

Follow the Leader

Develop core stability, balance, and leg strength.

This simple walk-and-stop activity is perfect for hallway travel. Over the course of several days, let leaders rotate to allow all students a chance to lead.

1. Tell students you'll be the first leader as you all travel down the hallway. Stand at the front of the line, a few steps to the side, so that the whole line can see you.
2. Have students join you as you walk forward eight steps to a rhythmic count, such as "Walk, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight."
3. Stop, freezing in midstep. With older, more physically confident students, choose a more challenging position, such as lifting and holding one knee high or balancing on tiptoes. Count out loud as you hold (e.g., "Hold, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight.>").
4. Repeat with variations (for example, add hopping, take a giant step, shuffle into the walking pattern: "Walk, two, three, four, hop, shuffle. Hold two, three, four...").

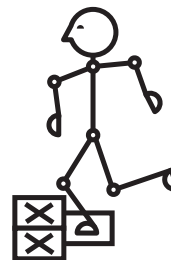


Hopscotch Walk

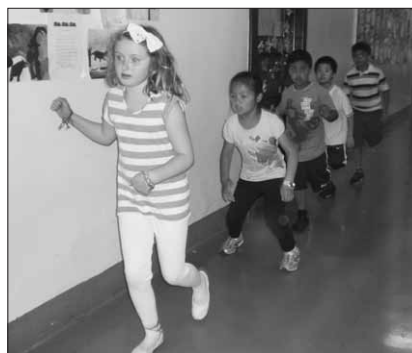
Perform a quick, controlled pattern of hopping and jumping.

Interjecting a simple movement pattern during your walk down the hall gets kids focused instantly. Having students invent the pattern builds skills in sequencing as well as in agility and coordination.

1. Select or have students select simple moves inspired by (but not limited to) hopscotch to put in a pattern, such as the following:
 - Jump your feet apart
 - Jump forward, backward, or to the side (two feet at once)
 - Hop forward, backward, or to the side (one foot at a time)
 - Scissor-switching your legs while jumping
 - Hold your balance on one foot to touch the ground
 - Make a jumping turn in place



2. During a walk down the hall, announce "Hopscotch time!" Make sure students are a safe arm's length apart and then give them a countdown from 3 or another signal to begin together. Resume the walk and repeat again.
3. Make a class hopscotch-pattern-of-the-week: Give younger students two or three simple choices to put in a sequence. Have older students work out patterns on their own and introduce one each week to the class. Increase the challenge by trying the pattern backwards or working in a variation.



Writing Bonus! Hopscotch makes a perfect how-to topic. Have students create their own pattern, list the steps, and write an informative narrative paragraph. Post the how-to pieces in the hallway for other students to read and try.

Jumping a favorite pattern: Hop forward two steps, jump apart, jump and turn in place twice, hop forward and touch the ground. Then reverse it.

Skating Through the Halls

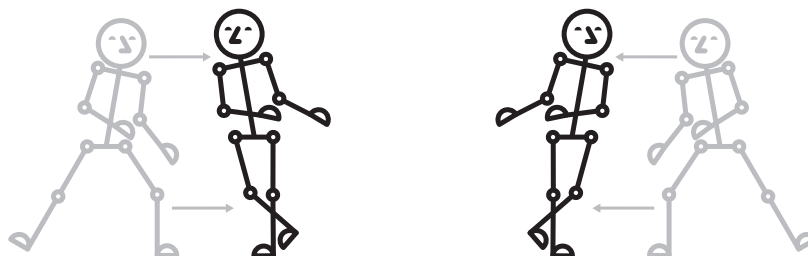
Use stability in the thighs and hips to move in a smooth pattern.

Students who are bursting with energy will exert as much energy "skating" as running, while also focusing on balance. Because "skating" can be done at slow to moderate speeds, it's great for moving through the hallways.

1. Have students put several feet of space between themselves and the person in front of them. (If the length of your line is a concern, then organize students in two parallel lines, staggering them so they are not right next to a classmate in the other line.)
2. Invite them to first "speed skate" in place by taking pushing-off steps from side to side.



TIP! Their free leg should come up and touch the inside of their opposite knee or thigh.



3. Once students are comfortable and can control the size of their steps, have them move forward with their steps, being mindful of the space around them.
4. Challenge students to add more momentum to their move by swinging their arms like a speed skater.



Twist and Walk

Improve coordination through varying walk patterns.

Keep this walk slow to help students stretch their legs and focus; speed it up to emphasize coordination and balance and help students get extra energy out.

1. Have students form two lines, spacing themselves more than an arm's length apart.
2. Ask students to take a few steps in a straight line. Then tell them to imagine that their feet have magnets that are attracted to the floor on the opposite side. So whenever they take a step forward, they must cross in front of the other foot—a "pretzel step."
3. When they are comfortable and steady, make a game of alternating straight walking and pretzel walking (5 to 8 pretzel steps is a good number).
4. Increase the challenge by having students make figure 8s with their arms as they pretzel walk. First, have them cross their arms in the same direction as their legs. If they can do that, then have them cross their arms in the opposite direction as their legs. (This may take some practice!)



TIP! Suggest smaller steps to help students keep balanced and larger steps to add more challenge.

