

Foundational Skills

Developing the athletic abilities of soccer players is an ongoing process. Yet the crucial foundations must be laid during childhood. Improved athleticism aids the refinement of ball skills.

Balance – Stationary

1. stand on one leg – stand back on two feet and then switch to standing on the other leg
2. cross leg over – a limb now crosses the midline
3. star
4. standing on one leg then extend other leg forward, then backward and then out to the side ... repeat on opposite side

Balance/Agility

1. hop in one place on one leg, then stop and repeat on the opposite leg, then switch while hopping
2. twirl in place – 180°/360°
3. happy star – arms and legs diagonally to the side; one leg back and one arm forward (both sides after a reset)
4. jump and kick heels towards buttocks

On the Move

1. hop and move (forwards/ backwards/ sideways) double leg; then single leg
2. skipping
3. galloping
4. leaping
5. jump forward and plant (backward/ sideways/ diagonal)
6. run – forward, backward

Twisting – Stretching – Bending

1. alphabet shapes
2. trunk twist
3. reach to stars on your toes
4. roly poly

Additional Exercises:

- jump from one training bib on the ground to the next
- go around & over disc cones while walking, hopping, jumping, walking backwards, skipping, twirling, lunging, loping, running & side step
- stomp like a giant
- tiny steps & then tiny steps with fast feet
- body shapes: letters, geometric shapes, animals
- jump straight up double leg & then single leg (left/right)
- broad jump double leg & then single leg

- jump and spin in the air 180° and then 360°
- forward roll
- single person log roll
- randomly placed vertical sticks, players weave in and out

Training Activity: *Dynamic Movement*

The diagram below shows a variety of movements that players could do alone, with a ball or other equipment. What implements are used depends on the age group, as the children grow older the equipment becomes slightly more challenging.



Figure 1 Samples of Movement Exercises