BODY MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

• BALANCE • CLIMBING •
The aim of KiwiSport Fundamental Skills is to develop basic sports skills through simple, enjoyable play activities.

This section contains those which are pertinent to balance. They are grouped for:

- Static individual balance.
- Static pair and small group balance.
- Dynamic balance.
- Inverted balance.
- Supports and hangs.
- Balancing in water

They are in skill groupings and generally arranged from the simplest to the most complex.

The activities have been selected with schools specifically in mind but an input of professional skill and judgement is needed to ensure lively and relevant programmes. Decisions will need to be made on when and how the activities are used and what modifications are needed to match age and ability.

The activities also fill a need outside class programmes. They are useful for children’s learning and play at any time – lunch time, after school, sports training, holiday programmes and at home.

Parents and others who play with children in informal situations should find the ideas particularly helpful.
**STATIC INDIVIDUAL BALANCE**

**ACTIVITY 78 EXPLORING INDIVIDUAL BALANCES**

**BEFORE THE ACTIVITY**

Benches.

Even ‘giving’ surfaces.

**DURING THE ACTIVITY**

Children spread out in defined area.

- Who can balance while standing and make different body shapes...?
  - up high/down low/medium level.
  - wide/narrow.
  - symmetrical/asymmetrical.
- How many ways can you balance on your ...?
  - back.
  - side.
  - front.
  - sitting.
  - shoulders.
  - knees.
  - Now try eyes closed.
- Can you balance on a combination of body parts ...?
  - one hand, one foot.
  - one elbow, one foot, one knee.
  - two knees, one elbow. etc.
- How many of the balances we have tried can you do ...?
  - on a line.
  - on a bench.
  - on a boxtop.
  - on a crash pad.
  - while holding a large ball or other piece of small equipment.
  - while circling/throwing and catching a hoop, rubber ball, large ball.
- Show me animals or birds that balance.

**LOOK FOR**

- initial support for confidence.
- understanding of the broader the base, the lower the centre of gravity, the greater the stability.
- spacing for safety.
**STATIC INDIVIDUAL BALANCE**  
**Activity 79 FREEZE**

**Before the Activity**
Hall, grass, hard surface.

**During the Activity**
- Children in a group behind a leader.  
  Leader walks or jogs and the group follow a short distance behind.  
  When the leader turns around all children ’freeze’ on the spot.  
  Any children who move or who are slow to stop collect a ’thaw’ point.  
  Repeat several times – leader can change the type of movement to skipping, galloping etc.  
  Change the leader after several turns.  
  Who can avoid collecting any thaw points.

**Look For**
- quick reaction.
- using space.
- stable balances.

**Variation**
- Have children in smaller groups with their own leader.
- Change the type of movement after each stop.
- Teacher nominates some kind of statue position which the children assume, eg. ballerina, tall shape, stretched elastic, on one leg.

**STATIC INDIVIDUAL BALANCE**  
**Activity 80 CONNECT IT**

**Before the Activity**
Hall, grass, hard surface, classroom.

**During the Activity**
- Free spacing in a defined area.  
  Children walk freely about the area.  
  On whistle or teacher’s signal they stop and listen, teacher calls out two body parts which each child has to join together, eg.  
  - elbow to knee.  
  - hand to foot.  
  - foot to foot.  
  Repeat several times using different body parts.

**Look For**
- focus on an object or spot for stability.

**Variation**
- On whistle, pairs connect the body parts called by the teacher, eg. two feet – would be one foot from each person.
STATIC INDIVIDUAL BALANCE

ACTIVITY 81 PUZZLE BALANCES

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY
Using symbols such as below prepare a set of small cards. Put two or more on each card ensuring that a balance is possible.

Symbols

Examples of cards

DURING THE ACTIVITY
• In a defined area with mats for balances that need them. Children take a card and see how many balances they can do which solve the puzzle.

LOOK FOR
• avoiding activities which put pressure on the neck.

VARIATIONS
• Work in pairs.
• Children work in groups and verbally give a puzzle for the others.
**STATIC PAIR AND SMALL GROUP BALANCE**

**ACTIVITY 82  EXPLORING CO-OPERATIVE BALANCES**

**BEFORE THE ACTIVITY**
Benches, box tops, mats, balls.

**DURING THE ACTIVITY**
Freely spaced in pairs explore balances.

- How many ways can you balance with your partner?
- Can you balance with only
  - two feet on the ground.
  - two hands and one foot.
  - one foot and two knees.
  - one back and one foot etc.
- Who can balance one way and smoothly change to another?
- Can you be ...
  - an apple tree.
  - a yacht.
  - a letter of the alphabet – spell a word, numbers etc.
- In threes or fives build a stabile/pyramid.
- In pairs how can you balance ...?
  - on a line.
  - on a bench/box top.
  - on a crash pad.
- What ways can you balance and pass a ball?

**LOOK FOR**
Safety:
- suitable surface.
- sufficient arm strength for body support.
- pairs matched for height and weight.
- weight and support not on lower back or neck.
- slow control when engaging and disengaging.
- an understanding of the principles of stability, ie. a broad base, a low centre of gravity, an understanding of counter balancing.
STATIC PAIR AND SMALL GROUP BALANCE

ACTIVITY 83 DEAD BUGS

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY
Giving surface, eg. mats / grass.
Teach landings.

DURING THE ACTIVITY
• Matched pairs, one kneels on all fours and the partner lies on their back on top. The kneeling person then moves round.

LOOK FOR
• weight not on lower back.

STATIC PAIR AND SMALL GROUP BALANCE

ACTIVITY 84 STRETCHER CARRY

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY
Grass or mats.

DURING THE ACTIVITY
In threes, two kneel on all fours facing the same way and a short distance apart. The stretcher lies across these two and they then move in unison.

LOOK FOR
• body tension by the stretcher.
• care when moving.
**Locomotion activities**

**STATIC PAIR AND SMALL GROUP BALANCE**

**Activity 85 THREE LEGS**

| Hall, grass, hard surface. |

**DURING THE ACTIVITY**

- Children in pairs, standing side by side.
  - One partner lifts the inside leg.
  - One partner runs – the other hops.
  - Other partner has a turn.
  - Repeat but change legs.

**LOOK FOR**

- Co-ordinating hopping with running.
- Adjusting speed to suit the hopper.

**VARIATION**

- Five legs. Children in threes (as in diagram), outside partners join hands under centre child’s lifted leg. Centre child holds shoulders of outside children – swap positions until all have had a turn in the middle.

**Activity 86 SEATED/KNEELING VOLLEY BALL**

| Marked court with low net (padder tennis) or rope. Balloon covered in cloth or a very light plastic ball. |

**BEFORE THE ACTIVITY**

- Marked court with low net (padder tennis) or rope.
- Balloon covered in cloth or a very light plastic ball.

**DURING THE ACTIVITY**

- A team of six to eight at each end of the court, spaced out kneeling/sitting.
  - The court size should be adjusted to suit the number in the team. The distance between players is that finger tips can touch when they reach towards each other.
  - The balloon is hit from player to player until it can be hit over the net. A point is gained when the balloon hits the floor in the opponents’ court or the opponents hit out of court.
  - Allow any number of hits – strike the balloon with any part of the body – feet, head.
  - For beginners allow the balloon to be caught before it is hit.

**LOOK FOR**

- Stable base.

**VARIATIONS**

- Put a small weight in the balloon to change its flight.
- Limit the number of hits before the ball must be hit over the net.
- Introduce a second balloon.
**DYNAMIC BALANCE**

**Activity 87 Exploring Dynamic Balance**

**Before the Activity**
Inside or outside, a variety of equipment, playground apparatus. Teach landings.

**During the Activity**
Spread the equipment out and ask the children ‘Who can …..?’ or allow them to experiment.

- Walk along lines, ropes, a line of blocks or around a hoop.
- Walk along low bench, broad side/rail.
- Walk up and down an inclined bench or rail.
- Walk along a beam.
- Balance on an unstable base e.g. rocker board/swinging rail/skateboard

**Look For**
- Head up, point of focus.
- Using arms.
- Safety procedures on equipment.

**Variations**
- Increase height.
- Change direction.
- Vary locomotor movement.
- Add a turn.
- Make a sequence.
- Work with a partner.
- Add a ball, hoop, ribbon ball and hold, throw, bounce and catch, move in patterns.

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**DYNAMIC BALANCE**

**Activity 88 Balance Obstacle Course**

**Before the Activity**
A variety of equipment suitable for balance set out in a circuit – ropes, blocks, benches, beams, playground equipment etc.

**During the Activity**
- Children spaced round the circuit move round individually. They perform a nominated balance or decide themselves how to balance on the equipment.

**Look For**
- Low centre of gravity, wide base for stability.
- Head up, focusing.

**Safety – Check for**
- No crowding or touching others.
- Padded landing below higher equipment.

**Variations**
- In small groups follow the leader.
- A task card by each piece of equipment.
**DYNAMIC BALANCE**

**Activity 89 HOPPO**

**Before the Activity**
Hall, grass, firm surface.

**During the Activity**
- Children in pairs – standing on one leg facing each other, arms folded across chest.
  Partners try to put each other off balance by hopping and ‘bumping’. Change legs frequently.

**Look For**
- Lighthearted activity, no rough play.
- Friendly competition.
- Matched pairs.

**Variation**
- Both partners stand in a marked area such as one square of a four square grid – each tries to ‘bump’ and manoeuvre the other over the boundary.

**INVERTED BALANCE**

**Activity 90 EXPLORING INVERTED BALANCE**

**Before the Activity**
Wall, box, desks, chairs, safety mats.

**During the Activity**
Teach the balances then set up a circuit for the children to move round. Stress safety procedures.

- Tripod Balance.

**Look For**
- Padded surface (mats).
- Walk one knee, then the other on to elbows.
- Weight on crown of head, not forehead on mat.
- Head/hands triangle.

- Handstands.
  - Walk up a wall backwards.
  - Against a wall.
  - From a desk/box.
  - With support from partner.

**Look For**
- Straight arms.
- Middle finger points slightly inwards.
- Minimal arch in back.
- Tight body.
**SUPPORTS AND HANGS**

**Activity 91 EXPLORING SUPPORTS AND HANGS**

**BEFORE THE ACTIVITY**

Benches, beams, rails, bars, chairs, desks and mats.

**DURING THE ACTIVITY**

- Teach the activities, then set up a circuit for the children to move round, either individually or in small groups. Teach or revise landings first.
- **Front support.**
- **Back Support.**
- **Stride.**
- **Underarm (between desks).**
- **Vertical (upright) hang.**

**LOOK FOR**

- hand position – fingers face forward like toes.
- upper body strength adequate to hold weight of body.
- stable equipment
- safety mats or suitable soft landing.
- practise on floor first, then on equipment.
BALANCING IN WATER

The aquatic environment provides numerous opportunities for developing skills associated with balance. Water has a resistance factor against which limbs can be moved to maintain a balanced position, or alternatively to create changed positions.

Learners who are able to create or maintain balance on the back, side and front will be able to use this skill in synchronised swimming and aquafitness programmes to good effect.

Make sure they know how to regain their feet before starting the activities.

ACTIVITY 92 **EXPLORING BALANCE IN WATER**

- Balance on one leg using sculling movements with the hands. ‘Rest hands on a pile of sand. Turn thumbs down, divide it in two and push the halves apart. Turn thumbs up and push the halves back together’. Begin with other leg flexed under the body and progress to other leg extended backwards on water surface.

- Lean forward with whole body, toes touching pool bottom. Use sculling actions to keep chin on water level.

- In pairs, lean forward with single arm support on partner’s shoulder. Use the free arms to scull and maintain balance.

- Lean backwards, heels touching pool bottom. Use an ‘S pull’ to secure upper body balance.

- When gliding, move from front to back lying positions and vice versa.

- Progress from a front glide to stationary float, then to back lie in the opposite/same direction. When moving to the opposite direction, legs should swing under the body.
**CLIMBING**

The aim of *KiwiSport Fundamental Skills* is to develop basic sports skills through simple, enjoyable play activities.

This section contains those which are pertinent to climbing. They are generally arranged in order from the simplest to the most complex.

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CLIMBING

ACTIVITY 93 EXPLORING THE CLIMBING ACTION

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY
Smooth surface.
Hoops, ladder, steps, hand and foot cut outs or animal prints.

DURING THE ACTIVITY
Set up a circuit and the children move around as individuals or in small groups.

• Mirror Games
  In pairs one person does an arm or leg action and the other mirrors this action. How fast can you move?
  Alternate the initiator.

• Climbing Steps
  Make steps from equipment or use existing steps with cut out hand/foot shapes and move over them with hand/foot crawling action.

• Hoop Patterns
  Set up a trail of hoops and children follow on all fours, placing only one hand or foot in a hoop at a time.

• Horizontal Ladder
  On all fours move along a drawn ladder or a horizontally placed ladder and rescue the teddy or doll etc at the end. ‘Fireman Rescue’.

LOOK FOR
• alternate independent foot and leg action.
• safe surface for hands.
• frequent breaks from walking on the hands.
CLIMBING

Activity 94 CLIMBING on EQUIPMENT

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY
Ropes, ladders, bars, poles, climbing net.
Available playground equipment.

DURING THE ACTIVITY

- Horizontal ladders.
  - Move along on all fours.
  - Move like animals.
  - Face downwards and upwards.
- Jungle gym and similar equipment.
  - Mark a course on the equipment with numbered tags to follow either in order or any order.
- Inclined equipment.
  - Make a circuit of ladders, nets, benches, parallel pipes etc.
  - Try it in reverse order or help an ‘injured’ partner around.
- Vertical ladders/wall bars.
  - Climb up and down.
  - Climb up, across/through and down.
  - Small group relay – run, climb up, “ring a bell”, climb down and run to tag next person off.
  - Climb up and jump into targets (safe heights and landing surfaces).
  - How far can you go without putting feet on the ground.
- Low, horizontal rope.
  - With rope over a slippery surface, lie on back and pull along with a hand over hand action.

• Vertical Ropes
  - From sitting on the floor pull up hand over hand to standing, then lower hand over hand to sitting.
  - Climb up a rope with hands and feet and climb down again.
  - Climb a rope, cross to another and climb down again. Grip second rope with feet and one hand before changing the second hand.

It may be necessary to knot the ropes to make it easier.

• Combination Climbs
  - Set up an obstacle course using ropes, ladders, bars, nets, beams, boxes, outdoor equipment etc.

  Use this in different ways.

  - Let the children use it the way they want to.
  - Exploratory play.
  - Creative play – monkeys in the jungle, pirates in the rigging, mountaineers.
  - Look-out in the crow’s nest giving orders – eg, ‘up the rigging’, ‘on deck’, ‘scrub the deck’, ‘coil the ropes’, ‘up the rigging etc’.