

Physical Literacy at Summer Camp

1-week unit for ages 8 - 12 years

Are you looking to add some physical activity to your summer camp? This collection of physical literacy session plans has been developed for summer camp leaders who are running 1-week programs.

Each of these sessions takes about 30 minutes to complete with a group of children. At the end of each session, kids will have enjoyed a series of fun activities while developing their physical literacy.

What is physical literacy?

Physical literacy is when kids have developed the skills and confidence to participate in many different physical activities and sports. Fundamental movement skills such as throwing, catching, running and jumping are the beginning of physical literacy.

Physical literacy is important because it gives kids the confidence to stay active for life. It's not about being a "superstar athlete"—everyone can learn fundamental movement skills, and everyone can become physically literate!

How to use these session plans

1. Decide what time of day that you will run your physical literacy sessions.
2. Review each session plan in advance to ensure that you have the needed equipment.
3. Establish a session routine for the kids (e.g. coming together and listening to your instructions at the start of each session).
4. Make sure that your campers understand your expectations for each session (e.g. stop and start on your signal, put away equipment, etc.).

Tips for running a fun session

1. Manage each session so that all of the kids feel included. For example, avoid setups where highly skilled kids dominate.
2. If necessary, select partners and teams to make sure that all of the partners or teams are balanced for ability.
3. Maximize every child's participation by minimizing line-ups and avoiding games with large circles. Whenever possible, stick to small group activities or fun competitions that use small teams of 2-4 kids each.

Enjoy your camp! For more session plans and information on physical literacy, visit:

ActiveForLife.com

Session 1: Running

8 - 12 year olds

EQUIPMENT: Cones to set up a perimeter or lines.

Introduction (1 - 2 minutes)

Are there different ways 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 a “shadow”.
- The lead child jogs around the activity space and the 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.
- 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, and hands pump from hip to lip.

Practice: Running on the spot (5 minutes)

- Ask the children to run on the spot with you for 20-30 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 bent 90 degrees at elbows.*

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 (balance the teams).
- 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 (1 - 2 minutes)

What special movements should we remember to run well?

Session 2: Overhand throw

8 - 12 year olds

EQUIPMENT: Hula hoops, balls, beanbags, targets, cones, buckets or cardboard boxes. If you don't have beanbags, you can use rolled-up socks or small stuffed animals!

Introduction (1 - 2 minutes)

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

What sports and activities require you to throw overhand?

Warm-up: Hot dog tag (5 minutes)

- Leader chooses 3-4 children to be "it".
- Leader explains that when the music starts children are to run around activity space trying not to be "tagged".
- Children who are tagged become "hot dogs" by lying down with arms at their sides.
- Tagged children can be free again if two other children make a "bun" by lying down on either side of them.
- All three children can then get up and continue playing.
- Leader can suggest different ways to move around activity space (e.g. run, hop, gallop, skip).
- Leader should switch who is "it" every 1-2 minutes.

Demonstration: Overhand throw (2 minutes)

- Leader explains that the standing position for throwing overhand is like the stance of a knight in battle.
- Leader demonstrates the "Knight stance":
 - » *Turn sideways to the target.*
 - » *Feet shoulder-width apart.*
 - » *Point to the target with your arm that is nearest to the target.*
 - » *With your other arm, hold the ball close to your ear and raise your elbow.*
 - » *As you throw, drop your pointing arm and allow your shoulders and trunk to rotate.*

Practice: Target stations (10 minutes)

- Leader divides the children into four groups.
- Leader sets up the following practice stations:
 - » Pin Knock Down – Line up 4 cones with a lightweight ball balancing on each cone. Each child at the station has a ball for throwing. Using the knight stance, children take turns trying to knock the ball off the cones.
 - » Targets – Set up 4 different targets around the activity space (e.g. hoops hung on something, painted wall targets, poly spots, etc.). Each child at the station has a ball. Children try to hit the targets with their ball.
 - » Bucket Ball – Place different sized buckets or cardboard boxes around the station. Each child at the station has a ball. Children try to overhand throw their ball into the buckets.
 - » Hula Hoop Toss – Place 2 hula hoops in the centre of the activity space. Spread a number of poly spots around the hula hoops at various distances from hoops. Each child has 5 beanbags. Children stand on a poly spot and try to overhand throw their beanbags into the hoops.

TIPS FOR INSTRUCTION

- Stations should be set up in advance.
- Children should be careful not to walk in front of somebody throwing.
- Rotate stations every 2 minutes.

CUES

- *Stand sideways to the target*
- *Point to target (with non-throwing hand)*
- *Ball close to ear, elbow up (throwing arm)*
- *Rotate shoulders and trunk*

Game – Hoop elimination (10 minutes)

- Leader divides the activity space in half.
- Children spread out at one end of the activity space.
- Leader divides children into teams of 4 or 5 and assigns each team their own colour of hula hoops (e.g. group 1 – green hoops).
- Leader places several hoops around the other half of the activity space ensuring that there are equal numbers of hoops for each colour team.
- Leader places several beanbags in two hoops close to the children.
- Each team will work together to eliminate their colour of hoops.
- Children pick up one beanbag at a time and try to overhand throw the beanbag into their hoops according to a time limit or until all beanbags are gone.
- Children must throw from behind a centre line or from designated positions in the activity space (e.g. cones that are strategically placed).
- At the end of the round, remove any hoop that has a beanbag in it.
- Leader then asks children to collect all beanbags and return them to the hoops in the corners.
- First team to eliminate their hoops wins. **Wrap-up (1 - 2 minutes)**

TIPS FOR INSTRUCTION

- Leader should walk around and encourage children to use proper throwing technique.

Wrap-up (1 - 2 minutes)

Review what they learned today.

What are two things to remember when throwing overhand?

Session 3: Hopping

8 - 12 year olds

EQUIPMENT: Hula hoops, skipping ropes, bean bags, music source. If you don't have beanbags, you can use rolled-up socks or small stuffed animals! If you don't have hula hoops, you can use beach towels for this session.

Introduction (1 - 2 minutes)

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

Can you think of a sport or a game where you need to hop?

Warm-up: Mirror tag (5 minutes)

- Leader chooses one child to be "it".
- Children jog around activity space trying not to be tagged.
- *When you are tagged you must hop on the spot.*
- *To become free again, someone must come and mirror your hopping.*
- Encourage children to hop in different ways:
 - » *hop on right foot*
 - » *hop on left foot*
 - » *hop high*
 - » *hop low*
 - » *hop forward*
 - » *hop backward*

Demonstration: Hopping (5 minutes)

- Demonstrate different ways of hopping to children:
 - » Landing softly
 - » Landing hard (stomp)
 - » without using your arms
 - » using only one arm
 - » using both arms
 - » forwards
 - » backwards
 - » as high as you can
 - » with little low hops
 - » as far as you can

- » with your right foot
- » with your left foot
- *How do my arms move when I change the way I hop?*

Practice: Simon says (5 - 8 minutes)

- When the leader says “*Simon says...*”, children must imitate what the leader is doing.
- If the leader does not say “*Simon says...*” before a command, children should remain still.
- Once the leader has done several commands, they may choose different children to lead more rounds.
- Variations: “*Simon says...*”
 - » *Use same movements as demonstration.*
 - » *Hop side to side*
 - » *Hop in a circle*
 - » *Hop and twist*
 - » *Hop with your arms on your hips*
 - » *Hop with your arms on your head*
 - » *Hop with your arms on your shoulders*

TIPS FOR INSTRUCTION

- If a child moves when the leader does not say “*Simon says...*”, the child must run once around activity space, then return to game.
- This avoids elimination from the game.

CUES

- *Look forward*
- *Spring with leg on the ground*
- *Swing arms*
- *Soft touch down*

Game: Hopping relay (8 - 10 minutes)

- Teams line up at one end of the activity space with a hula hoop placed behind each team.
- Set up an obstacle course in front of each team using available equipment (e.g. hula hoops, skipping ropes, beach towels).
- At the far end of the obstacle course place numerous beanbags.
- Each child takes turns hopping through the course to grab one beanbag.
- Children then turn around and hop back through the course and place the beanbag inside the hoop behind their team.
- Once the beanbag is placed in the hoop, the next child in line goes.
- The team with the most beanbags in their hoop at the end of 2 minutes wins.

TIPS FOR INSTRUCTION

- Encourage the children to hop using both their left and right legs.
- Music can be used to start and stop the race.
- Children touching an obstacle while hopping must restart.

Wrap-up (1 - 2 minutes)

Review what they learned today.

When you hopped high or low, fast or slow, how did your arm movement change?

Session 4: Catching

8 - 12 year olds

EQUIPMENT: Hula hoops, skipping ropes, foam blocks, balls, cones, music source. If you don't have hula hoops, you can use beach towels.

Introduction (1 - 2 minutes)

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

Today we are going to practice how to catch.

Can you name a sport where you have to catch a ball or something else?

Warm-up: Obstacle course (5 - 8 minutes)

- Leader arranges a variety of equipment (e.g. ropes, hoops, foam blocks, bean bags) around activity space.
- Leader explains: When the music plays, you have to move around the activity space.
- When you come to the hoops, I want you to jump in and out with two feet. When you come to the foam blocks, I want you to hop over with one foot.
- For safety, remind children they should not step or jump on any of the equipment.
- Every 1-2 minutes, leader can suggest different locomotor skills (run, skip, gallop) to move around activity space.

Demonstration: Catching (2 - 3 minutes)

- Leader chooses one child to help demonstrate catching.
- Leader and helper stand 3-5 metres apart from each other and throw and catch a ball.
- While demonstrating, leader reminds the children:
 - » *Keep your eyes on the ball until it arrives in your hands.*
 - » *Get your body behind the ball (i.e. in front of its flight path).*
 - » *If you see the ball passing to one side, move your whole body to the side. Don't just reach your arms to the side.*
 - » *If the ball is arriving above your belly button, your palms face forward and your fingers point up, and your two thumbs point toward each other (triangle).*
 - » *If the ball is arriving below your belly button, your palms face forward and your fingers point down, and your two pinky fingers are close together (bowl).*
 - » *As you receive the ball with your hands, you should bend your arms and bring the ball in towards your body.*

Practice: Triangle toss and catch (5 - 8 minutes)

- Leader divides children into groups of three.
- Children spread out around activity space and form a triangle with their group.
- Each group has a ball.
- Children begin by tossing the ball clockwise and practice catching.
- Leader can suggest the following:
 - » *Change the direction (i.e. counterclockwise).*
 - » *Toss to either partner.*
 - » *Toss and catch below the waist.*
 - » *Toss and catch above the waist.*
 - » *Toss with your other hand.*
 - » *Take a step back to increase the distance between partners.*
 - » *Speed up the rate of passing (e.g. as soon as you catch the ball, toss it to a partner).*

TIPS FOR INSTRUCTION

- Time and practice is needed to develop the skill of catching.
- Praise children for what they are doing well.
- Remind children of the cues.

CUES

- *Eyes on ball*
- *Get “behind the ball”*
- *Hands together (triangle or bowl)*
- *Bring ball to body*

Game: Catch it (10 minutes)

- Leader pairs teams to play against each other.
- Using cones, leader marks a rectangular “zone” for each team measuring approximately 4x5 metres.
- Each team must stay in their own zone.
- Zones can be 5-10 metres apart depending on available space and skill levels.
- One team throws the ball to the other team’s zone in an attempt to hit the floor or ground in their opponent’s zone.
- If the ball hits the ground, the throwing team scores a point.
- If the receiving team catches the ball, they score a point.
- If the ball is thrown outside of the receiving team’s zone, the receiving team scores a point.
- To make the game more challenging, a second ball can be added.

CUES

- *Eyes on ball*
- *Get “behind the ball”*
- *Hands together (triangle or bowl)*
- *Bring ball to body*

Wrap-up (1 - 2 minutes)

Review what they learned today.

What do your hands look like when you catch below the belly button? Above the belly button?

Session 5: Kicking

8 - 12 year olds

EQUIPMENT: Soccer balls (preferably size 4) or playground bouncy balls with low inflation.

Introduction (1 - 2 minutes)

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

Can you name any sports or games where you kick a ball?

Demonstration 1: Basic instep kick (2 minutes)

- All children stand up in their own space with their own ball while you demonstrate a basic instep kick.
- Children rehearse movements without the ball at first.
- Explain that to kick a ball well (power and accuracy) kicker needs to start at least one step behind the ball.
- Step forward with non-kicking foot and plant it 10-15 cm beside the ball.
- Swing kicking leg towards the ball, toe pointed down, and make contact with laces (i.e. instep), not the toe.
- Follow through with kicking leg so that it swings across the front of the body.
- Power comes by making quality contact with middle of the ball and staying balanced on the non-kicking leg.
- Arms should be raised slightly like “airplane wings” to provide balance.

Demonstration 2: Basic receiving (2 minutes)

- Explain that a ball can be received with different parts of the body (foot, thigh, chest).
- In this lesson, the children will practice receiving with the inside of the foot.
- *Put yourself in the path of the ball when receiving.*
- *Turn your foot sideways like a “hockey stick” and gently cushion the ball as it arrives.*
- *Your receiving foot should be off the ground, and relaxed like a “wet noodle”.*
- With practice, after their cushion touch, the ball should land one step in front of them so it is ready for them to kick it again.

Practice: Kicking and receiving with a partner (10 minutes)

- Explain that a ball can be received with different parts of the body (foot, thigh, chest).
- Partners kick and receive one ball back and forth over 10-15 metres.
- Make sure all pairs are kicking in the same direction across the gym.
- Leader circulates and provides feedback.

CUES FOR KICKING

- *Step forward to plant*
- *Use your laces*
- *Follow through*
- *Airplane wings up*

CUES FOR RECEIVING

- *Stand in ball's path*
- *Inside foot*
- *Cushion impact with "wet noodle" foot*

Game: Numbers game soccer (10 minutes)

- Leader uses cones to outline a large rectangular activity space.
- Leader divides children into 2 teams and numbers the children 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, etc.
- Teams spread out on two opposite sides of the activity space.
- A soccer goal is set up at one end of the activity space between the 2 teams. (Neither team is along the side where the goal is).
- The soccer goal can be marked with cones or beanbags.
- Leader stands near the goal with a few balls.
- Leader shouts a number out and throws a ball into the middle of the playing area.
- Players with that number compete for the ball and try to dribble and shoot the ball into the goal.
- Play stops after a shot is taken, or after the ball travels out of bounds.
- Children then return to their side and another number is called out.
- Leader starts by calling one number at a time, and then progresses to calling 2 or 3 numbers to compete for the ball.
- Leader can also throw 2 or 3 balls into the playing area.

TIPS FOR INSTRUCTION

- Good kicking requires many elements of technique.
- At this level, simply ensure that children plant their non-kicking foot next to the ball and contact the ball with their laces (instep).

CUES

- *Eyes on ball*
- *Get "behind the ball"*
- *Hands together (triangle or bowl)*
- *Bring ball to body*

Wrap-up (1 - 2 minutes)

Review what they learned today.

What are the key elements of a good instep kick in soccer?

What are the key elements of good receiving with the foot?