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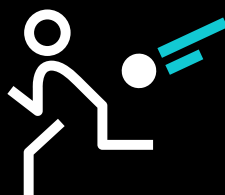
NATIONAL SCHOOL

SPORTS WEEK 2026

6-12 JULY

= summer  
= of sport

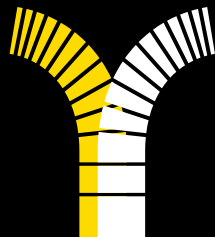
# Retro playground *games circuit*



Find out more:

[youthsporttrust.org/NSSW](https://youthsporttrust.org/NSSW)

#NSSW2026 | #ThisSummerOfSport





# Retro playground *games circuit*

Welcome to the **Retro Playground Games Circuit**, the third of our 'This Summer of Sport 2026' playground to podium activations. To celebrate National School Sports Week (NSSW) and the upcoming summer of sport, we have created 4 themed circuits, each made up of exciting activities for pupils to try in the lead up to and during NSSW!

Developed to support young people participating in 60 minutes a day of P.E, sport or play, these games are designed for all abilities aged 4-12 years old (20 minutes for pupils with a disability) and include progressions, regressions, alternatives and additional leadership opportunities.

## STEP

Making sure your sessions are inclusive and safe is critical to success. Use the STEP model when setting up your activities:

### Space

Where is it happening?

### Task

How it is happening?

### Equipment

What is being used?

### People

Who is doing what?





# Retro playground *games circuit*

## Format

Circuit of retro playground games themed activity stations (10 in total)

- 01** Hopscotch hustle
- 02** Reaction ball wallsie
- 03** Target strike
- 04** Rapid fire hot potato
- 05** Bulldog dash
- 06** Piggy in the middle
- 07** Skip the rhyme
- 08** Reaction tag
- 09** Head, shoulders, knees, toes, cone
- 10** Os and xs

## Equipment

- 1** Agility ladder
- 10** Tennis balls
- 10** Skipping ropes
- 3** Dodgeballs
- 3** Reaction balls
- 60** Mini-space markers

## Setup

- Up to 10 activity stations in a layout that fits your space
  - Place one activity card at each station in a clear order so pupils can move around easily
  - You can reduce the number of stations if time is limited
  - Ask sports leaders to help set up the circuit
  - Place adaptive equipment at each station ready for use when needed
- 



# Retro playground *games circuit*

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## Session overview

- > **Age range:** adaptable (KS2–KS3 ideal)
- > **Time:** 60 minutes
- > **Participants:** 30 pupils
- > **Format:** 10 stations, 3 pupils per station
- > **Rotation time:** 3 minutes per activity + 1 minute to rotate
- > **Warm-Up:** 10 minutes
- > **Total circuit time:** 40 minutes
- > **Warm-Down and Reflections:** 10 minutes
- > **Teacher role:** Timekeeper, motivator, safety checker

## Think inclusion

- > Adapt group sizes as needed
- > Give more time for activity
- > Allow processing time
- > Use inclusive communication throughout
- > Complete a sensory audit, think light, sound, smell, texture and tactile environment
- > Have a regulation zone to help those who need sensory re-regulation
- > Ask participants what adaptations they would make to be included

[Click here or scan QR code  
to find more ideas](#)





# Session *structure*



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## Warm-up: playground parade (10 minutes)

Whole class, no equipment initially

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### Activity

Encourage the whole class to move around the space performing actions to prepare them for their retro games. The teacher calls out different actions to perform:

- > Walk/run
- > Jog/high knees
- > Jump/skip
- > Catch/react and change direction

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### STEP adaptations

- > **Space:** Use a smaller, accessible space with clear or tactile markers to support movement and understanding
  - > **Task:** Choose simple warm-up activities that suit everyone, such as wheelchair pushes, tapping knees, stretching, or stamping feet
  - > **Equipment:** Use familiar equipment and larger objects that are easier to catch
  - > **People:** Pair participants to support each other and listen to their ideas on how to adapt the activity
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# Session *structure*



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## Skills

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Core movements to raise the heart rate and deliver key teaching points en masse

- > Run
- > Jump/Skip
- > Catch
- > Dodge
- > React

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## Teaching points

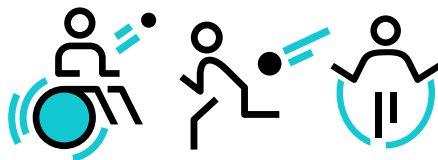
Use the following teaching points during the warm up

- > **Run:** Light feet, stay balanced
  - > **Jump/Skip:** Land softly with bent knees
  - > **Catch:** hands together, spread your fingers
  - > **Dodge:** Plan ahead, change direction fast
  - > **React:** Watch and move quickly
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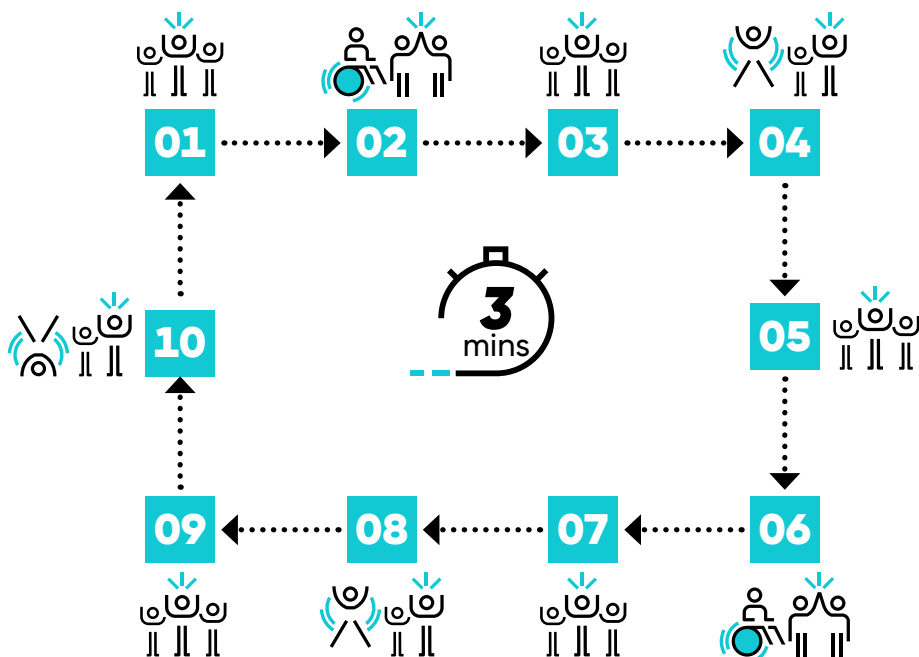
# Main circuit

## *retro zones*



## Organisation

- > **10** zones/games
- > **3** pupils per zone
- > **3** minutes per zone (2 minutes per transition)
- > Rotate clockwise
- > Use **space markers** and **activity cards** to clearly mark each zone.



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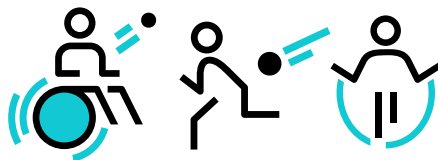
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# Activity 1

## Hopscotch hustle



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**Equipment:** 1 agility ladder

### Activity

Pupils continuously move through ladders one after another in hopscotch patterns

- Round 1: Two-foot jumps
- Round 2: Single-foot hops
- Round 3: Forward/backwards hopping

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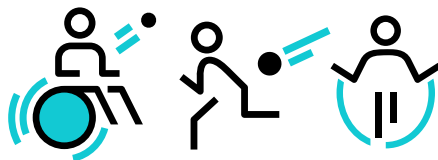
### STEP adaptations

- **Space:** Shorten the ladder or use wider gaps to make movement easier
  - **Task:** Replace the ladder with a simple course or guide to follow and adapt movements so jumping or hopping isn't needed
  - **Equipment:** Use floor spots or cones to mark out the course
  - **People:** Pair players for support, use guides if needed and run parallel activities where helpful
- 



## Activity 2

### Reaction ball wallsie



**Equipment:** 1 reaction ball

#### Activity

Pupils number themselves 1, 2 and 3. They take turns throwing the reaction ball against the wall whilst the other two players react quickly to catch the ball:

- Pupil 1 throws, 2 and 3 catch
- Pupil 2 throws, 1 and 3 catch
- Pupil 3 throws, 1 and 2 catch

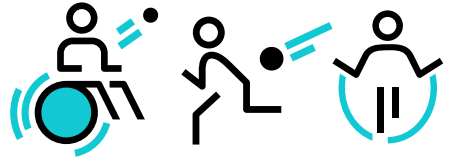
#### STEP adaptations

- **Space:** Let players stand closer or further from the wall using different zones to suit ability
- **Task:** Allow the ball to bounce or roll, use the whole body instead of hands if needed or play seated if helpful
- **Equipment:** Use different ball sizes or a more predictable ball or a tee to hit from. Choose balls that make a sound for easier tracking
- **People:** Work in teams or pairs and ask players what changes would help them feel included



## Activity 3

### Target strike



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**Equipment:** 1 dodgeball + 5 tennis balls

#### Activity

Place 5 tennis balls on cones in a row (3 steps between each)

- Each player has 5 throws to knock as many tennis balls off as they can.
- The other 2 players collect Dodgeball and reset tennis balls

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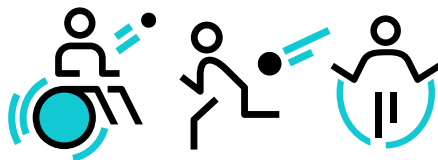
#### STEP adaptations

- **Space:** Move the throwing line closer or use different lines for different abilities and group targets together
  - **Task:** Allow rolling instead of throwing, use larger targets and add sound cues to help with tracking
  - **Equipment:** Use bigger balls, ramps if needed or targets that make a sound when hit
  - **People:** Pair players to support each other e.g. allow partners to help collect balls
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## Activity 4

### *Rapid fire hot potato*



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**Equipment:** 4 tennis balls

#### **Activity**

Players stand in a triangle, 10 metres apart from each other

- Pupil 1 starts with 4 tennis balls
- The aim is to pass all 4 tennis balls around the triangle as quickly as possible with a minimal amount of dropped balls
- All three players must throw and catch every ball.
- Pupils try to beat their score (reduce time and number of dropped balls)

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#### **STEP adaptations**

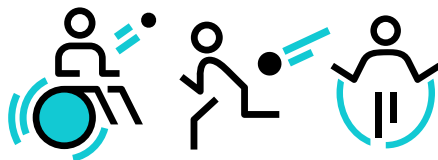
- **Space:** Bring players closer together to make it easier.
  - **Task:** Use fewer balls, encourage simpler passes, slow the game down and allow bounces or seated play if needed
  - **Equipment:** Use bigger, softer, or more tactile balls. Add ramps or sound-making balls where helpful and consider clear colours and shapes
  - **People:** Let different abilities play alongside each other, work in pairs and adapt so everyone can take part without feeling under pressure
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## Activity 5

### *Bulldog dash*



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**Equipment:** 2 dodgeballs

#### **Activity**

Set up an alley with cones

- One pupil has to move through the alley without getting 'tagged' by a dodgeball.
- The other two pupils try to tag them using dodgeballs
- Pupil continues to run from one end to the other until they get tagged.
- Once they get tagged they swap over with a tagger

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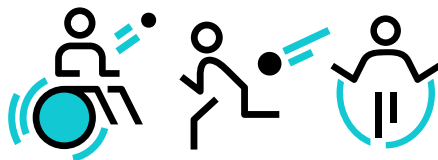
#### **STEP adaptations**

- **Space:** Move throwers further back to give more time and adjust lane width to suit different abilities
  - **Task:** Allow walking or pushing instead of running, add safe zones or use blindfolds for extra challenge
  - **Equipment:** Use soft or appropriately sized balls and allow ramps if helpful
  - **People:** Let players choose adaptations and involve the group in making changes fair for everyone
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## Activity 6

### *Piggy in the middle*



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**Equipment:** 1 tennis ball

#### **Activity**

Set up in a 'piggy-in the-middle' format

- > Two outside players continuously pass the ball to each other
- > The middle player has to try and intercept the ball
- > The middle player switches with the player who threw the ball if they intercept the ball or the ball hits the floor

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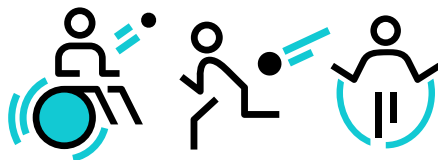
#### **STEP adaptations**

- > **Space:** Adjust the size of the area to suit ability and use zones if helpful
  - > **Task:** Allow rolling or throwing, adapt rules, add safe zones, give extra time or use the non-dominant hand for challenge
  - > **Equipment:** Use larger or sound-making balls, ramps or tactile markers to support movement
  - > **People:** Work in pairs if needed, make sure no one is out too quickly and give time to listen and adapt
- 



# Activity 7

## *Skip the rhyme*



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**Equipment:** 2 skipping ropes

### **Activity**

1 pupil sings a playground rhyme (or their favourite song) whilst the other two pupils skip to it

- > Pupils skip continuously
- > Pupils take turns singing on rotation

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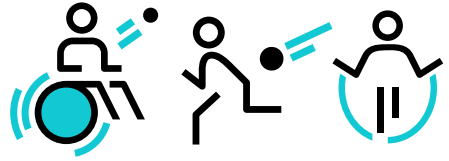
### **STEP adaptations**

- > **Space:** Skip on the spot and adjust the space as needed
  - > **Task:** Change skipping to another movement e.g. step over, move feet while seated, kick objects or shadow skip without a rope
  - > **Equipment:** Use floor markers or other equipment to copy the skipping action e.g. cones to kick
  - > **People:** Allow different actions if some are not comfortable, pair players for support and ask what adaptations would help
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## Activity 8

### Reaction tag



**Equipment:** 1 reaction ball

#### Activity

Pupils stand in a triangle, 3 metres apart

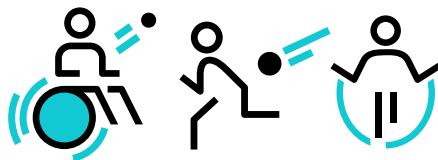
- > One drops the reaction ball.
- > Whoever catches it becomes the tagger and tries to lightly tag another player as quickly as possible
- > Rotate dropper.
- > Game is continuous

#### STEP adaptations

- > **Space:** Adjust the size of the area or use zones for different players
- > **Task:** Replace tagging with simpler actions like catching or holding the ball, allow bounces or roll instead of throw
- > **Equipment:** Use different balls, a tee to hit from or sound-making balls
- > **People:** Change group size as needed and pair players so one can guide or support the other

## Activity 9

### Head, shoulders knees, toes, cone



**Equipment:** 1 cone

#### Activity

Two pupils stand opposite each other with a cone on the floor between them and the other pupil is the games master

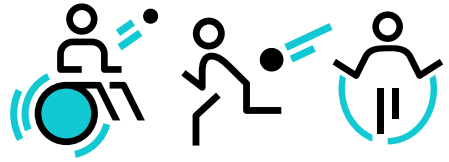
- Games master calls out body parts (head, shoulders, knees, toes etc)
- Pupils have to touch those body parts as quickly as they can
- When the games master calls 'cone' it's a race between the pupils to react and grab the cone
- Rotate games master after each round

#### STEP adaptations

- **Space:** Adjust the area to suit ability, with different zones for different players
- **Task:** Knock over cones instead of grabbing them, add more targets and use simple movements (e.g. stretch or clap) instead of body part calls
- **Equipment:** Use larger or easy-to-knock objects and choose bright or sound-making equipment
- **People:** Demonstrate actions instead of calling them out and let players work together and take turns

# Activity 10

## *Os and Xs*



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**Equipment:** 14 cones, 4 skipping ropes

### **Activity**

Lay out a noughts and crosses grid using 4 skipping ropes and a start point, for each pupil, 10 metres away

- 2 Pupils play against each other and the other acts as a referee
- Each pupil has 6 cones of the same colour (i.e 6 red and 6 blue)
- Pupils can only carry one cone at a time
- They race from the start point to the grid and claim a square with their cone
- They travel back, collect another cone and repeat
- The aim is to get three of your colour in a row to win
- If all squares are filled but there is not three in a row no-one wins
- Rotate referee after each game

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### **STEP adaptations**

- **Space:** Adjust distances and grid size to suit ability
  - **Task:** Allow objects to be dropped instead of placed or use cones to knock over instead of a grid
  - **Equipment:** Use larger or smaller objects and ensure clear, visible markers are used
  - **People:** Assign roles like a guide or clapper and give simple, clear tasks to support understanding
-