



# Stay Active with Skyhawks!

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## Lesson #5: Speed

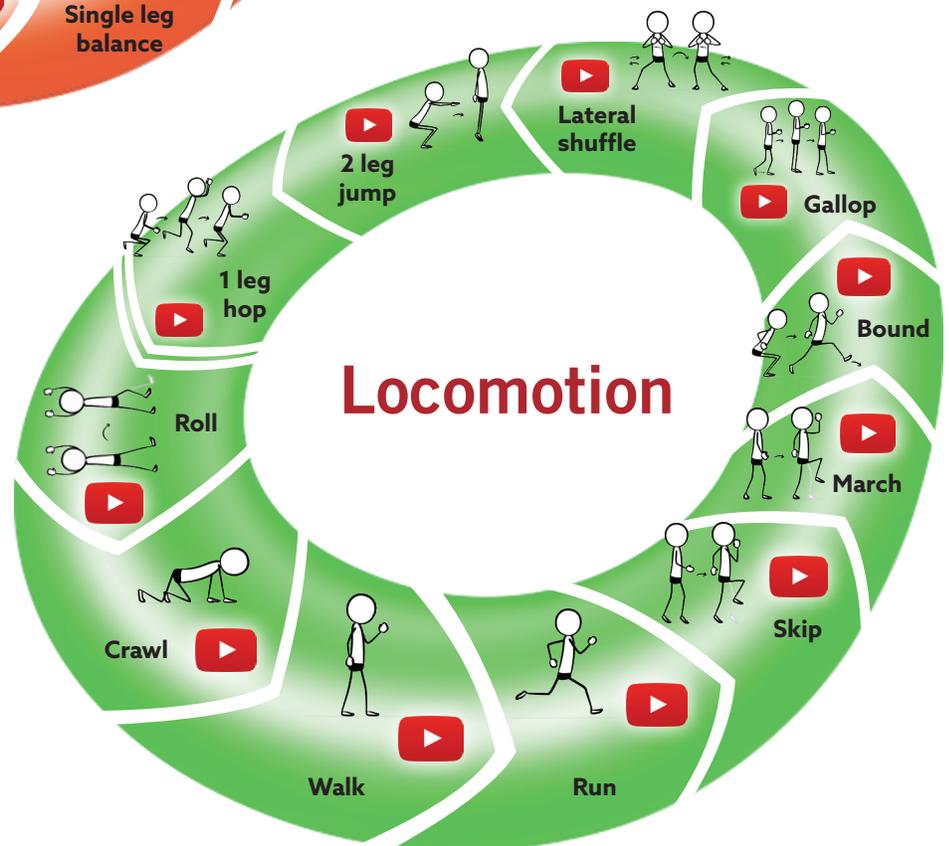
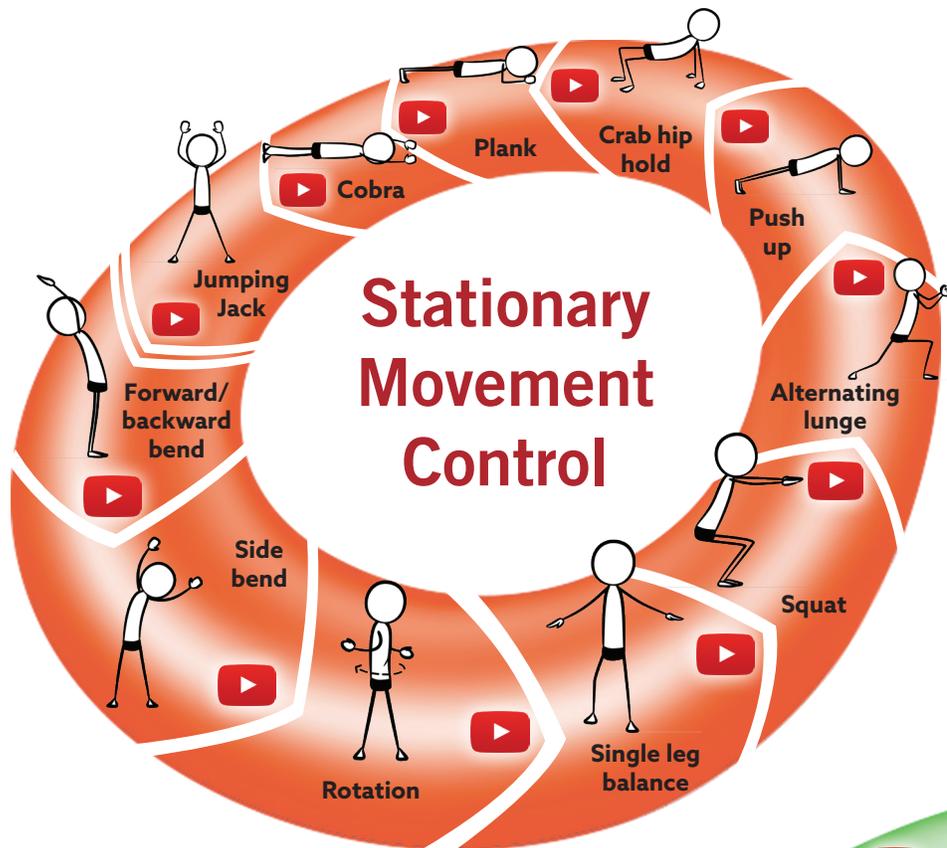
# Introduction to Speed for Six Years and Older

Our focus in today's "Stay Active with Skyhawks!" lesson is all about developing speed. Speed is the ticket to success for many athletes. While there are some genetic components to athletes being "fast", there are ways for every athlete to improve their speed. Improving overall strength, reaction time, 1st step quickness ("acceleration") and running technique are some of the aspects of speed that can be trained at any age.

Assuming athletes six years and older have had both exposure and practice with fundamental movement skills, it becomes a priority to refine these skills. For example, if a young athlete has practiced and mastered the basic mechanics of running, it becomes important to continually improve these mechanics through drills and other activities.

As an athlete's coordination with these movements mature, it becomes important to find ways to continually challenge them with different movement tempos, directions, and other modifications.

# Fundamental Movement Skills



# Dynamic Warm Up (5 Minutes)

## The Twister

When young athletes develop a clear understanding of the vocabulary associated with parts of the body and what these body parts do, it's important to challenge this ability by introducing relationship, directional, and movement cues.

**Prompt your young athletes below with the following challenges:**

- Hands on knees, shuffle back and forth (10 seconds)
- Squat and twist your torso to the left (10 seconds)
- Squat and twist your torso to the right (10 seconds)
- Skip to the right, reach to the left (repeat for 10 seconds)
- Skip to the left, reach to the right (repeat for 10 seconds)

## **Movement Variables**

Start by having your child perform a fundamental movement skill for 5 seconds. After that, add an extra "movement variable" to that movement. Provide just enough instruction for your child to understand how to perform the movement and what the added variable looks like.

March (5 seconds), To the left (5 seconds), To the right (5 seconds), Backward (5 seconds), Fast (5 seconds), March (5 seconds)

Hop (5 seconds each foot), Fast and low (5 seconds each foot), Fast and high (5 seconds each foot), Hands above head (5 seconds each foot), Hop (5 seconds each foot)

Lateral Shuffle (5 seconds), Loud feet (5 seconds each direction), Quiet feet (5 seconds each direction), Hips low (5 seconds each direction), Lateral shuffle (5 seconds each direction)

Squat (5 seconds), Legs wide (5 seconds), Legs narrow (5 seconds), Moving (5 seconds), Legs uneven (5 seconds), Squat (5 seconds).

## **Sensory Preparation**

As young athletes begin to understand their basic body parts and what these body parts do, it becomes important to incorporate vocabulary that will be used to teach specific skills.

**Today, your child will be learning the specific mechanics of proper running technique.**

**Perform these running (slowly) from one marker to another, roughly 15-20 yards apart.**

- Bounce on the toes
- Bounce on the heels
- Bounce on the ball of the foot
- Skip with thigh below parallel to the ground
- Skip with thigh above parallel to the ground
- Skip with the thigh parallel to the ground
- Bend arms to 90 degrees at the elbow
- Bend arms less than 90 degrees at the elbow
- Bend arms more than 90 degrees at the elbow
- Swing hands from back pocket to nose
- Swing hands from behind body to the top of the head

# Skill Development Activity: Running Technique

Skipping is an important predecessor to proper running technique. The more advanced coordination to develop the rhythm and body position involved with skipping is an important aspect of coordination for kids to develop.

## Key elements of high-level skipping include:

1. Arms bent to 90 degrees
2. Hit the ground with the ball of the foot
3. Bring the thigh parallel to the ground

Do the following activities to reinforce proper running mechanics for speed:

- [Robot Arms](#) (4 sets of 10 seconds)
- [Forward Cone Step Over](#) (4 sets of 8-10 cones each leg)
  - Equipment needed: cones
- [Glue Ground Run](#) (4 sets of 15-20 yards)
- [Lean and Run](#) (4 sets of 15-20 yards)

## Speed Activity #1: [Small Cone Jump](#)

Being able to control your body while maintaining a forward lean and rebounding off the ground quickly is an important aspect of developing running speed.

Equipment needed: 8-10 small cones

Perform this activity for 5-8 repetitions.

## Speed Activity #2: [Partner Mirror Drill](#)

Reaction is an important component of improving speed. This activity requires young athletes to immediately respond to an opponent's movement.

Perform this activity for 3-4 sets of 10-15 seconds with each partner taking turns leading.

## Speed Activity #3: Movement Circuit

These circuits highlight developing the strength and coordination to transition from one movement to the next.

Do the following circuit three times

- [Alternating Lunges](#) (30 seconds each leg/60 seconds total)
- [Diagonal Reaches](#) (30 seconds each leg)
- [Half Plank](#) (3x10 seconds each round)
- [Bear, Crab, Butterfly](#) (30 seconds)

## Today's Challenge: Balance Challenge

With your eyes closed, balance on one leg and try to touch the ground and stand up 5 times with each leg without opening your eyes.

**Thank you for playing today! Next week, our lesson is all about developing hand/eye coordination to improve catching skills. Until then, let's stay active, eat healthy, and sleep well so we can succeed in sports and in life!**