



### What's unique about Basketball

Basketball is a unique sport that blends fast-paced, strategic play with deep connections to culture, music, and fashion. Its dynamic nature allows every player to contribute on both offense (attacking) and defence (defending), with moments of individual creativity - like a slick dribble, flashy pass, or clutch shot - shining within a strong team environment. Highly adaptable, the game can be played indoors or outdoors, full court 5v5 or half court 3x3, with flexible timing and minimal equipment, making it inclusive and accessible for all ages and stages. This versatility not only builds athletic skill, confidence, and life skills, but also engages non-sporty students through its creative expression and ability to foster connection and community.

### What is the intent of your format



Develop confidence and competence within physical activity/sport skills



Build social skills and connections (i.e. sense of belonging)



Develop leadership, character, life skills

An invasion game, Basketball stands out for its fast pace and constant action, where every play can shift the game in seconds. It's a unique mix of skill, teamwork, and quick thinking.

Basketball naturally builds social skills by encouraging communication, teamwork, and trust among players. It teaches how to listen, cooperate, and support others to reach a common goal, both on and off the court.

Basketball develops leadership by putting players in situations where they need to guide, motivate, and make quick decisions for their team. It also builds character through discipline, resilience, and learning how to handle both wins and losses with respect.

### Target group benefits



All young people

Basketball is fast-paced, accessible, social, and can be played indoors or outdoors, making it appealing to a wide range of young people – its roots in urban spaces and the global stage make it both visible and relatable. The rules are simple enough for beginners yet challenging enough to keep experienced players engaged. It encourages respect for rules, referees, and teammates while frequent opportunities for success builds self-esteem, perseverance and motivation.

### It's just not Basketball if you...

1

Don't bounce/dribble the ball.

2

Don't try your best, for yourself and your team.

3

Don't enjoy being creative and trying to score in different ways.





### How to run inter-competition: Primary Skills Festival



#### How to set up

- Prepare the area (court space, equipment)
- Select the activities/skills you'd like to offer
- Create stations and allocate equipment
- Decide the length of time at each station
- Ensure the rotation allows for everyone to have a turn at each skill
- Decide if there are points for stations or School Games values.



#### Age group

KS2 (7-11 years old)



#### Gender

Mixed



#### Participant numbers

- Basketball can accommodate lots of children, even if space is limited, some can be on a station, while others are at the baseline doing more stationary activities such as ball handling
- A single court can accommodate 30 children across five stations, with six children at each station. If a double court space is available, 60 children can participate across 10 stations.



#### Target audience

- Basketball is for everyone – it has appeal for those who are athletic and “sporty” but also those who are currently unengaged or haven’t found a sport that resonates with them
- The strong links to culture and fashion make it relatable, it doesn’t require much at all to get started – a ball and a hoop
- The game can be practiced individually through skills stations or built upon through small-sided games for tactical and technical understanding.



#### Benefits for YP

Young people will develop:

- Motor Skills: Enhances agility, balance, and hand-eye coordination
- Goal setting: How to set realistic goals and work towards achieving them
- Fitness: Improves cardiovascular health, strength, coordination, and endurance
- Communication: Develops the ability to work with others, listen, and express ideas.



#### Roles for YP

Young people can:

- Create or co-create the stations and lead on their chosen skill
- Be responsible for allocating equipment, welcoming participants and promoting School Games values
- Consult with participants to review what went well, what the participants enjoyed and what fresh ideas could be implemented next time.



#### Progression

Having played short, small-sided games within a familiar environment, children will feel more confident in testing their new skills against different children in a new environment.





### How to run inter-competition: Primary Play Festival



#### How to set up

- Prepare the area (divide court space, equipment)
- Select the type of games you'd like to run (full court, half court, cross court)
- Allocate equipment (balls, whistles, scoring equipment)
- Decide length of each game
- Decide the format (round robin, knockout etc.)
- Decide how points are allocated and if there are points available for the demonstration of School Games values. Players could select a value they wish to work on, and opponents, officials, or non-playing teams could decide if this is displayed and if/how many additional points are awarded
- Allocate teams to courts and play.



#### Age group

KS2 (7-11 years old)



#### Gender

Mixed



#### Participant numbers

Participant numbers depend on the chosen format:

##### 3x3:

- 3x3 basketball is played with 1 basket only, meaning both teams score at the same basket
- Each individual court can accommodate two teams, three players against three players, with an additional player as a sub per team (total eight children per court)
- A standard basketball court with six side baskets could facilitate six games at a time, involving 36 active children, plus 12 subs
- But, to allow rests between games (two teams at a time), and to enable involvement in scoring and refereeing, eight teams per court (maximum) could be invited to a Primary Play Festival.

##### 4v4:

- 4v4 basketball is played with two baskets cross-court
- A team of four, plus a sub (five) promotes player involvement and increases time on the ball
- Three cross-court games can be played with six baskets on a standard court (30 players total)
- Sports halls may have six fixed baskets, but where six aren't available, portables can be used.

Both types of formats can be played in a round robin, or knock-out format depending on time and space.



# Basketball for SGOs

PRIMARY



## Target audience

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- The strong links to culture and fashion make it relatable, it doesn’t require much at all to get started – a ball and a hoop
- Because the court size is reduced in a 3x3 game, those who are currently inactive needn’t be daunted by large areas of court to cover. While those who lack confidence will enjoy the smaller team size and not feel that “all eyes are on them”.



## Benefits for YP

Young people will develop:

- Discipline: Learn to develop self-control and manage emotions
- Teamwork: Experience being part of a team and understand your contribution to it
- Stress Relief: Physical activity and social connection help reduce anxiety and improve mood
- Problem Solving: Encourages quick thinking, adaptability, and decision-making under pressure.



## Roles for YP

Young people can:

- Design and deliver a group warm-up, making it fun to break the ice and prepare participants for game play
- Influence the type of game that is played, be responsible for allocating equipment, welcoming participants, and promoting School Games values
- Be a court manager, coach a team, referee the game or keep score
- Consult with participants to review what went well, what the participants enjoyed and what fresh ideas could be implemented next time.



## Progression

Having played short, small-sided games within a familiar environment, children will feel more confident in testing their new skills against different children in a new environment.





### Additional support

Basketball is a fully inclusive sport. To support you to adapt your practice, check out the [SEND Inclusion Toolkit](#) co-created by YST and the National Disability Sports Organisations (NDSOs) who are the leading experts within inclusive sport. They provide advice, support and opportunities for people of all ages with specific impairments. [The toolkit](#) provides you with an introduction to each Special Educational Needs and Disability, key top tips for creating an inclusive environment and signposting to further training and development opportunities within each National Disability Sport Organisation. It will help you adapt any practice in addition to our suggestions to make it inclusive for all.

### Physical Literacy

We have designed these formats with physical literacy at their heart. We want all young people to have a positive experience with physical activity from an early age. As far as possible, we've considered opportunities for young people to move, think, feel and connect through our activities, and given you suggestions to make adaptations. But, if they don't work for you and your young people, then use the THRIVE principle to remove barriers, make changes and give ownership to your young people to have a positive experience with the activities to see their true value.

For further support, look to the Physical Literacy Enactment Guide - Community, which can be found by [clicking here](#), and going to the "Getting Started" guide section to download it.

### NGB regional contacts

- If you are looking for some additional support or guidance all enquiries can be directed to [participation@basketballengland.co.uk](mailto:participation@basketballengland.co.uk)
- Head to our "[Get Involved](#)" area for support on club signposting, exclusive equipment discounts from [our shop](#) (for a range of balls, baskets and scoring equipment), participation programmes, facility development, funding, courses and more.

### Personal development

- Slam Jam is our primary-aged participation programme, designed to give a great first experience of the game. You can learn how to become an activator, and potentially run your own session within a school, club or community venue, by [clicking this link](#)
- Want to learn more about the technical and tactical side of basketball? We have a range of coaching courses to suit all levels, [available here](#)
- Always wanted to get to grips with the rules of the game, the mechanics, and feel confident in officiating? Our multi-level officiating courses cover refereeing, table officiating and statistics, so whatever your interest is, there is something for everyone. Find out more by [clicking this link](#).

### Where to participate next?

- Here is a great place to start – [click this link](#) to find out more
- The Basketball England Club Finder tool holds a wealth of information on a variety of clubs across the country, enter your postcode and check out your local offerings. [Click here](#) to get started.

### Where to compete next?

- There is a network of organisations and basketball clubs across the country delivering in house and central venue league competitions for students to take the next step in basketball. These leagues offer young players the excitement of regular, high-quality competition in one location, making it easier to develop skills, build friendships, and experience the energy of a real game-day atmosphere.





### Why Basketball for your school?

Basketball is a highly adaptable game; the space, ball, hoop, and number of participants can all be amended to suit the age and stage of those involved. Leaders can arrange basketball indoor or outdoor, full court 5v5 or half court 3x3 and game length can be flexible to suit the time available. With very little specialist equipment, basketball is inclusive and has mass appeal.

### How to use activities in curriculum time

[Slam Jam](#) is Basketball England's official junior programme designed for children aged between 7 and 11 years old.

The Slam Jam programme is designed to provide a great first experience to the sport in a fun, safe and engaging atmosphere.

Slam Jam not only focuses on basketball related activity, but it aims to improve the physical literacy and fundamentals of movement for all participants.

Slam Jam is packed with fun basketball games, rewards and gives children a great way to learn the basic skills of the game. Sessions can be delivered over six weeks as part of PE lessons or after-school clubs, as well as within a club or community setting. All the Slam Jam resources can be used to develop a complete basketball programme starting with physical literacy, basketball specific movements and skills as well as individual challenges and group games.

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Thrive isn't a checklist – it's a lens to help you sense check quality and inclusion, so consider the following when choosing which format to deliver and how it supports your young people to have a positive experience with physical activity:

- **TAILORED:** does your event support the needs, strengths and circumstances of the group?
- **HOLISTIC:** do the selected activities support young people to move, connect, think and feel?
- **REFLECTIVE:** have you built in time to allow young people to reflect on their engagement and to make choices about what they want to take part in next?
- **INCLUSIVE:** does your event support all young people to engage, feel welcome and included to take part?
- **VARIED:** have you planned for activity differentiation with equipment, space, task and outcome to provide appropriate challenge and maintain interest for all?
- **EMPOWERING:** have you consulted your young people to ask what they want to do, and how they want the event to run? Often, they create better rules and adaptations than we do, which gives them ownership and a positive experience.

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- Clubs enter and organise local league competitions and enter our national league, with many offering other activities such as courses, 3x3, Slam Jam and more. Clubs are a great place to meet new people and hone your skills, with coaches working with all abilities as the entry point to our talent pathway.

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### How to run intra-competition: Primary Skills Festival



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#### Progression

This is a great way to introduce children to team-based activities without the full commitment of a formal game situation. The group format can help build confidence and help participants to socialise with new young people, whilst developing skills ready for game play.





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# Basketball for Schools

PRIMARY



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## Roles for YP

Young people can:

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## Progression

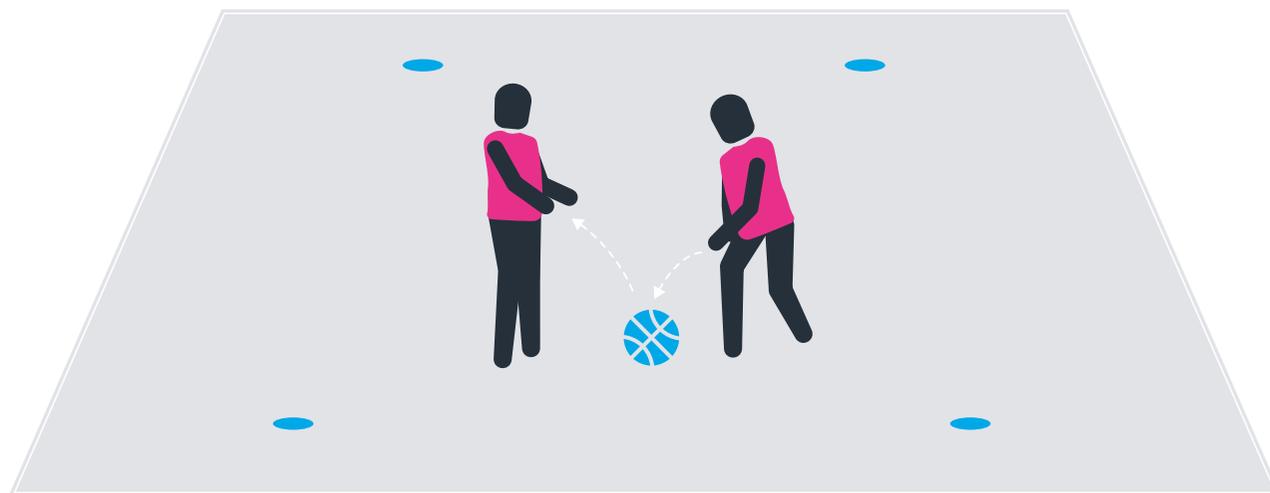
Having played short, small-sided games within a familiar environment, children will feel more confident in testing their new skills against different children in a new environment.





# Target Pass

PRIMARY



## How to play

- Set up an area big enough to allow players to move around freely
- In pairs, players move around the area, with one ball, dribbling and passing to each other
- On the Activator's call, players stop and make as many passes as possible to each other until the Activator signals to stop
- The game can be played until a certain number of passes have been complete or number of type of passes used
- Focus on the effectiveness of a chest pass, when a bounce pass works well, or how an overhead pass can help cover distance.

## Safety

- Remind participants to keep their heads up while moving to avoid collisions
- Use a bigger area for larger groups or divide groups into smaller areas.

## Equipment required

-  Ball to suit participants
-  Markers

## Space required

- Indoor or outdoor, adjust area based on number of participants
- Mark the playing area with cones.

## Estimated set-up time

- 5 minutes.

## Difficulty level



## How to make it easier

- Decrease the distance for passes "you partner must be no further than 3 strides away"
- Use a soft foam ball

## How to make it harder

- Change partners and group size, add a third player or buddy two sets of partners up
- Encourage players to pass while on the move
- Describe different ways a player can stop when they receive the ball – a jump stop with 2 feet, a stride stop with 1 foot first then the other

## Spirit of the Games



- How can you make it easier for your partner?
- What words would you use to encourage them?



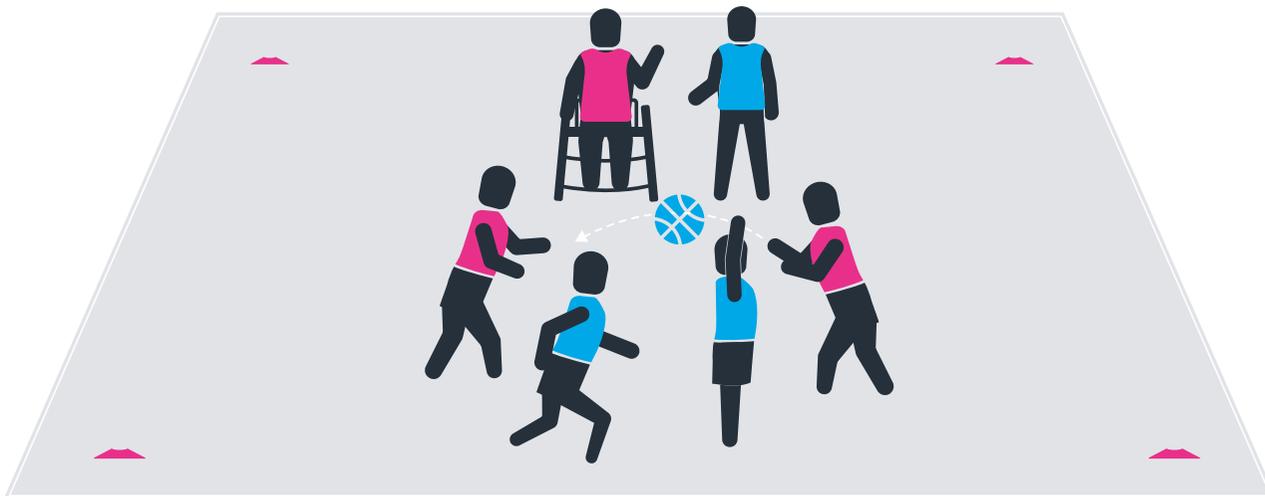
- Why is it important to tell the truth if the pass isn't received?
- How can we be sure that players are completing the right number of passes before winning?





# Passing Challenge

PRIMARY



## How to play

- Divide players into groups of 3, 4 or 5, allocate two groups per area
- One is attacking (offence) with the ball, and one team is defending (defence) with no ball
- The aim of the game is to make as many passes as possible without losing the ball
- After 1-minute, swap the attacking team to become the defending team
- The winning team is the one with the most successful passes.

## Safety

- Ensure all the activities are set up so that they are not overlapping with another station
- Use colourful bibs to help players see their teammates.

## Equipment required

-  Balls
-  Cones

## Space required

- Indoor or outdoor, adjust area based on number of participants
- Mark the playing area with cones.

## Estimated set-up time

- 5 minutes.

## Difficulty level



## How to make it easier

- All teams must use the same type of pass
- Reduce the number of defenders (4v2, 3v2, 2v1) until confidence and game play improves
- Defenders may only use their body, not their arms to intercept a pass

## How to make it harder

- If the ball is dropped or intercepted, the teams swap roles, i.e., attack becomes defence
- Points are only scored once all attacking players have completed a pass

## Spirit of the Games

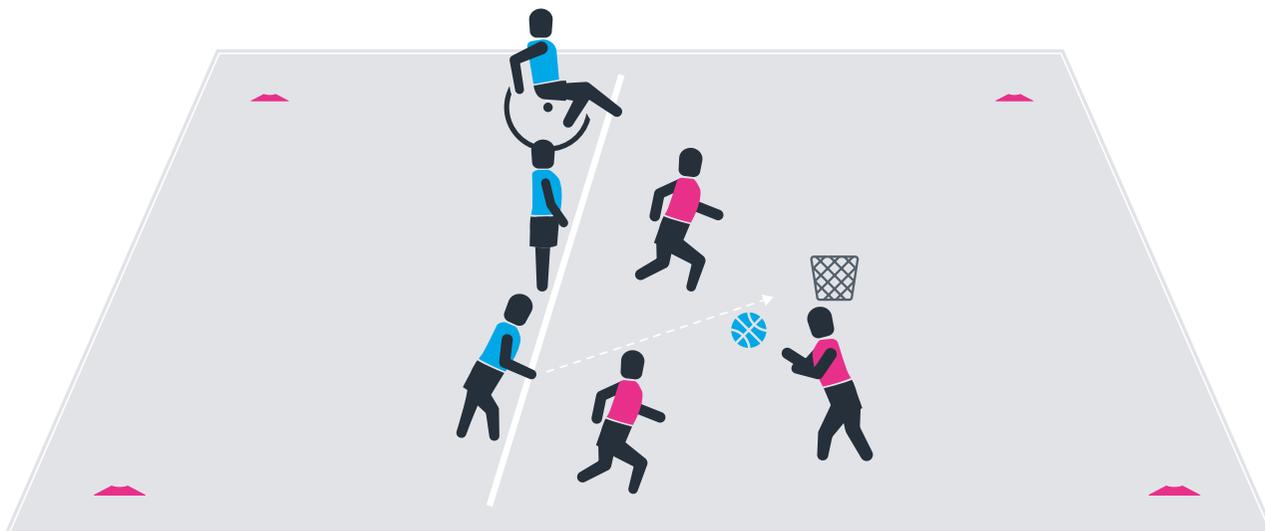


- Which of the activities did you feel the most confident doing?
- How can believing in yourself improve your basketball?



- How did your level of effort effect the score?
- What does your body feel like when you try hard?





### How to make it easier

- Place the ball on a cone so it's clear where to collect the ball from
- Rather than a traditional basket, get creative with your scoring opportunities, a target mat, a floor basket, a teammate in an area with a hoop – let players choose how they want to earn a point

### How to make it harder

- Roll the ball in a particular direction to make it more challenging for one player to reach the ball
- Players on the baseline can practice basketball stance or add in balls for figure of 8s, around the waist, around their heads to improve ball handling whilst waiting
- Call multiple players at once, for example “1, 3, 5” with all the red players playing together and the blue players on the opposing team
- End the activity with all players being active at once

### How to play

- Before you get started, choose the scoring method – a traditional basket, a floor basket, a marker or other target
- Pair the players and give both the same number
- Ensure each pair has one player wearing one colour bib and the other wearing another, before standing on the baseline in random order
- The activator rolls the ball into a space in the direction of the basket while calling out a number at the same time
- Players with that number run out, aiming to retrieve the basketball first
- The player without the ball plays defence, aiming to stop their partner scoring a basket
- You can choose how scoring works; higher points for certain types of shot, points for attacking/defending rebounds.

### Safety

- Remind all players about the importance of having fun and to be sensible when moving around the court, especially around others
- Teach the importance of respecting others and safety always coming ahead of a game outcome.

### Equipment required

-  Balls
-  Cones
-  Bibs (2 colours)
-  Baskets

### Space required

- Indoor or outdoor, adjust area based on number of participants.

### Estimated set-up time

- 5 minutes.

### Difficulty level



### Spirit of the Games



- How did you decide who was in the best position to shoot the ball?
- How did you create space to give them room to be creative?



- Which player showed the most heart on court?
- Why is bringing positive energy important in a group environment?





# Mat Ball

PRIMARY



## How to make it easier

- Decrease the size of the mat area
- Introduce your own rules – all players must have played a part in the point by all making a pass, for example

## How to make it harder

- Reduce the number of players to encourage teamwork
- No dribbling allowed, to encourage players to create space
- Defenders must remain still and can only move their arms

## Spirit of the Games



- Why does the defensive player standing still make it easier for the team with the ball?
- How did you use this to your advantage?



- What tactics did you use to get the ball from one end of the court to the other?
- Who showed strong determination today, and what did they do?

## How to play

- Create as many teams as space allows, min 3 people, to max 5 people
- Ask each team to wear a different coloured bib
- One player from each team starts on the mat
- To score, the attacking team must pass the ball to the player on the mat
- Players can pass or dribble towards the mat
- When one team scores, they switch and play defence
- Defenders are allowed to intercept or steal the ball.

## Safety

- Ensure all the activities are set up so that they are not overlapping with another station
- Remind players to ensure the person they are hoping to pass the ball to is looking in their direction
- Encourage them to call their name to help build communication.

## Equipment required

-  Mats
-  Balls
-  Cones
-  Bibs

## Space required

- 5m x 10m mini courts, indoor or outdoor.

## Estimated set-up time

- 5 minutes.

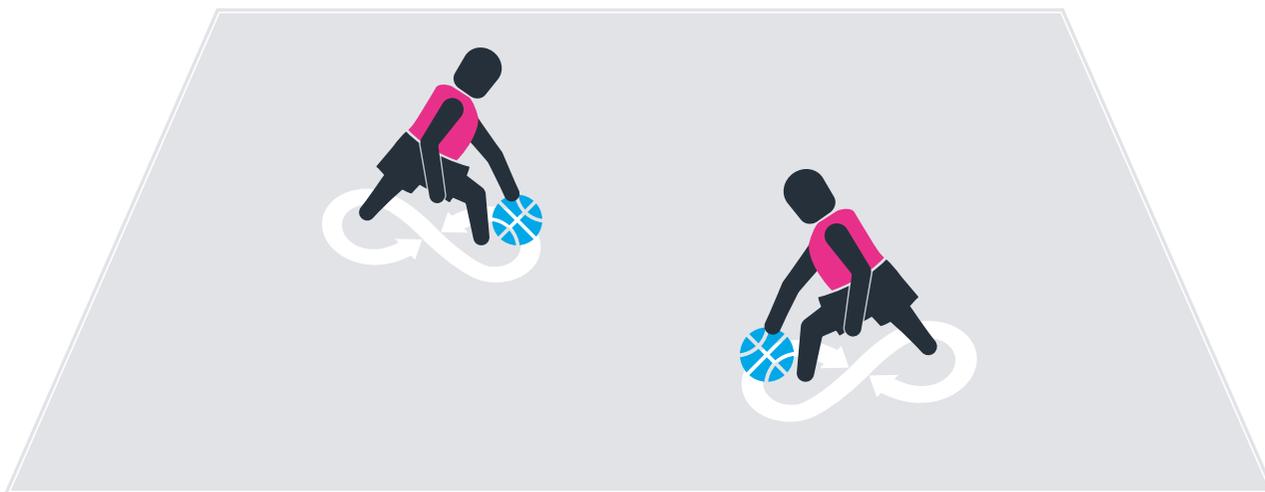
## Difficulty level





# Figure of 8

PRIMARY



## How to make it easier

- Start with a larger, lighter ball
- Allow players to look at the ball and don't highlight to players when the ball is dropped
- Encourage players to buddy up and give feedback to others on how and where they can improve, as well as encouraging them to build confidence

## How to make it harder

- In pairs, one player without a ball holds up their hands with a different number of fingers pointing in the air for the players with the ball to count and call out
- Players must make 5, 10 or 15 rotations in a particular style in a competition to be the fastest. Only accurate transfers count and if a player drops the ball, their score returns to zero

## How to play

- Each player finds a space on the court
- Each player needs a ball; the ball size and texture can be different depending on your group
- Players stand holding a ball, with their legs wide apart and chest up. With the ball on the floor, they roll it in a figure of 8 between their legs. 15 times in one direction, and 15 times in the other
- Challenge players to:
  - Speed up
  - Close their eyes
  - Move the ball in both directions
  - Move the ball off the ground around their ankles
  - Move the ball around their waist
  - Move the ball around their head.

## Safety

- Players should be able to hold their arms out and not touch another player, plus be able to take one step forwards, backwards, left or right.

## Equipment required

-  Ball per person

## Space required

- Enough space for each player to be able to spread out with personal space, indoor or outdoor.

## Estimated set-up time

- 2 minutes.

## Difficulty level



## Spirit of the Games



- Why is it important to have confidence when performing this activity?
- Did someone's confidence inspire you today? What did they do?



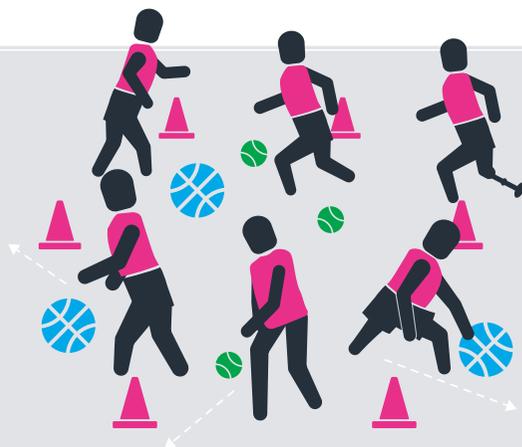
- How did you block out distractions?
- On a scale of 1-10, how determined were you during the activity? Why?





# Recycling!

PRIMARY



## How to make it easier

- Place lots of items to be collected to reduce pressure or consider fewer balls to help the game feel less overwhelming for new players
- Suggest walking instead of running to give players more control and confidence
- Allow players to roll the ball rather than dribble back to their area

## How to make it harder

- Increase the distance between the teams and the centre to make each run more demanding
- Introduce obstacles or cones on the way to and from the centre to work on agility and control
- Require specific tasks before returning (e.g., do a bounce pass or a chest pass to a teammate)

## How to play

- Set up a hexagon shape with the cones and place basketballs and tennis balls in the middle
- Divide the group into six teams. The teams then stand in their marked area at each point of the hexagon
- On the activator's call, one person from each team runs to the middle of the hexagon, collects a ball (aka a piece of recycling) and dribbles it back to their team area
- Once the ball has been put in their area, the next player takes their turn
- This is repeated until all objects are removed from the middle.

## Safety

- If players don't keep their head up, collisions could occur – encourage players to always look around and be careful when speeding up and stopping, especially if there are others nearby.

## Equipment required

-  Basketballs
-  Tennis balls, or balls of other sizes, shapes and textures
-  Cones

## Space required

- Indoor or outdoor, the court space can be flexible.

## Estimated set-up time

- 5 minutes.

## Difficulty level



## Spirit of the Games



- Why is it important to recycle?
- How could you encourage people to recycle after a basketball game or tournament?



- How can you show your teammates that you respect, and appreciate, the effort they made?
- Why is it important to do this for both of you?





# Primary Play

PRIMARY



## How to play

- Decide on the length of the games, 4-8 minutes works well (split game time into halves for cross court games)
- 3x3: The ball can be “checked” (passed between an offensive (attacking) player, defensive (defending) player, and back again) or a coin can be flipped to decide who has the first possession
- Offensive (attacking) players pass the ball between themselves and attempt to score a basket, meanwhile defensive (defending) players attempt to “steal” the ball
- If the ball is “turned over” (the defensive players intercept the ball), then the defensive (defending) team become the offensive (attacking) team
- The defensive (defending) team would need to start a new possession and “check the ball” or “clear the ball” via the arc, if in place, before they can try to score a basket.

## Rules

- Players can only bounce the ball with one hand
- Players cannot take more than two steps without dribbling the ball
- Players must not “double dribble” – this involves dribbling the ball with two hands or dribbling again after stopping. Instead, the player must pass or shoot. If a double dribble occurs, the ball is awarded to the opposition where the offence occurred
- Guard (mark) opponents without pushing, holding, or tripping. These actions are known as fouls. If a foul occurs, a free throw can be taken by the fouled player, or a point can be instantly awarded
- The ball is out of bounds when it crosses the court lines, possession is awarded to the other team where it left the court
- **4v4 only:** For older players, a halfway line can be added to prevent a “back court violation” – this is where the ball crosses the halfway line into the offensive (attacking) half but then returns into the defensive (defending) half. If this happens, possession is awarded to the other team.

## How to make it easier

- Place lots of items to be collected to reduce pressure or consider fewer balls to help the game feel less overwhelming for new players
- Suggest walking instead of running to give players more control and confidence
- Allow players to roll the ball rather than dribble back to their area

## How to make it harder

- Increase the distance between the teams and the centre to make each run more demanding
- Introduce obstacles or cones on the way to and from the centre to work on agility and control
- Require specific tasks before returning (e.g., do a bounce pass or a chest pass to a teammate)

## Spirit of the Games



- How can you show your teammates that you respect, and appreciate, the effort they made?
- Why is it important to do this for both of you?



- How did you work together as a team in defence?
- What did you do well as a team when you were attacking to score baskets?





# Primary Play

PRIMARY

## Scoring

- To win the game a team must score more baskets than their opponents
- Depending on the age and ability of participants, you may choose to award different points depending on where the basketball is shot from – this is at the discretion of the organiser or could be introduced once children are proficient at scoring from a closer range
  - Traditionally, in 3x3 it would be:
    - +2 points for a basket outside of the arc
    - +1 point for a basket inside of the arc
  - In a traditional game of basketball, in this case 4v4:
    - +3 points for a basket outside the arc
    - +2 points for each basket inside the arc.

## Safety

- Make players aware of court boundaries and walls. Courts should provide enough of a buffer between any hazards and playing space
- If resting between games, children should spectate from a safe distance
- Basketball is a non-contact sport. While contact with the ball is allowed, players must not contact other players.

## Equipment required



Balls (one per court)



Bibs (two different coloured sets per court)



Cones to mark out spaces and divide courts, or use existing line markings



Whistles for referees (one per court)



A way to keep the score; digital tabletop scoreboard, flip scoreboards, scoresheets and pens

## Space required

- An indoor or outdoor basketball court (see example diagrams).

## Estimated set-up time

- 5 minutes.

## Difficulty level

