

# Run

## Application

Running is the most used skill in Parkour. Refining this skill will not only have the greatest benefit to increasing speed through the environment but also increase longevity in the body.

## Focus Points

### 1. Running on the balls of the feet.

Parkour is usually performed over short distances so a fast, agile technique is required. Students need to be landing on and pushing off the front part of their foot. Parkour is most often performed in urban environments so landing repeatedly on the heels on hard surfaces sends a jarring force through the joints. Landing on the balls of the feet helps to absorb this.

### 2. Light on feet.

To enhance agility and longevity, encourage students to be light on their feet. Focus on bending knees on impact and use a rolling motion on front part of foot.

### 3. Spot your landing point.

Eyes need to spot the ground on which the feet will tread to check and adjust for small or uneven surfaces. They also need to look ahead for upcoming obstacles. As a guide, encourage students to glance ahead for 50% of the time, and down at their next steps for 50% of the time.

### 4. Push off to change direction.

When changing direction, again use the balls of the outside foot to absorb force, allow the knee to bend, then push hard in the opposite direction to alter the direction of travel. Again, eyes need to glance between the surface and the new direction in which the body will travel.



## Teaching Tips

- ★ Allow students to experiment with different techniques in order for them to begin to understand their body. Stand in a circle and have students bounce up and down on their toes. Then bounce on the balls of the feet, then the soles of the feet and finally on their heels. Ask which method felt best and which felt worst. Ask which words they could use to describe the different techniques. Relate this conversation to running technique and why it is best to run the balls of the feet.

- ★ You can tell how lightly students are running by the noise that their feet make. Have students listen to each other run with the aim of becoming completely silent!
- ★ Use coloured markers or lines on the ground and have students run to touch each one with their foot. Once touching they must change direction, looking ahead to avoid clashing with another student or obstacle.
- ★ When running or moving between activities, move along a variety of surfaces (For example, tanbark, asphalt, metal, wood, dry and wet surfaces). Discuss with students how their technique needs to adjust for different surfaces.

## Activity Suggestions

### Follow the Leader

Assign a student as the leader to run through the teaching space, ducking, weaving and changing direction. The rest of the group follows in single file. Every 30 seconds, the leader drops off to the back of the line and a new leader controls the direction.

### Agility Course

Set up a circuit which has students weaving in and out of poles and performing quick steps in small or uneven spaces. You may choose to use agility poles for weaving and a skill step ladder for quick steps. Even better, use the natural surroundings as obstacles.

### Cat and Mouse

Pair students up then have them stand on opposite sides of a line. All the students to one side of the line are cats and all students on the other side are mice. When the teacher calls "cat!", the cat chases and attempts to tag their partner. When the teacher calls "mouse!", the students turn around and the mouse chases and attempts to tag their partner.

### Doggy Doggy who's got the bone?

Students sit in a large circle with one student, the "doggy", kneeling face down in the middle with their eyes closed. Place an object, the "bone" in front of them. The teacher points to a student who then has 10 seconds to run in quietly, steal the bone and return to their place in the circle with the bone behind their back. While this happens, the rest of the circle slowly chants "10,9,8,7,6,5,4,3,2,1, Doggy Doggy Who's got the bone? Someone stole it from your home. Wake up doggy, wake up now!". The doggy can then open their eyes and has 3 guesses as to who stole it. Emphasise quiet, soft running for students to be successful at this game.

### Bang, Bang

One student sits in the middle of the playing space wearing a blindfold. Scatter small beanbags all around the area. The rest of the group sneaks around collecting beanbags, trying to collect as many as possible. If the blindfolded player hears someone, they point in their direction and call "bang, bang!". That player must then drop all their beanbags before moving on.