Running is similar to walking except that with running, there is a flight phase when both feet are momentarily off the ground at the same time. Variations of the running movement include jogging, sprinting, dodging, chasing and fleeing.

Running is one of the most basic movement skills required in daily activities (e.g. running because you are late for school). It is also a foundation skill required in many dynamic activities, games and sports (e.g. tag games, athletics, soccer, basketball). Proficiency and mastery of good running techniques for different situations will enable your child to move successfully and confidently.
Developmental Phases

Running

**Initial**
- Stiff arm swing.
- Legs appear stiff and take uneven steps. Short and limited leg swing.
- No flight phase, with at least one foot always on the ground. Wide base of support (feet apart) to maintain balance.

**Transition**
- Arms swing further from front to back.
- Wider steps and an increase in leg swing and speed.
- The support leg straightens more completely at take-off.
- A flight phase (both feet off the ground) is visible.

**Mature**
- Arms are bent at the elbows at about 90°.
- Arms swing close to body in opposition to leg movement.
- Wider steps and maximum flight phase when both feet are off the ground.
- Support leg bends slightly upon contact with ground, and then straightens to push body upwards.

### Approximate Age of Development (in years)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Initial</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Transition</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mature</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[1] 15
Teaching Strategies

Running

What to do if your child...

... is not swinging arms naturally in alternate fashion?
• Get your child to sit on the floor, legs outstretched.
• Bend elbows at about 90°, close to body. Swing backward and forward slowly, increasing speed of swing gradually.

... is dragging feet and not lifting knees?
• Get your child to run between two lines slowly at first, then increase speed gradually.
• During run, place hands at waist level and ensure knee lifts to touch them.

... is not running fast?
• Children to race one another in an open space. Ensure ground is flat and safe.

... is not able to change directions quickly?
• Draw different pathways on the floor or use court lines if available.
• Get your child to run closely along the lines.
## Variations
“Can your child run...?”

<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>heavely like an elephant</td>
<td>quickly like a leopard</td>
<td>as if he is tired/energised</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>quietly without waking the sleeping giant</td>
<td>in quick-slow rhythm</td>
<td>as if he is racing a car</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>lightly as on clouds</td>
<td>slowly like a tortoise</td>
<td>at “green light” and stop at “red light”</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 the wall and back</td>
<td>in four different directions</td>
<td>and reach for the stars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>along the side of the court</td>
<td>along the outline of a big ‘W’ on the floor</td>
<td>and dribble a ball like a soccer player</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>on the spot like a hamster in a wheel</td>
<td>in a circle as if following the outline of a clock</td>
<td>low as if avoiding a swarm of bees</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>holding hands with a parent on each side</td>
<td>without stepping on the scattered bean bags</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>behind you as if he is your shadow</td>
<td>carrying a ball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>to avoid being tagged by you</td>
<td>between two ropes on the floor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### COMBINATIONS
- Lightly and quickly like a race car along the sides of a court
- On the spot and lightly like clouds, while holding hands with a parent on each side
Activity 1
Running

HOW TO PLAY
• Have your child run around in a free space. When you clap once, he must change direction. When you clap twice, he must freeze.
• Get your child to explore running in different styles.

Styles of running
- Run, stooped down as low as possible, then gradually get taller and taller.
  Try the reverse (from standing tall to stooping down)
- Lift knees high and clap hands while running
- Run with arms high in the air, arms behind back, arms stiff at sides, arms swinging at sides, hands on head, hands in pockets. Do the same running backwards, clockwise and anti-clockwise

BE AWARE
• Ask your child how he felt lifting his knees high while running. Explain to him that lifting his knees allows him to take bigger steps, so that he can run faster.
• Ask your child how he felt running with his arms in various positions. He would have realised that he can better gather speed and momentum by swinging his arms naturally by his sides.

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT
• Do this activity wherever the area is spacious and safe (no pillars and other obstacles) such as lift lobbies and void decks.
Activity 2

Running

LOCOMOTOR SKILLS

WHAT YOU NEED

- Recycled materials, such as big empty bottles or boxes, to serve as markers

HOW TO PLAY

- Role play with your child. Pretend you are the captain and he is a sailor on a ship.
- Define running area with four objects. Each object doubles up as different parts of the ship (bow, stern, starboard and portside).
- At the captain’s command, the sailor must act correspondingly.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commands</th>
<th>Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bow</td>
<td>Run to object designated as bow (front)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stern</td>
<td>Run to object designated as stern (back)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Port</td>
<td>Run to object designated as port (left)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Starboard</td>
<td>Run to object designated as starboard (right)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Climb the rigging</td>
<td>Perform climbing action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tilt the deck</td>
<td>Squat down</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scrub the deck</td>
<td>Get down on one knee, perform floor-scrubbing action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Captain’s coming</td>
<td>Stand still and salute</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

BE AWARE

- For younger children, stick to bow and stern only. Gradually introduce other parts of a ship and variety of actions.
Activity 3
Running

WHAT YOU NEED
• 4 boxes, to serve as markers
• Number cards (numerals 1-10), placed in first box
• Word cards (words “big” and “small”), placed in second box
• Object cards (words like “apple”, “pencil”, “comb”, etc.), placed in third box
• Colour cards, placed in fourth box
• Play cards, each depicting a number-word-object-colour combination (phrases like “Two big red apples”, etc.)

HOW TO PLAY
• Define running area with the four boxes. Place play cards in the centre.
• Ask your child to pick and look at a play card. He must then run to each box, pick the appropriate card, bring the card to the centre, and repeat until four cards have been collected from all the four boxes.
• Next, get him to arrange the four cards in the sequence depicted on the play card. For instance, if play card shows two big red apples, then the arrangement must be number card (2), word card (big), colour card (red) and object card (apples).
• Activity ends when all the play cards are picked.

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT
• For younger children, play with the number and object cards only. The cards may depict pictures instead of words.