



Stay Active with Skyhawks!

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Lesson #6: Hand/Eye Coordination

Introduction to Hand/Eye Coordination for Six Years and Older

Our focus in today's "Stay Active with Skyhawks!" lesson is all about developing hand/eye coordination. Catching balls or other objects is an important object-manipulation skill for all ages. This skill requires the ability to visually track, determine spatial information, and move a limb in order to intercept an object. Training various components of visual tracking, focus, and object location are important in creating a foundation of sensory skills necessary for the hand/eye coordination required for catching.

[Click here for a short tutorial on developing hand/eye coordination](#)

The human eye develops a more advanced ability to focus by about age 6, achieving its round shape by about age 9. Prior to this, a primary challenge with hand/eye coordination is a child's ability to track and focus on a moving object. After the age of 7, children are able to focus on objects as they move. However, they may struggle when attempting to use their entire field of vision to track and locate objects thrown to them.

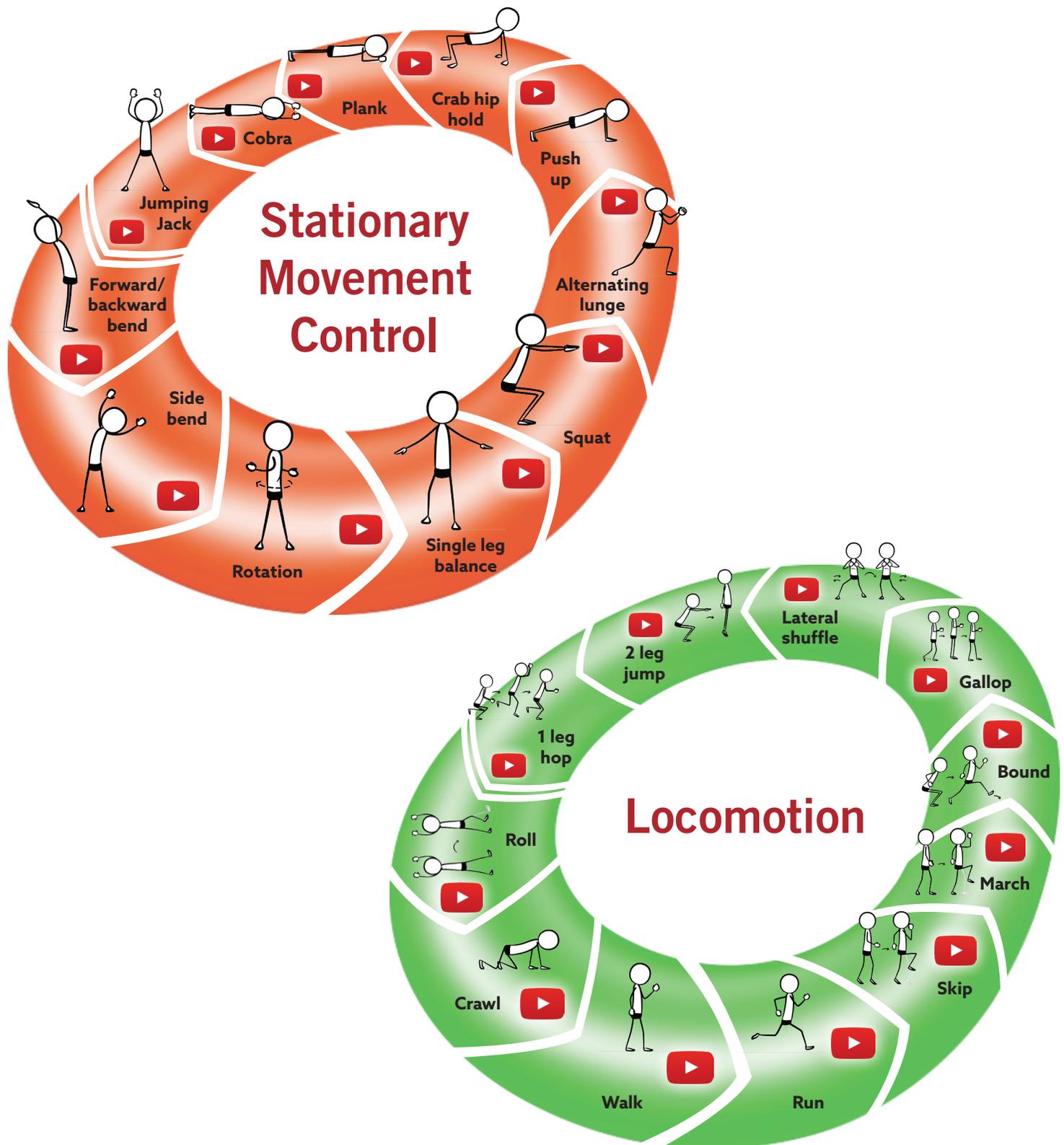
Assuming athletes at this age have had the opportunity to practice tracking and attempting to catch objects, it's important to begin developing a combination of the visual and manual skills necessary for catching. Utilize activities that make them track with both their head and their eyes. The muscles that move the eyes must be developed during these early years in addition to peripheral vision.

Tools like beanbags are easy to catch and help develop the grasping necessary for the hand/eye coordination necessary for tracking.

We recommend the following equipment for the involved activities:

- **Bean bags**
- **Cone or cup**
- **5-6 Tennis balls**

Fundamental Movement Skills



Dynamic Warm Up (5 Minutes)

<p>Movement Variables</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>Run (5 seconds), Loud feet (5 seconds), Soft feet (5 seconds), Run (5 seconds)</p> <p>Hop (1-leg) 5 seconds each leg), Fast (5 seconds each leg), Slow (5 seconds each leg), Hop (5 seconds)</p> <p>Squat (5 seconds), While moving (5 seconds), 1 Leg (5 seconds each leg), Squat (5 seconds)</p> <p>Lateral shuffle (5 seconds), Feet close together (5 seconds), Feet far apart (5 seconds), Lateral shuffle (5 seconds)</p>
<p>Creepy Crawlers</p> <p>Crawling activities warm up the entire body in addition to putting pressure on the hands, providing a proprioceptive warm up for catching!</p>	<p>Bear Crawl (5 seconds)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zigzag (5 seconds) • Backward (5 seconds) • Sideways (5 seconds) <p>Cheetah Crawl (10 seconds)</p> <p>Crab Crawl (5 seconds)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Backward (5 seconds) • Sideways right (5 seconds) • Sideways left (5 seconds) <p>Crab Roll (10 seconds)</p>
<p>Sensory Preparation</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>Focus and Move (10 seconds)</p> <p>Partner Pursuits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both Eyes Open (no head movement) (10 seconds) • Right eye open only (no head movement) (10 seconds) • Left eye open only (no head movement) (10 seconds) <p>Partner Tracking Tag - 3 sets of 10 seconds</p> <p>Partner Periphery Tag - 3 sets of 10 seconds</p>

Skill Development Activity: Hand/Eye Coordination for Catching

Young athletes six years and older should be able to track objects as they move and grasp them with either one or two hands.

Equipment: Bean bag

[Bean Bag Toss and Catch](#)
(2 sets of 10 tosses each hand)

[Bean Bag Arc Tosses](#)
(3 sets of 10 tosses)

[Bean Bag Toss and Catch: 1 Eye Closed](#)
(2 sets of 10 tosses each eye closed)

[Bean Bag Toss and Catch: Sit to Stand](#)
(3 sets of 5)

Hand/Eye Coordination Activity #1: [Kick, Punch, Catch](#)

Equipment: Playground-sized ball. For beginners, a balloon works well.

This activity challenges the reaction and timing aspect of hand/eye coordination

Perform 3 sets of 5 tosses

Hand/Eye Coordination Activity #2: [Butterfly Catcher](#)

Equipment: Cones or cups, tennis balls or bean bags*

This activity helps progress tracking and the ability to move a limb to an object.

*To modify this activity for bean bags, toss the bean bags in the air

Perform 2-3 sets of 10 tosses

Hand/Eye Coordination 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

- [Triangle Shifts](#) (30 seconds)
- [1-Leg Balance Reach](#) (30 seconds each leg)
- [Eccentric Push-Ups](#) (5 5-second push-ups)
- [Alternating Superman](#) (30 seconds)

Today's Challenge: Breathe with Your Belly

When you take deep breaths with your belly, your lungs get more air while you're exercising!

1. Put one hand on your chest and the other across your belly button.
2. Take in a deep breath through your nose and see if you can make your belly expand for 5 seconds without your chest lifting up too high.
3. Breathe out.
4. Try doing these 5 times in a row!
5. Challenge a friend or family member to do the same!

Thank you for playing today! This is the final lesson in our "Stay Active with Skyhawks!" series. We hope you had fun!

For upcoming SuperTots programs in your area, please visit [Skyhawks.com](https://www.skyhawks.com). Stay active, eat healthy, and sleep well so we can succeed in sports and in life!