

Quadrupedal

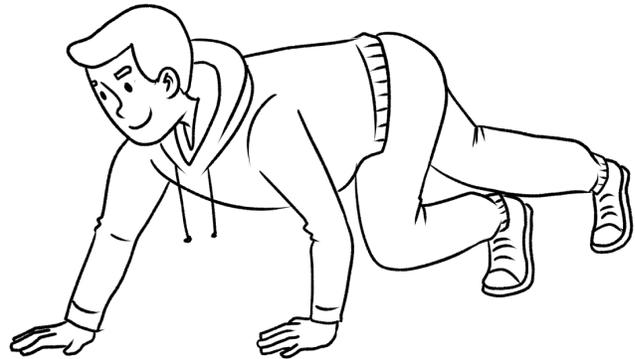
Application

Most skills in parkour involve using full body movements where both arms and legs share the load. It is therefore important that students train these both equally. Quadrupedal (four limb) movements are very common in parkour training and are great for building strength and endurance.

Focus Points

1. Arms and legs move in opposition.

To retain balance, when the left arm moves forward, the right leg moves forward. Have students experiment with different movement patterns so they can begin to feel and understand how their body balances.



2. Eyes look in the direction of travel.

Once students find their coordination between limbs, encourage them to look ahead to hold good body position and be aware of the surrounding environment. When doing a backwards quadrupedal, students can look down between their legs and feet. Keeping the head central helps retain balance.

3. Straight back.

Encourage a straight back for protection and to build core strength. Use terms such as “flat like a table” to help with visualisation. You can have students test their body position by having them balance an object like a small beanbag or ball on their back as they move.

4. Move with control.

As this is primarily a strength building skill, moving too quickly can be detrimental. Encourage students to work on controlled, symmetrical movement. You can even have them hold their position to help build endurance.

Teaching Tips

- ★ To extend this skill, have students perform the quadrupedal movement along a line so that they have a narrow base. From here you can then begin to quadrupedal along a low ledge or railing to really test their balance!
- ★ Use a variety of different quadrupedal movements. For example: backwards quadrupedal, inverted quadrupedal (crab walk), Caterpillar walk (step straight arms out into a plank position, then step straight legs into a bent position and repeat), Sideways quadrupedal (monkey walk).

- ★ Remember that parkour philosophy involves support and camaraderie among fellow trainees. Train this skill as a group and if someone reaches their goal, they can walk back and rejoin the group in a quadrupedal movement. This provides extra training for those that can handle it and some extra motivation for those who need help across the line.

Activity Suggestions

Team Relay

Students wait in line in a squat position, balancing on the balls of their feet to develop strength and balance. When they reach the front of the line, they quadrupedal to a designated position and back again, returning to the squat position. All students may sit and rest when their group has completed the challenge. Alternatives to this are to change quadrupedal type (backwards, sideways, inverted).

Crab Soccer

Students move in an inverted quadrupedal (crab walk), to pass a ball by foot and attempt to kick the ball into the goal or target. This game works best as a small-sided game so play on a small court with 2 vs. 2 or 3 vs. 3. Make this game easier by allowing students to rest on their bottom when not moving. Make it more challenging by using a small target, such as a cone, as the goal.

Egg Hunt

Have students begin outside the court or playing space. In the middle of the playing space, spread out a large number of cones or domes. Hide small beanbags (eggs) under most of the cones (rocks). On "GO", students quadrupedal into the court and turn over cones until they find an egg. They then place the egg on their back and balance it as they quadrupedal back out of the court. They repeat this and begin to build a stockpile of eggs until none are left. You can make this game easier by pairing students up so that one can rest while the other is hunting.

Spider Web Snatch

Similar to the game of "Rob the nest", students are arranged in small groups around the border of the playing space. Each group has a hoop in which to collect their "insects". To begin the game, spread the "insects" (eg. small beanbags or rubber chickens) throughout the middle of the court (the "web"). On "GO", all students quadrupedal ("spiderwalk") out to collect an insect, place it on their back and return it to their hoop. The entire group is allowed to move at the same time. When there are no insects left in the web, students can move to another group and steal insects from their hoop. The game continues for a set period of time.

Tunnel Crawler

Students stand with their palms on the ground in front of them and their backs arched high, so as to make a bridge with their body. A group of students do this in a line in order to make a tunnel. The last student in line then quadrupedals through the tunnel and joins the front of the line. Do this until all students have passed through the tunnel.