a rope. Loosely tie the other end of the rope around a pillar. Attach three crosses at three different heights on the pillar.
- Stand your child near the pillar, and have him kick the ball towards the first (lowest) cross.
- Increase his distance from the pillar, and have him kick the ball towards the second cross.
- Further increase his distance from the pillar, and have him kick the ball towards the third cross. The increased distance will allow your child to aim before a kick.

**BE AWARE**

- The rope must be long enough for your child to try kicking at various heights.
- Remind your child to aim at the cross using different parts of his kicking foot. He will discover that accurate kicking comes only by kicking with the in-step or dorsum of his foot.
- With the ball tied to the rope, kicking can be done indoor safely.

**PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT**

- Do this activity at the void deck or a park. At the park, you may tie the ball to a tree!
Activity 2
Kicking

WHAT YOU NEED

• Chairs
• A ball

HOW TO PLAY

• Place a chair between you and your child. Your child must kick a ball so that it passes under the chair to you.
• Gradually add more chairs in a linear arrangement.

• Challenge your child. With each successful kick-and-receive, you and your child must run to each other’s current position and switch roles.

BE AWARE

• For the ball to successfully pass under the chairs, encourage your child to bend and swing his kicking knee backward to produce more momentum and force.
Dribbling with Foot

Dribbling with foot, commonly used in soccer, involves controlling a ball and travelling with it. It is a foot-eye coordination skill that requires visual tracking, dynamic balance and spatial awareness. This skill also necessitates lower limb muscular control which is a challenge for young children.

To dribble well, your child needs to be able to use either side (inside or outside) of the foot to track and move the ball forward. Beginners generally kick at the ball with toes and have little or poor control of it. They also have little awareness of direction and effort, often kicking the ball too far ahead. Hence they end up chasing the ball instead of dribbling it.
## Developmental Phases

### Initial
- Walks or runs and kicks at the ball with toes/front of foot.
- Ball is usually kicked far away. Child ends up chasing ball, only to kick it again in random directions.

### Transition
- Runs and kicks at the ball with toes or the side of the foot.
- Ball remains near foot after being kicked. Child chases ball, attempting to gain control of it.
- Eyes on ball, looking ahead occasionally.

### Mature
- Runs with control.
- Pushes the ball forward or to the side with the inside/outside of the foot.
- Ball is kept near to the foot during the dribble, with the foot controlling the direction of the ball.
- Eyes alternate between the ball and looking ahead.

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</table>
Teaching Strategies
Dribbling with Foot

What to do if your child...

... is unable to control ball?

- Mark the inside/outside of foot with tape or tie a cloth band around the shoe near the front section.
- Get your child to tap the ball on the spot using the inside/outside foot.

... can only dribble with one dominant foot?

- Tie a plastic bottle and hang it just touching the ground.
- Get your child to practise tapping the bottle with inside/outside of foot.
- Practise tapping using left and right foot to develop versatility of both feet.

... tends to kick the ball far away?

- Get your child to imagine he is ‘walking the ball’ (i.e. to walk while keeping the ball next to his feet).
- Have your child progress to walking briskly with the ball, if he is able to.

... has little control of ball during dribble?

- Set up a simple obstacle course (using cones or markers). Get your child to walk and dribble around the obstacles.
- Have your child progress to walking briskly with the ball, if he is able to.
**Variations in**

“Can your child use his foot to dribble...?”

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<td></td>
<td>• an empty plastic bottle</td>
<td>• quickly</td>
<td>• with his legs straightened out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• a plastic bottle filled with sand</td>
<td>• and make the ball go slowly</td>
<td>• without swinging his leg to kick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• a juice/milk carton that is half-filled</td>
<td>• in and out of a row of cones</td>
<td>• and freeze when his hears the whistle</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Direction/Pathways</th>
<th>Levels/Extensions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• keeping the ball just in front of his foot</td>
<td>• along a straight line</td>
<td>• with his hands outstretched like an aeroplane</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• in between two lines</td>
<td>• following a curved/zigzag line</td>
<td>• keeping the ball rolling along the ground all the time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• along the lines of a basketball court</td>
<td>• then stop and change direction</td>
<td>• with his body leaning forward/backward</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Self (body parts)/People</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• with alternate left, then right foot</td>
<td>• an empty tissue box</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• and pass to partner on his left/right</td>
<td>• around cones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• and high-five anyone who passes by</td>
<td>• and stop the ball in a hoop</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**COMBINATIONS**

- Slowly following the straight line on the floor, keeping the ball next to his foot
- With the right foot only, till he reaches a cone at the other end and then dribble back with the left foot
Activity 1
Dribbling with Foot

WHAT YOU NEED
• Recycled materials, such as empty bottles and toilet rolls, to serve as markers
• A ball
• Objects found at home, such as stuffed toys or empty boxes, to serve as obstacles

HOW TO PLAY
• Ask your child to dribble a ball with his feet at the sound of music. He must try to gently stop the ball with one foot when the music stops. Have him repeat the activity using his other foot to stop the ball.
• Encourage your child to explore moving the ball with different parts of his foot.
  Parts of foot
  - Inside
  - Outside
  - Toes
  - Heel
  - Front
• Use the recycled materials (markers) to form different shapes, numbers and paths (zig-zag, curved, circular) for your child to dribble along.
• Place more recycled materials (obstacles) around the markers to serve as obstacles. Your child must dribble past these obstacles.
• Get your child to stay on the same spot, and make a turn while dribbling a ball with one foot. Have him repeat the activity using his other foot.

BE AWARE
• This activity helps your child practise his ball control skills. Your child will discover that the ball should be kept close to him for uninterrupted dribbling.
• Ensure his feet are slightly apart to maintain balance and to change direction quickly.
HOW TO PLAY

- Place two recycled materials (markers) approximately 20 metres apart. Have your child dribble a ball from one marker to the other.
- Place more recycled materials (obstacles) in the path. As he dribbles the ball from one end to the other, he must dribble past the obstacles.
- Use a stopwatch to record the time your child takes to dribble from one marker to the other. Encourage him to break his own record with each subsequent attempt.
- Form different pathways such as a zig-zag line using the recycled materials. This will serve as a guide for your child to dribble a ball along.
- Stick number cards on one wall. Get your child to dribble a ball towards this wall, pick one card, and dribble towards an adjacent wall to stick the card on. Continue until all the cards have been transferred. The game ends when all the cards are arranged in ascending order.

- Challenge your child by using alphabet cards instead. Specify a word for him to spell out such as “cat”. Dribbling between the adjacent walls, he must transfer the correct alphabet cards, one at a time. The game ends when the cards are arranged in the right order.
Overarm Striking

Overarm striking is similar to the overhand or overarm throw. It occurs when the arm or hand, with or without an implement, applies force to send an overhead object away.

Overarm striking is a challenging hand-eye coordination skill as your child has to track the oncoming object while looking upward. This requires good body control and stability skills. Generally young children can only perform at the initial phase of this skill. To progress to the mature stage will require formal instruction and plenty of opportunities for exploration and practice.
Developmental Phases

Overarm Striking

Initial

- Feet are stationary.
- Striking elbow is bent in front of body before strike.
- Elbow straightens during strike, generating limited force from the extension of the flexed joint.
- Body faces the direction of the strike. No body rotation during the strike. Body may move from back to front, bending at the waist.

Transition

- Elbow is bent slightly and held at shoulder level.
- Body trunk turns to the side of the striking shoulder in preparation for the strike.
- Trunk rotates to face object as hand extends at the elbow to strike at the object.
- Back foot moves forward to balance the body during the follow-through.

Mature

- Foot opposite striking hand steps forward. Body weight shifts to the back foot.
- Striking arm swings to the back and elbow is brought near head level.
- Shoulder and trunk rotate to the striking side in preparation for the strike.
- Body rotates back to face object. Weight transfers to the front foot as the striking arm straightens to strike at the object.
- Back foot moves forward to balance the body after the strike.

Approximate Age of Development (in years)

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<tr>
<td>Transition</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Teaching Strategies
Overarm Striking

What to do if your child...

... has difficulty maintaining balance when striking?
- Hang a target slightly above eye level of your child when he is seated.
- Get your child to reach out and strike the target using one hand at a time.

... does not reach up when striking?
- Hang targets above your child’s outstretched arm.
- Get your child to hit the target with an implement in his hand (e.g. paper roll, toilet roll, short shaft racquet).

... needs visual cues for correct weight transfer?
- Place footprint markers on the floor as visual cues for weight transfer from the back to front foot.

... tends to keep non-striking arm still and next to the body?
- Get your child to hold a pair of rolled up socks in his non-striking hand.
- During the overarm strike, get your child to swing the non-throwing hand backward to drop the socks to the back. This backswing of the non-throwing hand helps to generate force for the strike.
## Variations

“Can your child strike overarm...?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>何the body moves</th>
<th>How the body moves</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Direction/Pathways</th>
<th>Direction/Pathways</th>
<th>Levels/Extensions</th>
<th>Levels/Extensions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Force/Effort</td>
<td>like a badminton player</td>
<td>as if swatting a mosquito</td>
<td>while standing in a hoop/on a marker</td>
<td>to the left/right</td>
<td>to burst soap bubbles</td>
<td>at an object hung slightly above his head while seated</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>quickly</td>
<td>standing still (feet apart)</td>
<td>upward/downward</td>
<td>upward/downward</td>
<td>with a small/big paper plate or a roll of newspaper</td>
<td>an object just above his outstretched hand</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flow</td>
<td>repeatedly</td>
<td>as if hitting a balloon/shuttlecock</td>
<td>to land an object across the court</td>
<td>to land an object across the court</td>
<td>while lying flat on the ground</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### COMBINATIONS

- A hanging beach ball lightly/with great force, while seated on a low bench/stool with both feet apart and planted firmly on the ground
- To burst bubbles above his head, without moving from a defined boundary
Activity 1
Overarm Striking

WHAT YOU NEED
• Unwanted stockings
• A hanger
• A balloon

HOW TO PLAY
• Get your child to hit a balloon towards you. Do this five times, using only his right hand. Repeat, using only the left hand. Next, alternate between right and left hands for five strikes each.
• Wrap unwanted stockings around a hanger. This will be your child’s “racquet”.
  • Repeat by getting your child to hit the balloon towards you for five times, using the “racquet” held only in his right hand.
  • Continue with the “racquet” held only in his left hand.
  • Next, alternate between right and left hands for five strikes each.
• Have your child keep the balloon up in the air by patting it with his racquet. Count the number of pats he can accumulate before missing the balloon.

BE AWARE
• Overarm striking is not random hitting of an object. It involves several movements, including swinging the striking hand backwards and near the ears for better momentum and accuracy.
• Repetitive striking to prevent a balloon from dropping to the floor will help your child learn to straighten his elbow and generate striking force.
Activity 2
Overarm Striking

WHAT YOU NEED
- A stuffed toy
- A box

HOW TO PLAY
- Hold and lift a box slightly above your child's head. Have him hold a stuffed toy in his hand. He must then jump and put the stuffed toy into the box.

- Challenge your child by holding the box at various heights.

BE AWARE
- Encourage your child to swing his hand backwards, close to his ear, to gain the momentum and accuracy to put the toy into the box.
The two-handed sidearm strike is commonly used in ball games such as rounders, teeball, softball and baseball. Young children delight in the experience of batting a ball and sending it away with force.

This is a challenging hand-eye and foot coordination task for your young child, especially if the ball is travelling towards him. Start by allowing your child to strike a stationary ball, or one that is hung at waist level. Also have your child to try striking with the hand or fist first, before progressing to the use of bats or racquets (e.g. rolled-up newspapers, foam bats, short-shaft badminton racquets).
Developmental Phases
Two-handed Sidearm Striking

Initial

- Feet are stationary.
- Elbows are bent and arms swing bat from back to front.
- Body faces direction of oncoming object.
- Force is produced by straightening the elbows and swinging the bat downward.

Transition

- Hands hold bat close to the body.
- Prior to the strike, trunk turns to side, away from the direction of the oncoming object.
- Body turns to the direction of the object, with minimal body weight transfer from the back to the front foot.
- Force is produced when elbows straighten and the bat is brought to strike downward at an object.

Mature

- Hands hold bat near shoulder level with elbows bent at about 90°.
- To generate force, trunk rotates to the side as the body weight transfers to the back foot prior to the strike.
- As trunk rotates, bat is swung parallel to ground and body weight shifts from the back to the front foot.
- Bat strikes at the object as the body continues to rotate.
- Body weight on front foot at contact. Arms follow through, swinging bat over opposite shoulder.

Approximate Age of Development (in years)

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</tbody>
</table>
Teaching Strategies
Two-handed Sidearm Striking

What to do if your child...

... needs to learn the pre-strike position?
- Place footprint markers as visual cues.

... is unable to strike an oncoming object?
- Create a simple tee. Cut top off plastic bottle or roll a vanguard sheet and place over a cone.
- Put a medium-sized beach ball on it.
- Get your child to strike with the palm/fist first before using a shorter, wider bat or a newspaper roll.

... is learning to strike an oncoming ball?
- Hang a beach ball at child’s chest level. Child to bat the stationary ball.
- If child is able, progress to gently swinging the ball towards him, and using big to medium-sized balls.

... tends to keep arms close to the body during the strike?
- Pre-strike, get you child to hold the bat with his arms flapped outward or ‘chicken wing arms’.
- To strike, get your child to stretch arms out. A useful cue could be: “Lock your elbows and throw the key. Keep your elbows straight throughout the strike!”
## Variations in
“Can your child do a two-handed sidearm strike...?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How the body moves</th>
<th>Force/Effect</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Flow</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• and send the ball far away&lt;br&gt;• at a ball gently&lt;br&gt;• at a hanging empty milk carton (waist level) with a racquet</td>
<td>• only when he hear the whistle&lt;br&gt;• slowly&lt;br&gt;• in fast-forward motion</td>
<td>• with his arms straightened out like a robot&lt;br&gt;• without moving his feet&lt;br&gt;• while taking a step forward as he strikes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Where the body moves</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Direction/Pathways</th>
<th>Levels/Extensions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• with feet on the footprint markers&lt;br&gt;• at a ball on the tee&lt;br&gt;• a ball towards the wall</td>
<td>• to hit the smiley face poster&lt;br&gt;• downward&lt;br&gt;• to land the object on the line</td>
<td>• at objects placed at slightly below waist level&lt;br&gt;• with his hands swinging from the waist</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>With whom/What the body moves</th>
<th>Self (body parts)/People</th>
<th>Objects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• with both hands&lt;br&gt;• with left/right hand&lt;br&gt;• and send an object over his partner’s head</td>
<td>• at the hanging plastic bottles&lt;br&gt;• with an implement (newspaper roll)&lt;br&gt;• to send an object over the net</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**COMBINATIONS**

- At an empty milk carton on a tee lightly with the newspaper roll
- At a ball on a tee with great force to land it across a line marked by two cones at a distance, without moving his feet
Activity 1
Two-handed Sidearm Striking

WHAT YOU NEED
• Empty plastic bottles
• Newspaper, rolled up to make a rod

HOW TO PLAY
• Hang a few empty plastic bottles at your child’s waist level.
• Have your child bat at the bottles with his hands. He must put his hands together, with arms interlocked and outstretched.
• Repeat the activity, using a newspaper rod.

❖ Challenge your child to complete batting at all the bottles within a specific time frame.

BE AWARE
• Get your child to stand sideways to the empty bottles.
• He should keep his feet shoulder-width apart to maintain balance.
Activity 2
Two-handed Sidearm Striking

WHAT YOU NEED
• Newspaper rolled up to make a rod
• A paper cone
• A ball

HOW TO PLAY
• Place a ball on top of a paper cone. Position the cone at your child’s waist level.
• Get your child to use a newspaper rod to hit the ball towards you, the catcher.
• Have him count the number of successful strikes within a specific time frame.

• For an older child, increase the distance between you and your child.

BE AWARE
• Your child should first lift his arms and bend his elbows like chicken wings. As he bats, he should allow his arms to straighten and rotate. Arm rotation will generate force for effective batting.
• Prompt your child to always keep his arms and bat straight, and below his head.
Bouncing

Bouncing requires your child to track the up and down movement of a ball, and to push it downward firmly so that it will rebound. Bouncing can be done on the spot (stationary), or on the move.

The challenge this skill presents for your young child is the short time lag between the up-down motion of the ball, requiring him to react fast enough to keep up with the repetitive movement pattern. Bouncing, needed in games like basketball, develops hand-eye coordination and responses to rebounding objects.
Developmental Phases

Bouncing

**Initial**

- Holds ball with palms facing each other.
- Body weight is on both feet.
- Arms drop ball downward and palm attempts to slap at ball as it rebounds.
- Ball bounces close to body. Height of bounce decreases with each unsuccessful slap at ball.
- Eyes focused on the ball.

**Transition**

- Holds ball with one hand on top and the other near bottom of ball.
- Body leans forward slightly with body weight on both feet.
- Top hand and arm push ball downward with an inconsistent force.
- For subsequent bounces, elbow extends and palm slaps at ball.
- Unable to control ball after the first two to three bounces.
- Eyes focused on the ball looking up occasionally.

**Mature**

- One foot behind the other, with foot opposite bouncing hand in front.
- Body leans forward slightly, with ball maintained at or near waist level.
- Ball is pushed towards ground by finger-tip pads with flexion at wrist.
- Arm straightens during follow-through, with good control on ball.
- Able to apply consistent force for continuous bounces, and bounce with either hand.
- Able to look up occasionally while bouncing.

**Approximate Age of Development (in years)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>1</th>
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</table>
Teaching Strategies

Bouncing

What to do if your child...

... tends to slap at ball?
• Get your child to sit and practise “drop, catch” a few times, slowly at first and building up speed progressively.
• Ensure his fingers are spread out on top of ball during the catch.

... is unable to bounce continuously?
• Get your child to “drop, push, catch”; “drop, push, push, catch”.
• Place your hand on top of your child’s hand to guide and help him experience the pushing action.

... needs reminder to bounce with finger pads?
• Get your child to stand with his feet shoulder-width apart, and with knees slightly bent.
• Give cues to “drop catch”, followed by “drop, push, catch”, then “drop push, push, catch” and so on.
• Increase “push” cues progressively for continuous bounce.

... tends to bounce only with one dominant hand?
• Get your child to bounce with alternate hands (e.g. right, left, right, left).
# Variations

“Can your child bounce...?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How the body moves</th>
<th>Force/Effort</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Flow</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>forcefully with fingers straightened out</td>
<td>quickly/slowly</td>
<td>three times and then catch the ball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a small/medium-sized ball</td>
<td>in alternating quick-slow rhythms</td>
<td>and catch accordingly to odd/even counts</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>gently as if the ball were fragile</td>
<td>and the hold ball for three seconds before bouncing again</td>
<td>as many times in 30 seconds</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Direction/Pathways</th>
<th>Levels/Extensions</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>while seated/standing</td>
<td>against the wall and catch the ball when it rebounds</td>
<td>below the hip</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on the spot</td>
<td>to one side</td>
<td>above shoulder level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with the ball near/far from the body</td>
<td>in a circle on the spot</td>
<td>at alternating low-high levels</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Self (body parts)/People</th>
<th>Objects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>with his fingers spread out on ball</td>
<td>to land the ball on a flat marker/chalk mark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with his left/right hand</td>
<td>inside a hoop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>five times and then pass ball to a partner standing nearby/far away</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## COMBINATIONS
- A medium-sized ball as quietly as possible and call out the number of fingers held up by his partner
- Below the hip, alternating between the left and right hand
Activity 1

Bouncing

Object Control Skills

What you need

• A ball

How to play

• Ask your child to drop a ball once and try catching it (Drop-catch).
• Gradually increase the number of drops. Drop-drop-catch, drop-drop-drop-catch, etc.
• Add in variations to the drop-catch activity.

Ways to drop-catch a ball

- While kneeling on one knee.
- While kneeling on both knees.
- In a wide sitting position.
- With each consecutive bounce, alternate between standing and kneeling positions.
- While walking in a circle.


• Do the drop-catch in a static position.
• Your child must look up and shout out the number of fingers you hold up. He must simultaneously bounce to the number.

Be aware

• Remind your child to keep the ball at waist level. This is for better control of the ball.
• Train your child to look up and shout out the number of fingers you hold up, while he is bouncing the ball. This will help prevent collisions when he plays team sports in the future.
Activity 2
Bouncing

OBJECT CONTROL SKILLS

WHAT YOU NEED

• A hula hoop or tape
• A ball

HOW TO PLAY

• Place a hula hoop between you and your child, or use the tape to form a circle on the floor.
• Stand two giant steps away from the hula hoop, opposite to each other.
• Bounce a ball to each other. With each bounce, the ball must hit the floor inside the hula hoop or circle.

BE AWARE

• Encourage your child to tap the ball with greater strength. This will help the ball bounce in the centre of the hula hoop, and then out to the catcher.
• Make sure the fingers of the hand bouncing the ball is spread, open and apply consistent force on the ball.
• This activity will train your child to straighten his arms and have good control on the ball.
Dribbling with hand occurs when the ball is pushed in a forward-and-downward movement. It requires good dynamic balance and space awareness as your child needs to travel with a ball that is usually leading. Generally, only children who have achieved some proficiency with the bounce can dribble with hand.

Although dribbling with hand is a skill used primarily in the game of basketball, many children are drawn to the inherent attraction of moving with a ball. The developmental phases of this dribbling skill are similar to those of bouncing.
Teaching Strategies
Dribbling with Hand

What to do if your child...

... has difficulty travelling with the ball?
- Get your child to walk and “drop, catch” ball, always dropping it a little forward and catching it at about waist level.
- Walk with your child and prompt him to stay close to the ball.

... is unable to dribble continuously?
- Get your child to “drop, push, catch”; “drop, push, push, catch” and so on.

... does not look ahead when dribbling?
- Get your child to practise dribbling along a marked line from one end to the other.
- Progress to directional changes if child is able.

... tends to collide with others when dribbling?
- Prepare two or three differently coloured bean bags/“traffic lollipops”.
- Children to dribble freely around space.
- At regular intervals, call out for the children to look up and name the colour on display.

Approximate Age of Development (in years)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Initial</th>
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</table>
### Variations

**“Can your child dribble with hand...?”**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How the body moves</th>
<th>Force/Effort</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Flow</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• a heavy/light ball</td>
<td>• quickly/slowly</td>
<td>• while stopping at every third bounce to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• small/medium-sized ball</td>
<td>• in alternating quick-slow timing</td>
<td>change direction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• quietly/loudly</td>
<td>• from one cone to another</td>
<td>• following a drum beat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>taking big/small steps</td>
<td>• and travel freely around space</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Direction/Pathways</th>
<th>Levels/Extensions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• and turn around</td>
<td>• forward/backward</td>
<td>• below the knee level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on the spot</td>
<td>• diagonally</td>
<td>• in varying low-medium-high levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• to the wall and</td>
<td>• along a straight/zigzag line</td>
<td>• keeping ball close to/far from his body</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>back</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• up a ramp</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>With whom/What the body moves</th>
<th>Self (body parts)/People</th>
<th>Objects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• with both hands</td>
<td>• around a hoop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• with alternating left-right hand</td>
<td>• in and out of a hoop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• to a partner standing nearby/at a distance</td>
<td>• to and from between two cones spaced apart</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### COMBINATIONS

- A medium-sized ball below the hip, along the lines on the basketball court, and changing direction when he reached a cone on the line
- Lightly, slowly, and between two wide lines on the floor
Activity 1
Dribbling with Hand

WHAT YOU NEED

- A ball

HOW TO PLAY

- Have your child sit down and drop-catch a ball.
- Get your child to do the activity in different ways.

Ways to drop-catch a ball
- With both hands while standing.
- With both hands while walking around the entire house.
- With one hand while standing.
- With one hand, while alternating between sitting and standing with each bounce of the ball.
- While hopping.
- While skipping.
- While jumping.

- Challenge your child to dribble using other parts of his body, such as his wrist or elbow.

- Do this activity with your child. He has to try and match your bouncing rhythm.
Activity 2
Dribbling with Hand

WHAT YOU NEED
• A ball
• Big cut-out circles in three colours, green, yellow and red
• Objects found at home to serve as obstacles

HOW TO PLAY
• Get your child to explore dribbling with a ball.
• Encourage him to walk around while dribbling.
• Have him dribble to your instructions.

Instructions
- Start dribbling around when the light is green.
- Prepare to stop when the light is yellow.
- Stop and freeze when the light is red.

• Challenge your child. Randomly place objects found at home within the play area. Ask your child to continue dribbling to your instructions while avoiding the obstacles.
• Challenge your child further. Have him repeat the activity while jogging, hopping, skipping or jumping.

BE AWARE
• Flashing different colours will train your child to look up and avoid collisions while travelling.
Dribbling with Long Implement

Dribbling with long implement involves controlling an object with an implement (usually a stick) and travelling with it. It is a common skill in games like hockey and floorball.

This is a good hand-eye coordination movement skill that requires your child to track and control a moving object on the ground while maintaining stability of his moving body. Dribbling with an implement can be a fun and engaging activity for a toddler. It hones his walking and running skills, while building his awareness of effort, space and relationship.
**Developmental Phases**

**Dribbling with Long Implement**

**Initial**
- Tends to hold the implement with one hand.
- Implement is held in front of body, hitting (instead of pushing) the ball at a distance in front.
- Tends to chase object with no directional control of ball.
- Eyes focused on the object or implement.

**Transition**
- Holds the implement with both hands at the top of the implement.
- Attempts to push object forward, occasionally contacting with ball on either side with implement.
- Tends to chase object with some directional control of ball.
- Eyes are focused on the object or implement.

**Mature**
- Holds the implement with his non-dominant hand on top of implement while his dominant hand is about a quarter way down the implement.
- Knees are bent slightly with forward body lean during the dribble.
- Implement contacts ball on either side, pushing ball gently forward. Ball is well controlled and kept close to the implement throughout the dribble.
- Able to look up occasionally.

**Approximate Age of Development (in years)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Initial</th>
<th>Transition</th>
<th>Mature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3 4 5</td>
<td>6 7 8 9 10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Teaching Strategies
Dribbling with Long Implement

What to do if your child...

...needs to learn to hold the implement properly?
- Tape two markers in different colours on the implement (for right-handers: write LEFT on the top mark and RIGHT on the bottom mark). The reverse for left-handers.

...has difficulty controlling a ball?
- Get your child to practise dribbling objects that do not roll (e.g. shoebox, beverage carton, bean bag).

...has poor control of object during dribble?
- Attach object to the implement with a string that is about half-metre-long. This helps ensure that the object stays close to your child.

...tends to hit object away instead of dribbling object?
- Line three to four cones at short distances apart. Get your child to walk and dribble, weaving in and out of cones slowly.
Variations
“Can your child use a long implement to dribble...?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How the body moves</th>
<th>Force/Effort</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Flow</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• an empty tissue box</td>
<td>• slowly/quickly</td>
<td>• while balancing a small towel on his head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• a deflated ball</td>
<td>• slowly before a cone and quickly after it</td>
<td>• and change direction at every cone/marker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• a heavy object</td>
<td>• in slow motion</td>
<td>• to other end of room without stopping</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<th>Levels/Extensions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• in a square space marked by four cones</td>
<td>• forward/backward?</td>
<td>• with a stiff and straightened body</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• between two lines</td>
<td>• left/right/diagonally</td>
<td>• with knees bent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• to a line nearby/far away</td>
<td>• in a straight/zigzag/curved line</td>
<td>• with trunk slightly bent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<th>Objects</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• around a partner</td>
<td>• using a taped newspaper roll</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• following a partner</td>
<td>• around the outside of a hoop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• with hands close to his body</td>
<td>• between two cones</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

COMBINATIONS
- A shoebox (taped up) slowly with his partner following behind
- A plastic bottle half-filled with water along a zigzag line while balancing a small towel on his head
Activity 1
Dribbling with Long Implement

WHAT YOU NEED

• Newspapers, rolled up to form two rods
• Empty tissue boxes
• Objects found at home to serve as obstacles

HOW TO PLAY

• Have your child dribble empty tissue boxes around the house with a newspaper rod.
• Repeat the activity, this time placing obstacles around the house for your child to dribble past.
• Challenge your child further. You and your child must hold a rod each and compete who can dribble the empty box towards a specific area first (e.g., bedroom).

BE AWARE

• Ask your child to hold the newspaper rod with both hands, with his non-dominant hand at the top end and his dominant hand away from the top.
Activity 2
Dribbling with Long Implement

WHAT YOU NEED
• Newspapers, rolled up to form a rod
• An empty carton
• Rolled-up socks

HOW TO PLAY
• Lay out as many rolled-up socks as possible. Place an empty carton on its side on the floor to act as the goal.
• Have your child use a newspaper rod to dribble as many rolled-up socks into the carton as possible, within a specific time frame.