Running 3.1: Sprint relays
8 - 12 year olds

TIME: 30 minutes
SKILL: Locomotion
EQUIPMENT: Cones to set up a perimeter or lines

Introduction (2 minutes)

Call the children into a circle or into designated lines and greet them.

Explain any special safety rules and remind children to stop, look, and listen whenever you signal.

Explain in 20-30 seconds what you will be doing today.

Is there more than one type of running?

How do people run in different sports?
Warm-up: Running with your shadow (5 minutes)

• In pairs, one child leads and the other follows as his or her shadow.
• One child jogs around the activity space, shadow follows, keeping a constant distance “not too close” to the lead child.
• The lead child is encouraged to “jog” at different speeds.
• Lead child should make wide turns; no sudden changes of direction.
• Tell children you will be watching to see that their arms pump properly.
• Slow-tempo music can help children to maintain a sustainable pace.
• Switch leaders and shadows.

Demonstration: Jogging and sprinting (1 - 2 minutes)

• Tell children that there are things they can do to be better runners.
• Demonstrate the difference between jogging (medium speed) and sprinting (running fast).
• Jogging is good for going longer distances.
• Sprinting is good for short distances.
• Arms should be bent approximately 90 degrees at the elbows.
• When jogging, arms should “pump” gently forward and backward by the side of the body (not across the body).
• When sprinting, knees come up higher, hands pump from hip to lip.

Practice: Running on the spot (5 minutes)

• Ask the children to run on the spot with you for 30-60 seconds at a time.
• Ask them to slow down or speed up their arms and legs together.
• Keep the head still, not loose and “flopping” from side to side.
• From time to time, ask the children to stop and balance on one foot. If standing on the right foot, the right hand should point forward and vice versa.
• Repeat a few times so children can grasp the concept of moving the opposite arms and legs.

TIPS FOR INSTRUCTION
• There are many elements that make up mature running.
• It is beyond the scope of this basic lesson to address all of them.
• Simply watch each child and provide individual feedback based on the practice instructions.

CUES
• Keep head still.
• Arms “pump” gently when jogging.
• Arms “pump” vigorously when sprinting.
• Arms and legs move opposite.
Activity 1: “Bum” walk (5 minutes)

• Have the children sit on the floor with their legs stretched out in front of them.
• Knees should be slightly bent so that they can keep a straight back.
• They will move forward across the activity space simply by swinging their arms as they shift from one sitting bone to the other.
• Tell the children that moving their hands alternately from “hip to lip” will help them move faster.

CUES
• “Hip to lip”
• Straight back

Activity 2: Jog-react-sprint (5 minutes)

• Identify a start line that children can spread out along. Use cones to help children spread out.
• On the signal, ask them to start jogging away from the start line.
• On the next signal, they must turn quickly and sprint back to the start.
• As a variation, have the children sprint on your first signal and then turn and jog back to the start on the second signal.

CUES
• Keep head still.
• Arms “pump” gently forward and backward in jogging.
• Arms “pump” vigorously hip to lip in sprinting.

Game: Sprint relays (5 - 10 minutes)

• Identify a start line and arrange children into groups of 3-4 per line.
• Make sure each line has a mix of fast and slow runners.
• On signal to start, first child in each line sprints out around a cone and back to their line.
• Returning sprinter touches hand of next child and next child sprints.
• Each child sits down after they return to their line.
• Run 4-5 races. Consider rebalancing the teams if one or two teams are dominant.

Wrap-up (2 minutes)

Call the children back into a circle or designated lines and review what they learned today.

What special movements do we need to remember so we can be good runners?

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