

# Locomotor Skills

These games can be used for teaching locomotor skills in addition to general and self-space lessons. You can use them either in conjunction with the task cards or separately. You can add in levels, directions, and pathways as appropriate according to your students' needs and/or your unique curriculum. They are presented in no particular order.

**Line moving:** Students have to move using the gym lines. The focus is on self-space/general space, different locomotor movements, and directions (forward, backward, sideways).

**Bus Drivers:** Divide students into groups of two. Have one partner hold a hula hoop (steering wheel); the other partner is the passenger. The focus is on spatial awareness, locomotor movements, directions, pathways, and leading/following. You can change the directions and the speeds.

**Shrinking space:** Students start out using the entire gym. As you change the movements and directions, you also cut down the gym space, making the movement area smaller. Eventually the area the students have to move in is only a very small part of the gym. The focus is on spatial awareness, self/general space, and locomotor movements. You can add a penalty for students that bump. They have to come out of the movement area and do an exercise of your choice, such as 20 jumping jacks or a stretch.

**Cars:** This is similar to bus drivers. There is no hoop, however, and the driver is the back partner. The front partner is the car, and they must keep their eyes closed. The driver keeps his or her hands on the front partner's shoulders. The driver must drive their car around the gym safely. You make the game more exciting by changing directions and speeds, adding a horn, turning on windshield wipers for rain, or making the road bumpy. For example, you might say "it's raining." The front person would then have to move their arms back and forth like windshield wipers. To use their horn, they have to tap the shoulder of the car partner. The focus is on spatial awareness, directions, locomotor movements, and pathways.

**Hoop hop:** You spread hoops around the gym. The students have to move around, curving through the space if they want. They can either hop or jump through the hoops that are laying flat on the ground. I will sometimes do a round of hopping, a round of jumping, and a round of leaping. The goal is to be in control when moving while also having controlled hops, jumps, and leaps. No falling or bumping.

**Line Monsters:** All students move on the gym lines except for 5 or so "monsters." The monsters are trying to tag the rest of the students that are moving on the lines. When a student is tagged, they step off the line and raise their hand for a high five. I tell them that the monster has stolen all their energy. Another student can come down the line and high-five them, sharing energy and getting them back in the game. I normally tell the monsters they have to walk since they don't have to stay on the lines. The students that are not monsters have the choice of walking, galloping, or skipping.

**Shark:** When you say "swim," students move around the gym, and when you yell "shark," they must get to an island (hula hoop). Each round you take a hoop away. You can also count and see how fast

they can do each round. Change the locomotor movements from round to round. Talk about spatial awareness and sharing hoops.

**Parachute direction work:** Right/left, clockwise/counterclockwise. I call certain colors to go under the parachute while the rest of the class is standing holding the parachute up and moving it in various directions.

**Tree's in the Forest:** Taggers are in hoops with a gator skin ball, which is poison. The taggers must keep one foot in the hoop at all times. If tagged, change jobs with the tagger, who is the tree.

**Protect the golden ring:** Lay about 7 or 8 deck rings around the gym. Choose 7 or 8 students to protect the rings. The ring protectors stand over the ring and try to tag anyone who tries to touch their ring. Students may not dive to touch the ring. If someone touches the ring, they become the new ring protector. Talk about levels, dodging, and body control.

**Scarf toss:** This one focuses on levels (high, medium, low), tossing high/catching high, tossing high/catching low, tossing high/catching medium, and tossing high/sitting down and standing up and catching at a certain level. You can make it harder by calling out the level. Toss high and spin and catch at a level. Toss high, lay down, and then get up and catch at a certain level. Let the kids make their own pattern.

**Airplanes:** You are the control tower. Students start on their belly. They slowly take off from a low, medium to high level. You change directions and speed. Have them land by slowly going back down to high/medium/low.

**Island hopping tag:** 5 hula hoops are the islands. You have about 6 alligators that are taggers. Students move in the locomotor movement you choose each round. If an alligator tags you while you are not on an island, you change jobs. If you get to an island safely, you have to do a 5-finger count and then leave the island. Students must only do 5-second 5-finger counts, and they can't go back to the same island until they have gone to other islands. Each round I change the movement and talk about space.

**Race track tag:** You set up cones along the sides of the gym. You want them to be about 10-15 feet from the wall depending on the space you are using. The race track is inside the cones. Racers cannot go outside the track when they are racing. You want to have a start line at one end of the cones and a finish line at the other end. Students can only go in one direction on the race track. You can pick the locomotor movement. I do running a lot with this game, and it's one of the few games where this normally works pretty safely. You choose 3-6 taggers to stay inside the race track and tag the racers. If you are tagged, you become the new tagger. If you make it to the finish line, you are safe and walk back to the starting line by going to either side where you have the 10-15 foot coned off return zone. No falling, sliding, or diving.

**Attacking rings:** Give one or two deck rings to one or two students. They are the attackers. They must dribble and kick the rings with their feet. No hands. The attackers try to kick their ring into the feet of other students. Only feet count. If a student's feet gets hit, they go to the side and get their own deck

ring. You will go from having 2 taggers to 4 to 6, and before you know it, everyone in the class is an attacker. I use this game with the older kids during our unit on dribbling and kicking with our feet.

**Poison rings:** Students all have deck rings. They must dribble using their feet. You pick one color to be poison. If that color ring hits another color ring, then that person is frozen. They spread their feet out a little more than shoulder-width apart. In order for a student to be un-frozen, a non-poison ring must be kicked through their feet. I call it a goal. I also tell students to keep their rings on the ground. I play enough rounds that every color is poisonous once.

**Dice moving:** Write a movement on the board for each number on the dice. Roll the dice and do that movement.

**Lucky dice:** First you have to number the gym mats 1-6. Have students do a locomotor movement around the gym. When you say stop, they have to stand by one of the six wall mats. You then roll the dice. If the number comes up that matches the mat they are at, they get a point. Change the locomotor movement and play again. Students keep track of the points they score. Who is lucky and scored more than once? I play 6 rounds, and the students choose the mat they stop at each time. They have to make a quick choice: otherwise they won't count for being at any mat. After I've done this a few times, I tell the class what the highest score in any class is why it's lucky if they score more than once.

**Builders and Bulldozers:** I put a bunch of cones around the gym. Half are up, and half are down. Builders have to set cones up while bulldozers knock them down. No kicking cones or cone guarding. Each round I switch jobs and locomotor movements.

**Wash hands tag:** Red gator skin balls are germs. Blue gator skin balls are soap. Give out about 5 red balls and 5 blue balls. The red are taggers. If someone who doesn't have a ball gets tagged, they are frozen until someone with a blue ball hands it off to them. The students with the blue ball are always looking to help out the frozen people by giving them their blue "soap" ball. After a few minutes, I stop and change the movement for the students with the red ball.