

# Great Games and Activities

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***Special Olympics***

***Wisconsin***

Be a fan.

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## PHILOSOPHY

I have found that conditioning Special Olympic athletes is more successful when practices combine fun games and activities with specific training drills and technique work.

## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this handbook is to provide games and activities that can be used to improve cardiovascular fitness, strength, and agility in Special Olympic athletes. These activities are not intended to be sport specific but instead are designed to be used by athletes competing in a variety of sports.

There is not a recommended age listed for these games because of the wide variety of cognitive abilities that Special Olympic athletes represent. As a reference point non-disabled elementary students between the ages of 6-9 have played and enjoyed all of the activities included in the handbook.

Most of the games can be played in a medium to large indoor or outdoor playing area with little or no equipment. The "comments" area can be used as a quick reference when choosing a training emphasis.

The main purpose in all of these games and activities is that they are intended to be FUN.

# TRIANGLE TAG

<b>Facility needed:</b>	small playing area
<b>Equipment needed:</b>	flags
<b>Number of Players:</b>	4+
<b>Comments:</b>	quick warm-up activity

**How to Play:** Divide players into groups of four. Three of the players hold hands forming a triangle. One of the three players puts a flag (like a flag football flag or just a piece of cloth or bandana would work) into the back of the waistband of their shorts or pants. The fourth person in the group is outside of the triangle and runs around the triangle trying to pull the flag out. The other two triangle teammates must try and maneuver the triangle in order to prevent the flag from being pulled. The more they work together as a team the more successful they will be. Change positions every minute or two or when the flag is pulled.

## **Recommendations and Suggestions:**

1. May want to put a track and field relay team together in the triangle to promote working together.

**Resource:** Rohnke, Karl. Silver Bullets, Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company, 1984.

## FOX AND GEESE

<b>Facility needed:</b>	large field of snow
<b>Equipment needed:</b>	nerf balls for tagging
<b>Number of Players:</b>	10+
<b>Comments:</b>	great activity for building stamina - good acclimation game prior to starting cross country skiing practices; builds leg strength using the snow for resistance

**How to Play:** Similar to Line Tag (p. ) only the lines are in the snow rather than on the gym floor. Have athletes follow you to lay out original paths for fox and geese to follow. (Sometimes this is a work out in itself depending on the depth of the snow!) When fox catches geese they either become foxes or they are taken as prisoners.

### **Recommendations and Suggestions:**

1. May want to make "safe houses" for the geese to rest in. Limit time that geese are allowed to be in safe house. Fox may not go in the "hen house"!

**Resource:** Bonnie Kahn's childhood?

# **LAST FLAG PULLED**

<b>Facility needed:</b>	large playing area
<b>Equipment needed:</b>	one flag for each player
<b>Number of Players:</b>	8+
<b>Comments:</b>	great for aerobic conditioning

**How to Play:** Each player tucks a flag into either their back pocket or the back of their waistband of their shorts or pants. All players spread out in playing area. On "go" everyone tries to pull out everyone else's flag. If your flag is pulled you are still in the game and may continue to pull out other player's flags. The game is over when only one player is left with a flag. When a flag is pulled they must be put in a designated spot on the floor or be given to the teacher/coach.

## **Recommendations and Suggestions:**

1. When the flag is pulled go to the teacher/coach and do 5 exercises (e.g. jumping jacks, curl-ups, pull-ups, etc.). They may then put a flag back on and return to the game. Game is over after designated time.
2. If you pull a flag and you don't have one you may put that one on.

**Resource:** Carnes, Cliff. Awesome Elementary School Physical Education Activities. Cliff Carnes: Carmichael, CA. 1983.

## RAT TAIL

<b>Facility needed:</b>	large playing area
<b>Equipment needed:</b>	cotton clothesline rope cut in 4' pieces
<b>Number of Players:</b>	8+
<b>Comments:</b>	excellent warm-up activity

**How to Play:** Each piece of rope needs to have an overhand knot tied in one end of the rope. Each player is given a piece of rope and tucks the end without the knot into the back of their waistband of their shorts or pants. This is their "rat tail". The end of the tail must be on the floor. When the game begins players try and pull out other player's tails by chasing the other rats and trying to step on their tails. No one may use their hands to either pull out a tail or to protect their own tail.

### **Recommendations and Suggestions:**

1. After a tail is pulled that person may simply put their tail back on and rejoin the game.
2. They may be asked to do specific exercises in order to return to the game.
3. They may use their tail as a jump rope and jump designated number to times before they can go back into the game.

**Resource:** Rohnke, Karl. Cowstails and Cobras II. A Guide to Games, Initiatives, Ropes Courses, and Adventure Curriculum. Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company. Dubuque, Iowa. 1989.

## HOSPITAL TAG

<b>Facility needed:</b>	large playing area and hospital area
<b>Equipment needed:</b>	none
<b>Number of Players:</b>	12+
<b>Comments:</b>	good conditioning game if hospital stay is short

**How to Play:** One area of the playing area is designated as the "hospital". (Kids love it if the school nurse makes a guest appearance for this game!) Everyone is "it" and can tag everyone else. If a player is tagged let's say on the shoulder, that player has to place a "bandage" (use hand) on the shoulder where they are tagged. They may continue to play as long as they keep their bandage on and tag with the other hand. If they are tagged again they must put another bandage on (use other hand) and may continue to play the game. However the only thing they can do now is to avoid being tagged because both of their hands are being used as bandages! If they are tagged the third time they must go to the hospital to recuperate. You may want to limit the time they spend in the hospital and once they are "healed" get them back into the game.

### **Recommendations and Suggestions:**

1. Need to remind players to play honestly and keep bandages on.
2. If two players tag each other at the same time they both put a bandage on.
3. You can play until there is only one person left, but that means many players are spending a lot of time sitting in the hospital instead of running around.

**Resource:** Unknown.

## **BUG OFF**

<b>Facility needed:</b>	large space indoor or outdoor
<b>Equipment needed:</b>	hoops Nerf balls for tagging
<b>Number of Players:</b>	20+
<b>Comments:</b>	Great conditioning game; lots of movement and fun!

**How to Play:** Divide athletes into three groups and spread the hoops out in the playing area. One group will begin as the taggers, one group will be the runners, and one group will be standing in the hoops. The players standing in the hoops may not leave their hoop until one of the runners places their foot inside the hoop and says, "bug off". The player in the hoop must then leave the hoop and become a runner. Taggers may only tag those players who are not in a hoop. They tag a runner by touching them with the nerf ball. (They may not throw the ball at them) When they do tag a player they give that person the nerf ball and they become the new tagger. The player who was the tagger becomes a runner and may then "bug off" another player or continue to run around the playing area.

### **Recommendations and Suggestions:**

1. Those students in wheelchairs may either be next to a hoop and be "safe" or just put the front wheels inside the hoop if they are able to.
2. For students in wheelchairs or someone who has difficulty moving fast enough to tag someone allow them to throw the ball.
3. If a player has been in a hoop for a long time have them raise their hand so the runners know they want to be "bugged off".

**Resource:** Dave Braby and Bill Budris  
Central Wisconsin Education Conference

## HIT AND RUN

<b>Facility needed:</b>	large space with centerline
<b>Equipment needed:</b>	none
<b>Number of Players:</b>	6+
<b>Comments:</b>	Good for working on athlete's agility, balance, and reaction time.

**How to Play:** Partners stand facing each other at the center line approx. 3 feet apart. Partner A places hands palm up in front of his body. Partner B slaps A's hands and then attempts to run to safety (endline) before being touched by A. One point is scored for B if he makes it to safety; one point is scored for A if he tags B. Alternate chaser each time.

### **Recommendations and Suggestions:**

1. Make sure sets of partners have enough space between them.
2. Starting point made be made larger if there is a noticeable difference in ability between the two partners.
3. Allow ample room for slowing down after endline.
4. May want to cue when to "hit and run" so players are all running at the same time.

**Resource:** Kuntzleman, Charles and Beth and McGlynn, Michael and Gail. Aerobics With Fun. Fitness Finders: Spring Arbor, MI. 1984.

## **SNOWSHOE RELAY**

- Facility needed:** medium-sized playing area
- Equipment needed:** two sheets of 8 1/2" X 11" recycled for each team
- Number of Players:** 2 per team
- Comments:** great lead-up game before the snow flies

**How to Play:** This relay is played by having each player place a sheet of paper underneath each foot and move by sliding their feet across the floor. The players can move in a manner similar to cross country skiing, snowshoeing, ice-skating, etc. Player can move across area and return or to the other side of the area where their teammate is waiting for the "shoes".

### **Recommendations and Suggestions:**

1. Have students make up their own sport to imitate - you'll be surprised what they can come up with.

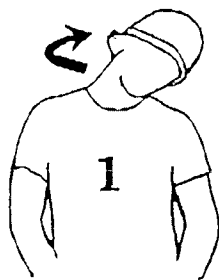
**Resource:** Kuntzleman, Charles and Beth and McGlynn, Michael and Gail. Aerobics With Fun. Fitness Finders: Spring Arbor, MI. 1984.

# Everyday Stretches

Approximately 10-15 Minutes

Use these everyday stretches to fine-tune your muscles. This is a general routine that emphasizes stretching and relaxing the muscles most frequently used during the normal day-to-day activities.

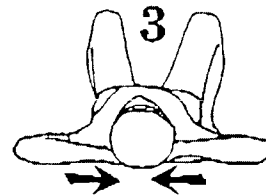
In the simple tasks of everyday living, we often use our body in strained or awkward ways, creating stress and tension. A kind of muscular *rigor mortis* sets in. If you can set aside 10-15 minutes every day for stretching, you will offset this accumulated tension so you can use your body with greater ease.



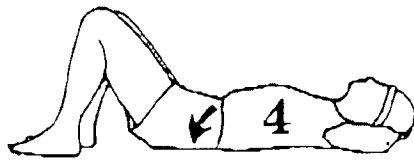
5 times  
each direction  
(page 89)



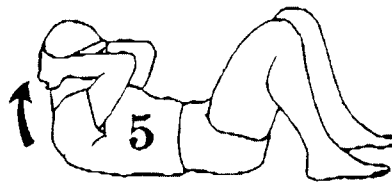
20 seconds  
(page 24)



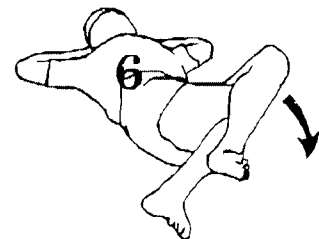
shoulder blade pinch  
2 times  
5 seconds each  
(page 26)



flatten lower back  
2 times  
5 seconds each  
(page 27)



3 times  
5 seconds each  
(page 25)



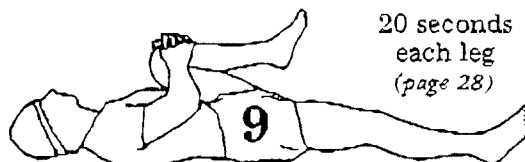
20 seconds  
each side  
(page 24)



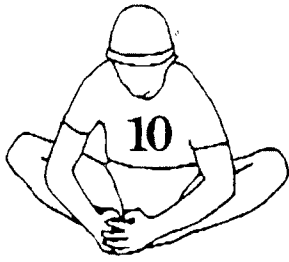
20 seconds  
each side  
(page 29)



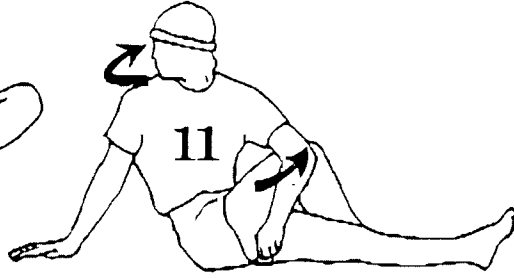
2 times  
5 seconds each  
(page 28)



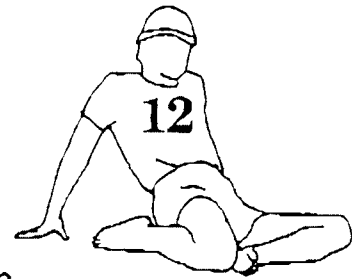
20 seconds  
each leg  
(page 28)



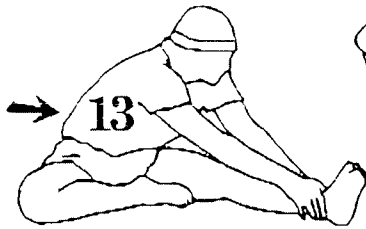
30 seconds  
(page 56)



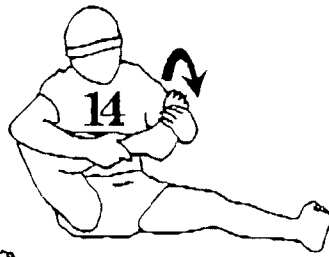
10 seconds  
each side  
(page 59)



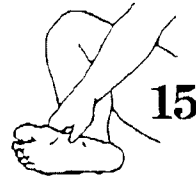
30 seconds  
each leg  
(page 33)



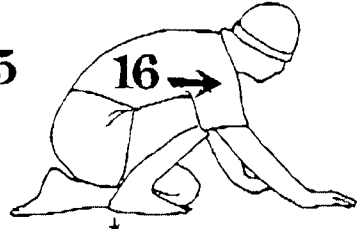
20 seconds  
each leg  
(page 36)



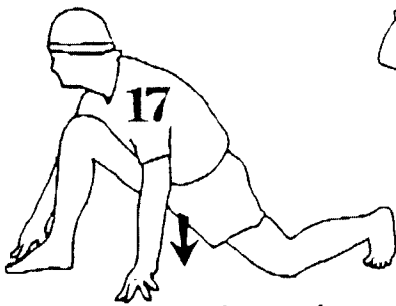
10 times  
each direction  
(page 31)



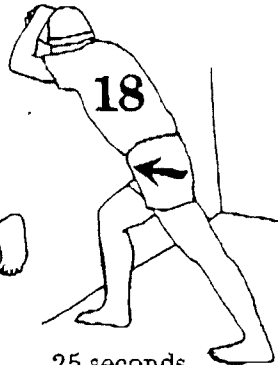
30 seconds  
each foot  
(page 31)



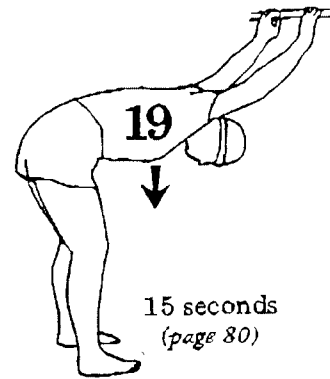
15 seconds  
each leg  
(page 47)



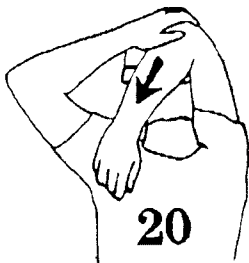
20 seconds  
each leg  
(page 48)



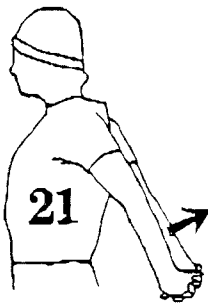
25 seconds  
each leg  
(page 71)



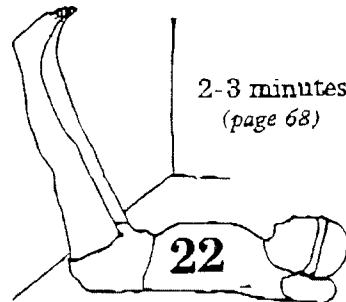
15 seconds  
(page 80)



10 seconds  
each arm  
(page 41)



10 seconds  
(page 44)

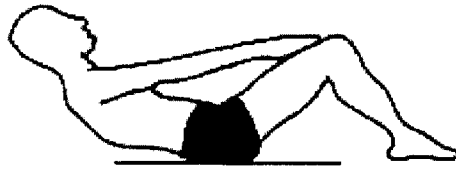


2-3 minutes  
(page 68)

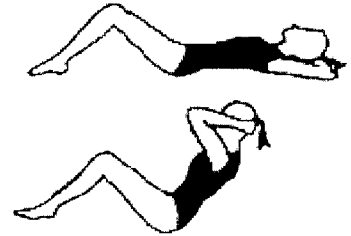
**Strength Training Basics** If you're just getting started in strength training, it's easy to become totally confused by all of the anatomical terms and gym jargon. Following is information on safe and effective strength training routines. You'll learn the names of the major muscle groups and the exercises that target them, the difference between sets and reps, the elements of proper form, and the basics of frequency and progression. Leg Swings, Lateral, Linear, "C" Swings.



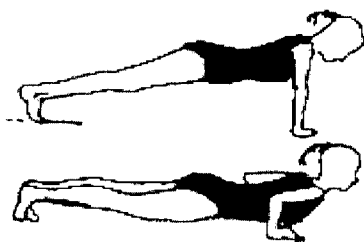
Modified Push-Up



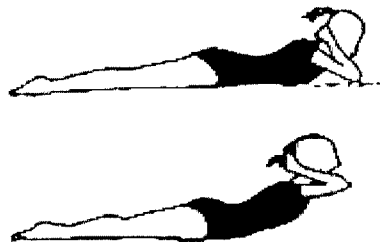
Modified Sit-Up



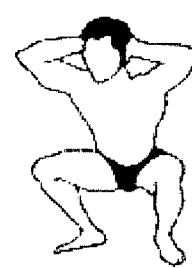
Situps for Abdominal Muscles



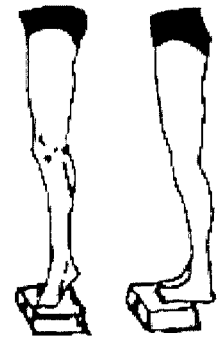
Push-Ups for Shoulders  
Chest, Arms



Back Lift for  
Strengthening Back



Squats for Thighs



Calf Raises

### The Major Muscle Groups

When selecting exercises for your strength routine, it's important to choose at least one exercise for each major muscle group. This prevents muscle imbalances that can lead to injury. Let's take a look at the major muscle groups and a few of the exercises that target them:

*Gluteus* - This group of muscles (often referred to as 'glutes') includes the gluteus maximus, which is the big muscle covering your butt. Common exercises are the squat and the leg press machine. The glutes also come into play during lunges, tall box step ups and plyometric jumps.

*Quadriceps* - This group of muscles makes up the front of the thigh. Exercises include squats, lunges, leg extension machine and leg press machine.

*Hamstrings* - These muscles make up the back of the thigh. Exercises include squats, lunges, leg press machine and leg curl machine.

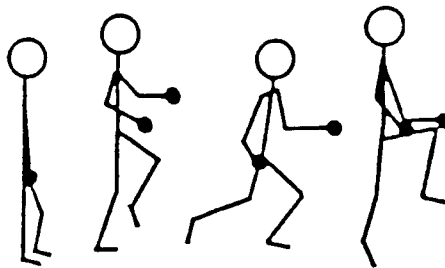
*Hip abductors and adductors* - These are the muscles of the inner and outer thigh. The abductors are on the outside and move the leg away from the body. The adductors are on the inside and pull the leg across the centerline of the body. These muscles can be worked with a variety of side-lying leg lifts, standing cable pulls, and multi-hip machines.

*Calf* - The calf muscles are on the back of the lower leg. They include the gastrocnemius and the soleus. The gastrocnemius is what gives the calf its strong rounded shape. The soleus is a flat muscle running under the gastrocnemius. Standing calf raises give the gastrocnemius a good workout, while seated or bent knee calf raises place special emphasis on the soleus. These small muscles can handle a relatively large amount of weight.

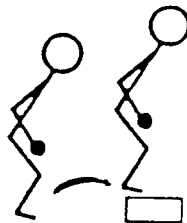
### 3.2 The Exercises

The following diagrams have appeared in "Performance Conditioning for Soccer" volume 2, numbers 3-5, and are being used with permission from Conditioning Press (Ken Kontor, publisher). For more information, please call (800)578-4636.

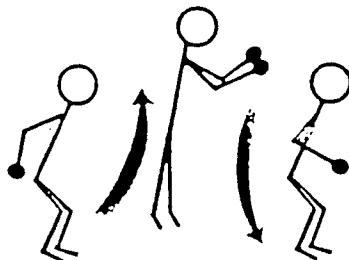
#### Low Intensity



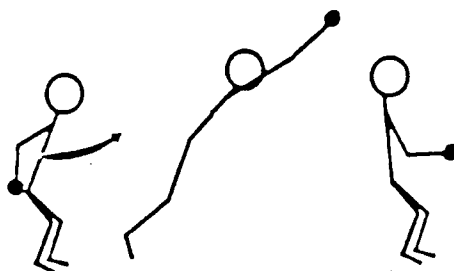
**Skipping:** Bend your right knee to a 90 degree angle while lifting your right leg waist high. At the same time bend your elbows 90 degrees and lift the left hand chest high. As the right knee and left arm are lowered, lift the left knee and right arm into the same position.



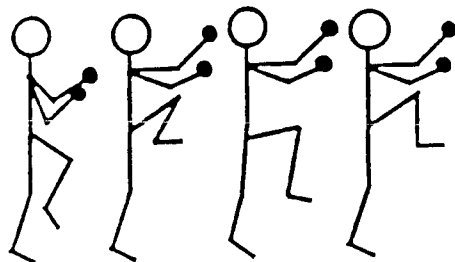
**Jump to box:** Stand with your feet at shoulder width in front of a box 6 to 12 inches high. Drop the hips slightly and, using a double arm swing, explode from the ground up to the box.



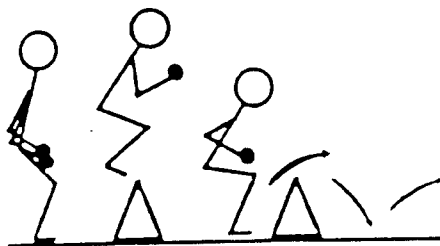
**Two-foot ankle hop:** Stand with your feet at shoulder width. Hop in place, generating momentum with your ankle joints. On each hop extend your ankles through their full range of motion.



**Standing long jump:** Assume a one-quarter squat position, with your feet at shoulder width. Drop the hips, swing the arms and long jump as far forward as possible.

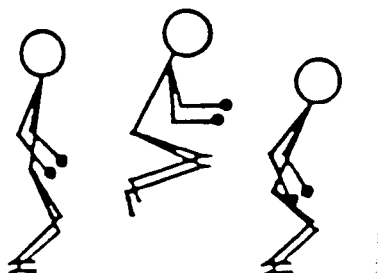


**Power skipping:** Stand with your arms extended at shoulder height. Skip forward, bending your forward leg at a 90 degree angle while trying to bring your knee into your chest. Continue the movement with the opposite leg until the required distance has been covered.



**Front cone hops:** Place a series of 6 to 10 cones (8 to 12 inches tall) in a straight line, about 3 to 6 feet apart. Stand in front of the first cone keeping your feet at shoulder width. Jump over each cone, trying to reduce the time spent on the ground between each cone. Use your arms to help reduce ground time. Land on both feet at the same time.

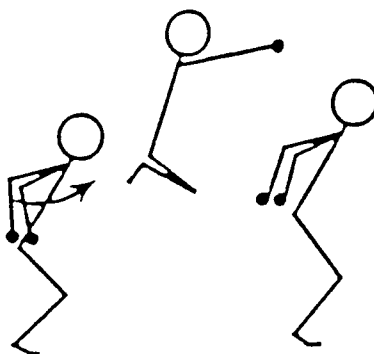
### Medium Intensity



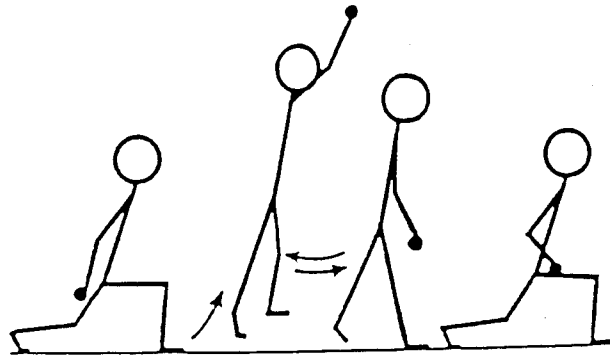
**Double leg hops:** Stand with your feet at shoulder width. Drop to a jumping position and explode forward as far as possible, using your arms to assist the movement. Upon landing, immediately repeat the action.



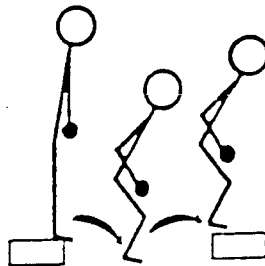
**Front box jumps:** Stand in front of a box 12 to 18 inches high. Your feet should be at shoulder width, your hands clasped together behind the head. Drop the hips slightly, then quickly jump up and land with both feet on top of the box. Step down and repeat the movement.



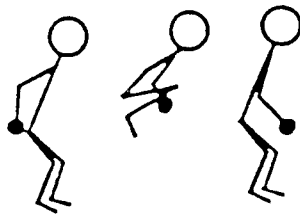
**Tuck jump with heel kick:** Stand with your feet at shoulder width and arms at your sides. Rotate forward slightly at the knees, then jump and kick your buttocks with your heels. Repeat the movement immediately upon landing.



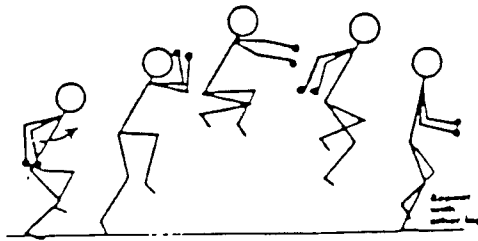
**Split squat jump:** Assume a lunge position, with the front leg bent 90 degrees at the hip and 90 degrees at the knee. Using a double arm swing for assistance, jump as high as possible while maintaining the start position. Repeat the movement immediately upon landing.



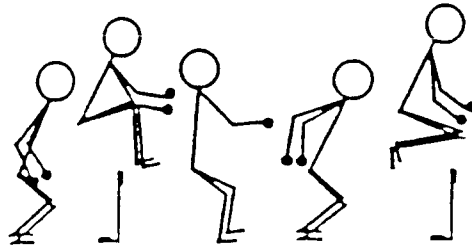
**Depth jump to prescribed height:** Stand on the front edge of the first of 2 boxes 12 to 18 inches high spaced 2 feet apart. Slide off the first box, landing on both feet. Immediately jump onto the second box.



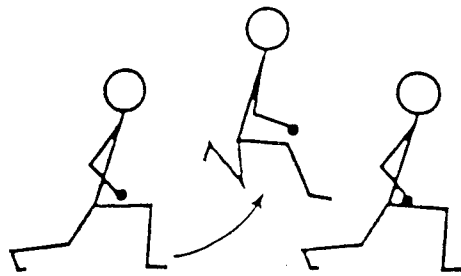
**Tuck jump with knees up:** Stand with your feet at shoulder width. Keep your body vertical, without bending at the hips. Jump off the ground while bringing the knees to the chest. Grasp the knees with the hands at the top position. Upon landing, immediately repeat the movement.

**High Intensity**

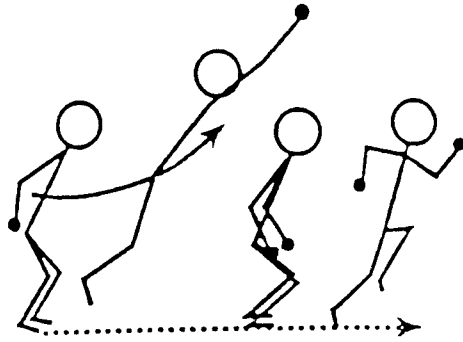
**Single leg hops:** Assume a one leg standing position. Drop the hips slightly and jump up and out, landing on the same leg. Upon landing, immediately repeat the movement. Use a big arm and leg swing during the jump phase. Repeat the movement for 10 to 25 yards. Repeat the movement on the opposite leg.



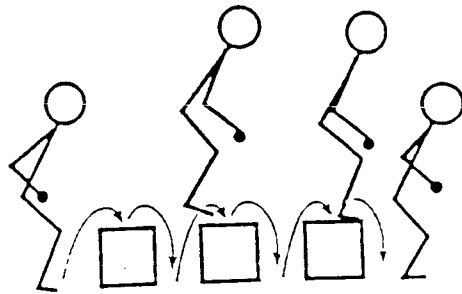
**Hurdle hops:** Standing facing 2 to 4 hurdles, 18 to 36 inches high. Space the hurdles according to ability. Drop the hips slightly and, keeping the feet together and using a double arm swing, jump over the first hurdle. Keep the feet together and the body upright over the hurdle. Upon landing, immediately repeat the movement over each of the hurdles.



**Split squat with cycle:** Assume a lunge position, with the front leg bent 90 degrees at the hip and 90 degrees at the knee. Keep the torso upright. From the starting position jump up and, while in the air, rotate leg positions so that the front leg is in back and the back leg is in front. Land in this lunge position. Upon landing, immediately jump into the air and repeat the movement.



**Standing long jump with sprint:** Stand with the feet shoulder width apart. Drop the hips slightly and, using a double arm swing, immediately jump forward as far as possible. Keep the torso upright upon landing and move directly into a sprint for 10 to 15 yards.



**Multiple box-to-box jumps:** Stand facing a row of 3 to 5 boxes, 18 to 32 inches high, depending on ability. With the feet shoulder width apart, drop the hips slightly and jump onto the first box, then off the other side. Immediately upon landing repeat the movement and jump onto the next box. Repeat the movement for the required number of boxes.

Refer to the Appendix for additional plyometric exercises.

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