

# How to use Motor Skill Check-In Cards



1. Use these cards to help assess & score various motor skills during the physical activity program.
2. Trust your judgment with scoring! This tool is just meant to help you decide practice activities.
3. Identify strengths and emerging skills for each child. Assign home-based practice activities by talking with families to determine meaningful goals.

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# Visual Adaptations

## Simple visual adaptations:

- Use visual schedules, "first, then" boards or choice charts (available on KidsAction.ca).
- Turn the lights down if possible.
- Bring out one activity at a time.
- Use visual timers to help children know prepare for transitions.

## Adaptations for visual impairment:

- Use a bell or other instruments to help indicate where the child/ children should throw/ kick a ball or the location of the space they should move towards.
- Use brightly coloured balls or balls with bells inside of them.
- Give the child time to feel physical activity equipment.
- Give time for the child/ children to get comfortable in the space (e.g., walk the room's perimeter and identify landmarks).
- Print off large, vibrant signs to show where the equipment is.

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# Cool-down

## 1. Put Away Equipment

Coach should work with child/children to tidy-up equipment back into the activity box.

## 2. Class Engagement

Coach can prompt class to share their favourite part of the day. Celebrate the athlete's progression towards their goals!

## 3. Team Cheer

End the class with a fun cheer or song to get the children excited for the next session! You can do a simple "go team!" or choose one of the songs below:

- If You're Happy and You Know it
- Twinkle Twinkle Little Star
- Row Row Row Your Boat
- Wheels on the Bus

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# Vestibular Adaptations

## What does vestibular mean?

- Our vestibular system affects how we balance, understand space, and coordinate movement. Some children may be sensitive to movement or may require more stimulation to engage their vestibular system.

## Simple Vestibular Adaptations:

- Use a wobble cushion when sitting for instruction or circle-time.
- Start with slower activities, such as yoga poses.
- Include warm-ups or activities that incorporate controlled rolling, jumping, or spinning.
- Use exercise balls for stretching or physical activities.
- Go on a swing or down a slide for a cool-down activity.
- Be observant and look at what each child prefers, responds to positively or avoids.

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# Auditory Adaptations

## Simple Auditory Adaptations:

- Use visual cues instead of sounds (switch out a whistle for visual cues).
- Use headphones for noise reduction if the child is sensitive to louder sounds.
- Take shoes off to avoid squeaking shoes on the gym floor.

## Adaptations for Hearing Impairment:

- Use visual cues instead of verbal (e.g., arm up instead of "go!").
- Use a whiteboard & marker to draw pictures/ write out rules for the game.
- Face the child when speaking.
- Model each step of instruction.
- Learn some basic American Sign Language (ASL) to use throughout instruction.



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# Adaptations for Participation & Overwhelm

## If the child is not interested in participating:

- Change it up! Ask them what they'd like to do & incorporate it into a physical activity.
- Be creative; alter your description of the activity to incorporate what they are interested in.
- Provide incentives (stickers, a preferred game).

## If the child is feeling overwhelmed:

- Make sure they're safe.
- Provide wait time and give space.
- Speak calmly & occasionally (check-ins as opposed to constant talk).
- Use visuals.
- Offer the child their own personal items (such as chewelry or poptubes) that might help them regulate.
- Refer to Visual, Auditory and Vestibular Cards



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# Helpful Tips

- Remember to try both sides as a child might have better mobility on one side!
- Be confident: this tool is just here to help you make choices for at-home practice activities.
- Model the action, do it together, and then have the child/children try the action independently.
- Allow them to practice each action before grading the skill.
- If skills(s) are not addressed during assessment, place "N/A" into the correct cell on the corresponding Motor Skills Scoring Chart.
- The benefits for the child and family extend to more than the PA program. It helps them improve their motor skills will help them with their physical activity, but also with aspects of their daily life, cognition, emotion, and more.



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# Warm-up

- Take 15 minutes to greet each child, work-together to organize the day & warm-up before conducting the Motor Skills Assessment.

## 1. Start with introductions, rules & review the shape-of-the day (schedule)

- "What is your name and favourite...." (food, show, etc).
- Work with the child/children to establish & develop the rules.
- Utilize visual schedules or choice charts (available on KidsAction.ca) to have the child/children choose what order the physical activities will go in.
- Encourage each child's participation & input.

## 2. Stretches

It's time to get the body moving! Choose 3 of each:

### Stationary Stretches:

- Hip Circles
- Touch Your Toes
- Butterfly
- Arm Circles

### Dynamic Stretches:

- Jogging on the spot
- Side Shuffle
- Skipping
- Clap Jacks

## 3. Warm-Up Games

Play a quick game to get the group moving. Refer to the Physical Activity Bank (available on KidsAction.ca) for ideas.



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## Physical Adaptations\*

### General Physical Adaptations:

- Use lighter, softer, or larger types of equipment (balls, discs, bean bags).
- Use lower, closer, and larger goals or target areas.
- Use partially deflated balls for dribbling and kicking.
- Simplify tasks (e.g., drop and catch the ball rather than bounce it consecutively).
- Use props to enhance skills (e.g. a pool noodle extends reach).
- Decrease distance (e.g. start or finish line moved, smaller play area).

### Wheelchair Adaptations:

- Substitute skills, such as wheeling for running, rolling a ball off a lap for kicking, and striking a soccer ball with a floor hockey stick instead of the foot.
- Use a ramp to send a ball or object along a path.

\*Modifications provided by Let's Play: Letsplaybc.ca

## Language & Cognitive Adaptations

### Adaptations for Language or Cognitive Needs:

- Reduce the number of rules to simplify the task.
- Make a visual or photo of the steps of the task.
- Model each step of instruction.
- Practice the task with the child/children before they do it by themselves.

### Specific Cognitive Adaptations:

- Use different objectives or scoring systems to reward specific behaviours that recognize effort, learning and success.
- Use visual schedules, "first, then" boards, or choice charts (available on KidsAction.ca).
- Reduce distractions, e.g., quiet room.

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# Balance (static)

## Raven on a perch

Pretend to be a Raven perched on one leg. Keep your wings spread wide to balance & don't let the wind knock you over!

- 1
  - Excessive arm movement
  - Limited time spent on one leg
  - Significant sway
- 2
- 3
  - Arms held tightly against the body
  - Eyes focused on the feet
  - Ability to stand on one foot with some body movement
- 4
  - Arms extended but not moving
  - Eyes focused forward
- 5
  - Free leg held away from the body with little movement

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# Jumping

## Rabbit Hop

Jump onto different floor targets on the ground, placed ~1 foot apart.

- 1
  - Counterproductive arm movement
  - Eyes faced downwards
  - Not leaning enough
- 2
  - Leads takeoff with one foot and feet do not land together
- 3
  - Some arm swing to initiate jump
  - Small preparatory crouch
  - Takes off and/or lands unevenly
- 4
  - Arms extend back during preparatory crouch then swing forward during take off
- 5
  - Body bends at waist in preparation for the jump
  - Take off and land on two feet

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# Balance (dynamic)

## Bear balance beam

Pretend you're a bear and heel toe walk along a narrow log across the river (a rope, tape or line on the ground ~3m long). Focus on using your arms to help you keep your balance.

- 1
  - Excessive arm movement
  - Trunk is tense and rigid
  - Foot movement slow/ shuffles
- 2
- 3
  - Arms are overused to maintain balance
  - Difficulty maintaining balance
  - Use of both feet but steps are uneven
- 4
  - Arms may be used to assist with balance
  - Eyes focused forward
- 5
  - Feet & arms work in opposition with one another

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# Hopping

## Frog hop

Hop on one foot to reach the target ~2m away; then turn around and hop back on the other foot.

- 1
  - Upper and lower body asynchrony
  - Inconsistent distances and low amplitude of displacement (vertical and horizontal)
- 2
  - Fails to maintain single leg support and touches down with other foot
- 3
  - Able to hop on one leg from start to end with medium distance hops
  - May not employ opposite leg to assist
  - Distance may vary from hop to hop
- 4
  - Substantial and consistent hopping distance
  - Continually in motion
- 5
  - Resting leg does not touch the floor
  - Balance is maintained

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# Jumping



## Set up:

Place mats or tape targets on the ground ~1 foot apart

## Activity Instructions:

- Jump onto different floor targets on the floor

## Equipment:

- Tape or,
- Different coloured/shaped mats

Find Physical Activity Bank suggestions for this skill under "Jumping"

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# Balance (static)



## Set up:

Have participants stand a few feet apart

## Activity Instructions:

- Pretend to be a raven
- Don't let the wind knock you over!

## Equipment:

- None needed

Find Physical Activity Bank suggestions for this skill under "Balance"

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# Hopping



## Set up:

Set up 2 pylons ~5m apart

## Activity Instructions:

- Hop on one foot to reach the target
- Turn around and hop back on the other foot

## Equipment:

- 2 pylons set ~2m apart

Find Physical Activity Bank suggestions for this skill under "Hopping"

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# Balance (dynamic)



## Set up:

Place tape or beam on the floor so that it is visible to the participant

## Activity Instructions:

- Heel toe walk along the narrow surface
- Try to stay on the line

## Equipment:

- ~3m long beam/ tape or line on the floor

Find Physical Activity Bank suggestions for this skill under "Balance"

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# Skipping

## Grasshopper skip

Step-hop alternating between hops on left/right foot from one side of the room to the other.

- 1
  - Slight arm movement but not effective in skipping motion
  - Vertical movement is exaggerated
- 2
  - Stride is short
- 3
  - Rhythmic use of arms aids in locomotion
  - Exaggerated upward lift
  - Some coordination
- 4
  - Arms move in opposition and in a rhythmic manner to help with locomotion in opposition to legs
- 5
  - Toe land first

# Galloping

## Caribou gallop

Move forward with one leg always leading. For example keep your right leg back while your left leg hops forward. Your right leg will always follow behind. [Like skipping, however no offsetting of hops between right/left leg]. You can choose which leg to lead with.

- 1
  - Stiff arms
  - Leading leg alternates
- 2
  - Irregular pace with pauses between steps
- 3
  - Arms help with balance
  - Inconsistent pace and exaggerated upward lift
- 4
  - Rhythmic movement of arms and legs
- 5
  - Knees bend on landing

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# Ball Rolling

## Bowling

Roll the ball along the floor to hit the target ~5m away. Focus on coordination, timing and precision.

- 1
  - Bats or pushes ball
  - Ball held between hands with palms facing each other
  - Arms are swung through the legs
  - Bent sharply at the waist
- 2
  - Feet are wide apart
- 3
  - Two hands hold the ball with one on top & the other on the bottom
  - Arms swing forward as the ball is released
  - One foot is in front of the other when the ball is released
- 4
  - Ball is released by one hand with a backward & forwards motion
- 5
  - Steps forward with opposite leg to the hand holding the ball
  - Knees bent

# Underhand Throw

## One-handed underhand toss

Throw the ball with one hand at a target ~3 feet above the ground by moving the arm in a scooping motion (Backwards, forwards and upwards).

- 1
  - Throws from chest with two hands
  - Arms move horizontally across the body
  - Poor timing in the release of the object
  - Feet are together & stationary
- 2
  - Minimal backswing
- 3
  - Throw initiated by wrist flick
  - Poor timing in releasing the object
  - Steps forward with same leg as throwing arm
- 4
  - Full backward & forward arm swing
- 5
  - Steps forward with opposite leg to the throwing hand
  - Weight transfer from back to the front of the foot
  - Object is released in front of the body at waist height

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# Galloping



## Set up:

Stagger participants

## Activity Instructions:

- Move forward with one leg always leading
- For example keep your right leg back while your left leg hops forward

## Equipment:

- Flat surface

Find Physical Activity Bank suggestions for this skill under "Running"



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# Skipping



## Set up:

Set up 2 pylons ~5m apart

## Activity Instructions:

- Run from one pylon to the next
- Turn around
- Run back

## Equipment:

- 2 pylons

Find Physical Activity Bank suggestions for this skill under "Running"



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# Underhand Throw



## Set up:

Stand ~5 feet away from the participant

OR

Place target ~3 feet above the ground

## Activity Instructions:

- Throw the ball with one hand at a target

## Equipment:

- Medium sized ball (e.g., 5-inch diameter dodgeball)

Find Physical Activity Bank suggestions for this skill under "Catching & Throwing"



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# Ball Rolling



## Set up:

Place target ~5m away from the child

## Activity Instructions:

- Roll the ball along the floor to hit the target ~5m away

## Equipment:

- Target (e.g., a pylon)
- Medium sized ball (e.g., 5-inch diameter dodgeball)

Find Physical Activity Bank suggestions for this skill under "Catching & Throwing"



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# Catching

## Bounce catch

Have a partner toss a ball. Let it bounce on the ground once, then catch it with both hands.

- 1
  - Arms are fully extended with palms facing upwards to trap the object close to the body by hugging it
  - Feet are together
  - May turn away from object to prevent getting hit
- 2
  - Arms are extended forward but scoops object against chest
- 3
  - Difficulty maintaining balance
  - One foot ahead of the other in preparation for the catch
- 4
  - Arms extend to meet object with hands
  - Body is positioned relative to the path of the object
- 5
  - Feet are positioned one in front of the other in a balanced stance

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# Overhand Throw

## One-handed overhand throw

Throw the ball to your partner with one hand, moving the arm in an overhead scooping motion (backwards, upwards and forward).

- 1
  - Throw resembles a push as the elbow extends from the face to push object forwards
  - Legs are stationary
  - No backswing
- 2
  - Ball held behind the head
  - Shoulder rotates towards throwing side
- 3
  - Small step forward taken on same side as throwing arm
- 4
  - Before the throw, elbow is bent at the same height as the shoulder & straightens before object is released
- 5
  - Throw lead by the elbow and follows across the body
  - Rotating into the throw
  - Step forward taken with leg opposite to throwing arm

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# Striking

## Handball

Hit the ball off the cone with your hand.

- 1
  - Before the strike, elbow is bent in front of the body then straightens out during the strike
  - Arm moves vertically & makes a chop like action
  - Feet are stationary
- 2
  - Elbow is held close to the body with a slight bend
- 3
  - Horizontal swinging action
  - Trunk rotates to face the object
  - Feet are shoulder width apart
  - Back foot moves forward to balance
- 4
  - Preparatory back swing
  - Follows through on the swinging path
- 5
  - Hip and trunk rotate to initiate striking action
  - Weight transfers from back to front

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# Bouncing

## Bouncing

Bounce and catch the ball with two hands.

- 1
  - Ball is held with palms facing each other
  - Eyes are focused down
  - Arms drop the ball down
  - Unable to catch object as it rebounds
- 2
- 3
  - Ball is dropped
  - Anticipates the bounce back, but does not catch with ease
- 4
  - Ball is dropped by both hands
  - Arms move outwards in anticipation to catch the ball
- 5
  - Able to successfully time and catch the ball

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# Overhand Throw



## Set up:

Stand ~5m away from participant

## Activity Instructions:

- Throw the ball to your partner with one hand, moving the arm in an overhead scooping motion (Backwards, upwards and forward)

## Equipment:

- Medium sized ball (e.g., 5-inch diameter dodgeball)

Find Physical Activity Bank suggestions for this skill under "Catching & Throwing"

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# Catching



## Set up:

Stand ~5m away from participant

## Activity Instructions:

- Have a partner toss a ball. Let it bounce on the ground once, then catch it with both hands

## Equipment:

- Medium sized ball (e.g., 5-inch diameter dodgeball)

Find Physical Activity Bank suggestions for this skill under "Catching & Throwing"

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# Bouncing



## Set up:

Stagger participants & provide each participant 1 ball

## Activity Instructions:

- Bounce and catch the ball with 2 hands

## Equipment:

- A ball that can bounce easily (e.g., Basketball)
- A hard surface (e.g., gym floor, concrete)

Find Physical Activity Bank suggestions for this skill under "Dribbling"

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# Striking



## Set up:

Place a ball or balloon on a surface (cone, table) approximately waist height

## Activity Instructions:

- Hit the ball off of the cone/surface with your hand

## Equipment:

- 1 tall cone or surface to hit a ball off of
- Medium sized ball (e.g., 5-inch dodgeball) OR balloon

Find Physical Activity Bank suggestions for this skill under "Striking"

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# Dribbling

## Dribbling

Dribble a ball with one hand while standing, or while walking if you feel comfortable. Try the first time in standing.

- 1
  - Ball is held with palms facing each other
  - Arms drop the ball down and palms slap it as it rebounds
  - Body weight on both feet
- 2
  - Inconsistent force applied
  - Elbow extends, and palm slaps the ball
  - Unable to maintain control of the ball
  - Body leans forward with body weight on both feet
- 3
  - Ball is pushed with fingertips with consistent force
  - Feet are staggered
  - Slight lean to the body with the ball being maintained near hip level
- 4
  - Ball is pushed with fingertips with consistent force
  - Feet are staggered
- 5
  - Slight lean to the body with the ball being maintained near hip level

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# Running

## Run

Run from one pylon to the next, turn around and run back.

- 1
  - Stiff- arms do not move in coordination with legs, move across the body & are held high between waist and shoulder level
  - Minimal flight
  - On the recovery swing forward, leg is stiff
- 2
  - Arms swing side-to-side coupled
  - Minimal knee drive
  - Lack of extension on push of leg
  - Recovery leg swings outwards & inwards
- 3
  - Arms swing back and forth
  - Trunk rotation
  - A period of flight
  - Extension of supporting leg at lift off
  - Recovery leg goes to backside
- 4
  - Arms swing back and forth
  - Trunk rotation
- 5
  - A period of flight
  - Extension of supporting leg at lift off
  - Recovery leg goes to backside

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# Kicking

## Stationary ball kick

Set ball on the ground. Kick it towards the target.

- 1
  - Arms are stationary
  - Kick is initiated by short swing but once contact is made with the ball the leg stops
  - Ball is pushed
  - Contact is made with the toes/ front of foot
- 2
  - Arms are at side of the body or out in front
  - Step forward taken with non-kicking leg
  - Minimal leg swing
  - Knee bent when contact is made with the ball
  - Contact with side/top of foot
- 3
  - Arms swing in opposition to the kicking foot
  - Body bends at the waist to generate power
  - Preparatory windup
  - Non-kicking foot beside the ball
  - Ball contacts shoe laces/ side of foot
  - Kicking leg follows through after contact
- 4
  - Arms swing in opposition to the kicking foot
  - Body bends at the waist to generate power
- 5
  - Preparatory windup
  - Non-kicking foot beside the ball
  - Ball contacts shoe laces/ side of foot
  - Kicking leg follows through after contact

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# Punting

## Drop Kick

Drop the ball in front of you and try to kick it before it hits the ground.

- 1
  - Ball is tossed instead of dropped
  - Leg is flexed at 90 degrees
  - Ball contacts toes
  - Kicking leg swings from parallel position
  - Short step taken
- 2
  - Late drop of the ball from chest height
  - Slight lean forward
  - Step(s) taken prior to kick
  - Foot is extended downwards away from leg
- 3
  - Ball is dropped
  - Arm that is opposite the kicking leg swings forward
  - Arm of kicking leg goes behind the body
  - Step(s) taken prior to kick
- 4
  - Ball is dropped
  - Arm that is opposite the kicking leg swings forward
- 5
  - Arm of kicking leg goes behind the body
  - Step(s) taken prior to kick

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# Running



## Set up:

Set up 2 pylons ~5m apart

## Activity Instructions:

- Run from one pylon to the next
- Turn around
- Run back

## Equipment:

- 2 Pylons

Find Physical Activity Bank suggestions for this skill under "Running"



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# Dribbling



## Set up:

Stagger participants & provide each participant 1 ball

## Activity Instructions:

- Dribble a ball with one hand while standing, or while walking if you feel comfortable
- Try the first time in standing

## Equipment:

- A ball that can bounce easily (e.g., Basketball)
- A hard surface (e.g., gym floor, concrete)

Find Physical Activity Bank suggestions for this skill under "Dribbling"



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# Punting



## Set up:

Stagger participants & provide each participant 1 ball

## Activity Instructions:

- Drop the ball in front of you
- Try to kick it before it hits the ground

## Equipment:

- Target (e.g., a pylon)
- Medium sized ball (e.g., 5-inch diameter dodgeball)

Find Physical Activity Bank suggestions for this skill under "Kicking"



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# Kicking



## Set up:

Place target ~5m away from participant

## Activity Instructions:

- Set the ball on the ground
- Kick it towards the target

## Equipment:

- Medium sized ball (e.g., 5-inch diameter dodgeball)
- 1 cone or similar target

Find Physical Activity Bank suggestions for this skill under "Kicking"



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