

BALL SKILLS

The following are some activity suggestions that are designed to gradually develop a child's ball skills. This is achieved by breaking the skills down into small steps enabling the child to achieve success and build confidence. Try to follow this progressive sequence and remember to keep the activities fun!!

Rolling:

- Sitting on the floor roll a large ball back and forth.
- Progress to rolling the ball in a straight line to hit a target. Move further away as success is achieved.

Throwing:

- Throw a beanbag / small soft toy at a target on the floor
- Vary the distance of the targets

Throwing & Catching:

- Start by using a large ball, beanbag or soft toy – something which is easy to grasp with two hands.
- Stand a short distance away from your child to begin with. This can be increased as they become more confident and are able to judge the force and distance required to return.
- Encourage your child to stand with their feet slightly apart to help balance and to hold their hands out ready to catch.
- As the ball / beanbag approaches encourage your child to watch it and move their hands to close around to catch.
- If your child has difficulty watching the ball try bouncing it on the floor to them, this can sometimes appear less threatening and easier to follow with the eyes. If this is still too difficult go back to rolling the ball along the floor to one another.
- Practice bouncing and catching a ball to self with two hands.
- As your child masters the skill of catching progress onto smaller balls, initially with two hands but then with one hand as they become more proficient.

Kicking a ball:

- Start by practicing standing and balancing with one foot placed on a ball. Practice switching which foot is placed on the ball.

- Progress onto kicking the ball at a goal a short distance away. Increase distance as judgement of force and direction develops.
- Standing a short distance apart at first try stopping and kicking a soft ball to your child.
- Dribbling the ball – start by walking and trying to keep the ball at the feet with little taps.
- As your child develops increase speed, also try dribbling in and out of obstacles.

Hitting a ball:

- Start by hitting a stationary ball – place a large foam ball on a stand / cone and practice hitting with a large surface area bat.
- Progress onto throwing a soft ball to your child for them to hit. Start at a short distance apart. Encouraging your child to stand side on to you and swinging through with their arm to strike the ball can sometimes help.
- Try your child bouncing a ball to themselves to then hit back to you.

Other Games:

- Skittles
- Balloon keep ups – try to keep a balloon in the air by tapping with hands
- Hoopla
- Swing ball
- Whizz ball

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