




Youth Athlete Training

Teaching Coaches. Guiding Parents. Molding Athletes

F.A.S.T. Speed & Agility Games



Enjoy these games... my athletes always have.
Yours in strength, speed and athleticism,
Steve Preston - Sports Performance Specialist



Steve Preston is a Sports Performance Specialist and PE Teacher in Virginia Beach, VA.

He has trained, taught and coached over 10,000 athletes and students for over 25 years. His athletes have ranged from 6 years old to the NFL. He is a life-long student of strength and conditioning and was a National Runner Up in Powerlifting and set a Junior World Record in the Bench Press.

His mission is to help 50,000 youth athletes, coaches and parents in the next 5 years discover appropriate training systems to improve strength, speed and conditioning for all sports, while building mental strength, character and integrity.



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Introduction

One thing is for sure...

Kids learn through play much better than repetitive skills and boring drills.

If you want a young athlete to enjoy sports while getting really good at them you have to make it fun.

Games are a great way to reinforce some of the athletic skills you are trying to have them master.

You can have your young athletes finish off practices and workouts with games. This gives them incentive because they love the fun that they get to look forward to. You as the coach, parent or trainer get the benefit of increasing their skills, strength, power, balance, cardio and more...

Sometimes equipment is lacking and makes games difficult. If you have a large team that you're working with, this is especially true.

I've included 10 simple games that don't require much equipment and can really help your athletes with all aspects of sports-fitness.

They can be done with an entire team without a lot of sitting around and waiting.

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Crazy Cones

Equipment Required:

20-30 small cones

Space Required:

Gym or equivalent space on field

Benefit:

Cardio-respiratory fitness, change of direction skills, change of level skills

Directions:

Scatter all of the cones on the field or gym floor. Some will be standing upright, some will be on their side. Split athletes into two teams. One team will be picking setting the cones upright. The other team will be turning the cones on their sides.

On the signal “go” the athletes run in random directions trying to get the cones upright or on their side for the allotted time. The goal is to have the most cones turned when time is called.

After a brief rest, repeat but have the athletes switch roles in regard to turning the cones or setting them upright.

1 Leg Tag

Equipment Required:

None or pool noodles

Space Required:

Gym or equivalent space on field

Benefit:

Leg Strength, Hip Stability, Cardiorespiratory Fitness, Balance

Directions:

Depending on how many athletes you have, choose 1-3 to be taggers and the rest are “it”. Every athlete has to hop on one leg the entire time. Taggers and “its” have to stay on one leg while moving at least 10 times before switching legs. The taggers will use either their hand to tag or a pool noodle.

On “go” the taggers chase the “its”. When an athlete is tagged they must walk to the side of the playing area, and perform either 5 jumping jacks or 10 side to side hops before immediately returning to the game.

Have a round go live for 2 minutes. Stop the game. Choose new taggers and repeat.

Pony Express

Equipment Required:

4 cones, 2 pool noodles

Space Required:

Gym or equivalent space outside

Benefit:

Linear Speed Training

Directions:

Split group of athletes into 2 teams. Set up a cone at each corner of the gym or field so that you've created a big box.

Have one team in a single file line behind one of the cones. Have the other team for a single file line behind the cone that is diagonal to the first cone. (If you were standing in front of the cones, one team would be on the front left cone, and the other team behind the back right cone.)

The first athlete in each line will hold the pool noodle. On the signal "go" they take off running around the cones in the same direction (either both run clockwise or both run counter-clockwise). Each person runs one full time around the playing area, going around each cone and returning to their line where they pass the noodle to the next person. The next person immediately takes off running. The goal is to eventually catch up and tag the person on the opposing team. At that point, play is stopped and the winning team gets a point. Immediately continue play with next two people in line.

Pushup Hockey

Equipment Required:

Bean bags

Space Required:

Gym or smooth floor

Benefit:

Upper body muscular strength, core strength.
scapular/shoulder stabilization

Directions:

Athletes will pair off in groups of 2. Each pair of athletes gets one bean bag. Athletes start by facing their partner in a pushup position. They should be around 2 feet away from each other.

One of the athletes begins by trying to slide the bean bag towards their opponent so that it goes through their hands (which are holding a pushup position). The other player tries to block the bean bag from passing through their hands. That player then reverses the process and tries to slide bean bag through their partner's goal. (think of Air Hockey)

Each successful goal is one point. Encourage athletes to remain in pushup position and stay off their knees during this activity. They can rest in between rounds, but when they start they must hold a good pushup position with a flat back.



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Jump the River

Equipment Required:

Folding Mats, 2 jump ropes

Space Required:

Gym or equivalent outdoor field

Benefit:

Hip stability, plyometric strength

Directions:

Unfold mats and lay end to end to create a long path. Place one jump rope across the mat about 2 feet from the end. Place the other jump rope horizontally to the first jump rope, about 2 feet away.

Athletes will form a line at one end of the mat. One at a time, they will run towards the mat and leap across the jump ropes, being sure not to step inside the two jump ropes. (I like to tell them that the river is in between the jump ropes and it's filled with snakes, alligators, sharks... and whatever I can think of at the time).

After a successful jump the athletes go to the end of the line. After all of the athletes have jumped over the river, you widen the river by one foot. This is done by simple moving the second jump rope further from the first jump rope by one foot.

This process continues until you have challenged the athletes with a wide river.

4 Corners

Equipment Required:

4 Cones, Index cards or paper

Space Required:

Gym or equivalent space on field

Benefit:

Accentuate different athletic movement patterns

Directions:

Place a cone at each corner of the gym or field. Write down different locomotive skills on a bunch of different index cards or paper:

- Jogging
- Hopping
- Side Shuffle
- Walking
- Skipping
- Galloping
- Karioka

You can create your own movements as well.

Have someone stand at each corner with a card or tape them to the cones. The athletes will perform whatever is on the card until they get to the next cone and card. If you have a person at each cone they can switch cards/ movements each time the athletes come around to them... in order to mix it up and keep it interesting.

2 Person Tug of War

Equipment Required:

None

Space Required:

Limitless

Benefit:

Core strength, Balance, Hip Stabilization

Directions:

Have athletes pair up with a partner. Each pair will find their own space so as not to bump into anyone else.

Each pair will grab hands as you would when shaking someone's hand. They will then stand on one leg with hands grasped.

The object is to knock the other person off balance. There is a lot of pushing and pulling in order to accomplish this.

Once a person has been knocked off balance and places the raised leg back on the floor that round is over. Simply repeat or have them switch partners after a few rounds.

Grab the Apple

Equipment Required:

Bean bags, music

Space Required:

Any space will do

Benefit:

Teaches reaction time, core strength, upper body strength

Directions:

Have athletes pair up. Each pair will sit on floor with legs Indian style, facing their partner with about 1 foot in between them.

Place the bean bag between the two partners. Partners begin with hands on knees. The music begins to play. Stop the music at a random time. As soon as the music stops each person tries to be the first one to grab the apple (bean bag). Each successful grab is a point for the winner.

After a few rounds, have them place one hand behind the back and repeat.

After a few more rounds, have them perform while in a pushup position.



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Bridges and Tunnels

Equipment Required:

None

Space Required:

Gym or equivalent field space

Benefit:

Core Strength, Upper Body Strength

Directions:

Split your athletes into two groups. One group will start as 'Bridges and Tunnels'. The other group will start as "travelers".

Have the Bridges and Tunnels group begin either as a

Bridge: In a crabwalk position.

Tunnel: On hands and feet "downward dog" position.

On the signal, the "travelers" head towards the Bridges and Tunnels. When they come to a bridge they step over the bridge. The bridge then flips over and becomes a tunnel. When they come to a tunnel they crawl underneath and out the other side. That tunnel then flips over and becomes a bridge.

Continue the flip-flop of tunnels and bridges for a few minutes. Then have athletes switch roles, so taggers becomes bridges/tunnels and vice-versa.

Football Follies

Equipment Required:

Many soft-type footballs or round balls, 2 rubber bands or pieces of string.

Space Required:

Gymnasium with 2 opposing basketball hoops

Benefit:

Cardio-respiratory fitness, change of levels, throwing accuracy

Directions:

Begin by tying off the end of each basketball net with a rubber band or string so that the end is closed off.

Separate athletes into 2 teams. Each team is in open space on their half of the gym. Spread out a lot of soft-type balls (of different shapes and sizes if possible) on each side of the gym.

On the signal “go” the athletes will throw the balls at the other teams basket. The first team to sink a ball into the other team’s basket wins a point.

Continue as long as desired. Challenge athletes by having them throw with their non-dominant throwing arm.