Jumping and Hopping

Objective
To be able to jump and hop easily, with confidence, beginning with small jumping and hopping sequences, and then advancing to more complex jumping skills.

DOMAIN
Physical Health and Development: Gross-Motor Skills

RATIONALE
Jumping and hopping skills help develop children’s awareness of their environment and how their body relates to that environment. Jumping is often children’s first physical expression of emotion, accompanying feelings of joy, excitement, impatience, frustration, or anger. Jumping also can be an expression that children feel secure in their relationship to the world around them. Hopping is often children’s first experience in specialized walking or running. Most children enjoy the sensation of momentary freedom when being airborne even for a few short seconds. Hopping and jumping won’t get children very far, but whatever distance they travel, children have fun getting there.

RELATED SKILLS
- Gross-Motor Skills: Walking ...............................................................325
- Gross-Motor Skills: Running ...............................................................347
- Gross-Motor Skills: Ball Skills ............................................................353

Sequence
Although each child’s developmental rate and pattern is unique, the following is a sequence of skills that children typically develop through the age of seven years. Use the skill sequences as a general guide when planning your curriculum. The developmental age notations to the left of each skill provide guidance in selecting the appropriate skill level and activity for instruction.

DEVELOPMENTAL SEQUENCE OF PREREQUISITE SKILLS
1-0 Attempts jump with one hand held.
- Attempts jump without hand held (feet do not leave the floor).
- Attempts jump (one foot leaves the floor).
2-0 Jumps off floor with both feet.
- Jumps over small object such as a chalkboard eraser.
- Hops once on preferred foot, with one hand held for balancing support.
2-6 Broadjumps (both feet together) a distance of 2 inches (5 cm).
- Jumps four times consecutively.

DEVELOPMENTAL SEQUENCE OF SKILLS
3-0 Broadjumps over an object or string 2 inches (5 cm) high.
- Broadjumps a distance of 10 inches (25 cm).
- Hops on preferred foot one hop.
- Hops on preferred foot two hops.
- Hops on preferred foot three hops.
- Hops on preferred foot five hops.
- Hops on other foot one hop.
- Hops on other foot two hops.
4-0 Hops on other foot three hops.
- Hops on other foot five hops.
- Jumps forward ten times.
- Jumps backward once.
5-0 Jumps rope three consecutive jumps.
- Jumps backward two consecutive jumps.
- Hops a distance of 10 feet (3 m) on preferred foot.
- Hops a distance of 10 feet (3 m) on other foot.
- Hops a distance of 50 feet (15 m) on preferred foot.
6-0 Jumps rope ten consecutive jumps.
- Jumps backward five or more consecutive jumps.7-0
Tips for Teaching Jumping
When engaging in jumping activities, be sure that an adult is nearby to “spot” the child and offer encouragement.

- To jump, a child springs from one or two feet and lands on both feet in an even rhythm.
- Model jumping a few times before children try it.

To teach jumping, try these suggestions:
- Say: “Jump with both feet—like this!” Demonstrate the action.
- Hold the child’s hand and jump together.
- Encourage the child to jump without holding your hand.
- Have the child stand on a low bench. Take the child’s hands or hold him under his arms and use a slight swinging motion to “jump” the child to the ground.
- Have the child jump toward your waiting arms without holding the child’s body as he jumps.

Teaching Activities

1. Leaf Pile Jumping!
   **Materials:**
   - A fall day.
   - Rakes.
   - Several piles of raked leaves.
   **Location:** A level, open area, clear of sticks and debris.
   **Group Size:** Individual or small group.
   **Procedure:** Provide rakes to aides, parent volunteers, and children if they can handle them. Do the following:
   - For safety and to avoid collisions, it’s important to rake leaves into several piles. Be sure the piles are large enough to provide a cushion for a soft landing.
   - Have a few children stand in a line near each pile.
   - One at a time, have children jump into the leaf piles. Encourage them to land on their feet.

2. Tightrope Jumping
   **Materials:** Chalk.
   **Group Size:** Individual, small group, or class.
   **Procedure:** Make a chalk line and have children do the following:
   - Have children start at the beginning of the line and jump forward down the line.
   - Have children pretend they are on a tightrope and need to maintain balance.
   - Encourage children to use their arms to maintain or regain their balance.

3. Busy Bee
   **Materials:** None.
   **Group Size:** Small group or class.
   **Procedure:** Divide the class into pairs. Select one child to be the Bee. Then do the following:
   - Have the class form a circle.
   - Ask the Bee to stand inside the circle.
   - Have the Bee call instructions to the pairs. For example, the Bee might say:
     - “Hold hands and jump with your partner.”
     - “Jump with your back to your partner.”
     - “Jump and wave to your partner.”
     - “Jump and clap your partner’s hands.”
   - When the Bee says, “Busy Bee,” the children switch partners.
   - The Bee tries to cut in on one of the pairs as they switch partners.
   - If the Bee succeeds, the child who has no partner becomes the Bee.
4. You Jump In!

**Materials:** None

**Group Size:** Small group or class.

**Procedure:** Form a circle. Recite the following rhyme. At the end of the rhyme, go around the circle and say each child’s name. Encourage children to take one jump into the circle when they hear their name called.

*Strawberry Shortcake, Huckleberry Finn,*
*When you hear your name called, you jump in!*
*Ana, Jason, Hugo, Jenny, Kobe, Maria, Ameer, and so on.*

Say the next rhyme and encourage children to take one jump backwards when they hear their name called.

*Strawberry Shortcake, Huckleberry Trout,*
*When you hear your name called, you jump out!*
*Ana, Jason, Hugo, Jenny, Kobe, Maria, Ameer, and so on.*

5. Jump Like Jack, Jump Like Jill

**Materials:** None.

**Group Size:** Individual, small group, or class.

**Definition and “How to”:** A jumping jack is a jump, alternating with feet apart and feet together. When the feet are apart, hands are clapped together overhead. When the feet are together, arms are down by your sides.

**Procedure:** Standing in front of the children, demonstrate how to do jumping jacks. Then, invite children to practice jumping jacks with you.

**VARIATIONS:**
- Without jumping, have the children stand still. Alternately, have them clap their hands above their heads, then bring their hands down to their sides.
- Have the children jump and bring both knees up. If they are able, have them tap their knees.
- Have the children place their hands on their hips while they jump.
- Have the children jump and bend their knees as they kick behind them.

6. Beans in the Knees

**Materials:** One beanbag per child.

**Group Size:** Individual, small group, or class.

**Procedure:** Have children try the following:
- Place a beanbag between their feet and jump without dropping it.
- Place a beanbag between their feet, jump, and try to grab the bean bag while they are still “airborne.”
- Place a beanbag between their knees and jump without dropping it.

7. Meet the Snake

**Materials:** A long jump rope.

**Group Size:** Individual or small group.

**Procedure:** Place the jump rope flat on the floor. Have children jump back and forth over the pretend “snake.” As they jump, they can chant:

*I saw a snake and the snake said “Hiss.”*

“Hiss, hiss, hiss. Please jump like this.”
*I saw a snake and the snake was fat.*

“Hiss, hiss, hiss, Please jump like that!”
8. Cradle Swing Jump  
**Materials:** A long jump rope.  
**Group Size:** Small group.  
**Procedure:** Select two children to swing the rope from side to side. Remind the children who are swinging the rope that the rope should swing gently and rhythmically like a baby’s cradle. Then have the rest of the children do the following:  
- Stand in a line.  
- Take turns jumping over the rope as it is lying still.  
- Take turns jumping over the rope as it swings.

9. Jumping Rope  
**Materials:** A ten-foot jump rope.  
**Group Size:** Individual or small group.  
**Procedure:** Have two adults swing the jump rope, or tie one end of the jump rope to a tree or other object. Begin with the rope on the ground, and as the children’s abilities improve, swing the rope and move it higher. Invite children to do the following:  
- Take turns jumping over the rope as it lies still.  
- Take turns jumping over the rope as you gently swing it back and forth.  
**VARIATION:** Once children become more comfortable jumping rope, invite them to take turns being the “turner” and “jumper.” Then recite the following chants to make jumping more fun:  
Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear, Turn around.  
Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear, Touch the ground.  
Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear, Turn out the light.  
Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear, Say goodnight.  
Apples, oranges, banana too.  
How many grapes do I have for you?  
One, two, three, four, five . . .
2. Bunny Rabbit Romp

Materials: Chalk or masking tape.

Group Size: Individual, small group, or class.

Procedure: Use chalk or masking tape to make two parallel lines on the floor approximately ten feet apart. Invite children to do the following:

- Pretend they are rabbits.
- Line up on one of the lines.
- Hop across to the parallel line.

VARIATION: Children with less-advanced hopping skills can simply hop up and down the straight line until they are ready to hop the ten-foot distance. Children with more-advanced skills can hop lines drawn or taped in the shape of triangles, diamonds, squares, or other patterns.

3. Icky, Icky! Don’t Get Your Feet Sticky!

Materials: Chalk.

Group Size: Individual, small group, or class.

Procedure: Draw a small chalk “puddle” on the ground. Invite children to do the following:

- Pretend that the puddle is filled with sticky goop that they don’t want to step in.
- Take turns hopping over the puddle.
- Draw progressively larger puddles when children are able to hop over the puddle with ease.

Tips for Teaching Hopping

Children should be jumping with relative ease before teaching them how to hop.

When engaging in hopping activities, be sure that an adult is nearby to “spot” the child and offer encouragement.

- To hop, a child springs from one foot and lands on the same foot in an even rhythm. Hopping is done on one foot only. Hopping can be stationary or part of a forward motion.
- Demonstrate hopping a few times before children try it.

To teach hopping, try these suggestions:

- Hold the child’s hand as she hops on one foot.
- Have the child hop on one foot without holding your hand.
- Hold the child’s hand as she hops on her other foot.
- Have the child hop on this foot without holding your hand.

Teaching Activities

1. Hopping on Down the Line

Materials: Chalk.

Group Size: Individual, small group, or class.

Procedure: Make a chalk line and have children do the following:

- Pretend they are on a tightrope and must gain their balance when they come down on the tightrope.
- Hop with their dominant foot, then switch to hopping with the other foot.
- Hop on the line.
- Hop backward or to the left or right.
- Hop over the line.
- Alternate feet. Use their arms to gain their balance.

VARIATION: Change the shape of the line as the skill level of children progresses. Draw curves, rectangles, circles, and figure eights. Invite children to hop along the chalked lines.
4. The Color Hop!

**Materials:** None.

**Location:** Level, smooth-surfaced, open area.

**Group Size:** Small group or class.

**Procedure:** Have the children stand facing you. Tell them to listen carefully for the color and direction you call out. For example:
- “If you are wearing red, hop on one foot.”
- “If you are wearing green, hop on your right foot.”
- “If you are wearing blue, take three hops forward.”
- “If you are wearing orange, take four hops backward.”
- “If you are wearing yellow, hop to the table.”

Be certain to include colors each child is wearing so that everyone has an opportunity to participate in this activity.

5. Hopscotch

**Materials:**
- Chalk
- A small object that can be tossed (a block, a stick, a flat stone, a beanbag).

**Group Size:** Individual or small group.

**Procedure:** Have children do the following:
- Take turns standing at the beginning of the hopscotch board.
- Toss an object into the first space (usually #1). The object must land within the lines of that space or the child loses a turn.
- Hop on each consecutive number for the length of the board.
- Hop over any spaces containing an object (his or another player’s).
- If the child touches a line or puts the opposite foot down, he loses a turn.
- When the child reaches the end of the board, he turns around and hops back toward the start.
- Before he reaches his object, he stops on the prior space and picks up his object.
- The child hops back to the starting point.
- The child tosses his stone into the second space (usually #2). The winner is the child with his object in the highest-numbered space at the end of the game.

**VARIATION:** Tailor the rules to match the skill levels of the children. Simplify the rules or make the game more challenging. For example, have the children switch feet while hopping. Or, for more advanced hoppers, have them hop the entire grid without stopping.