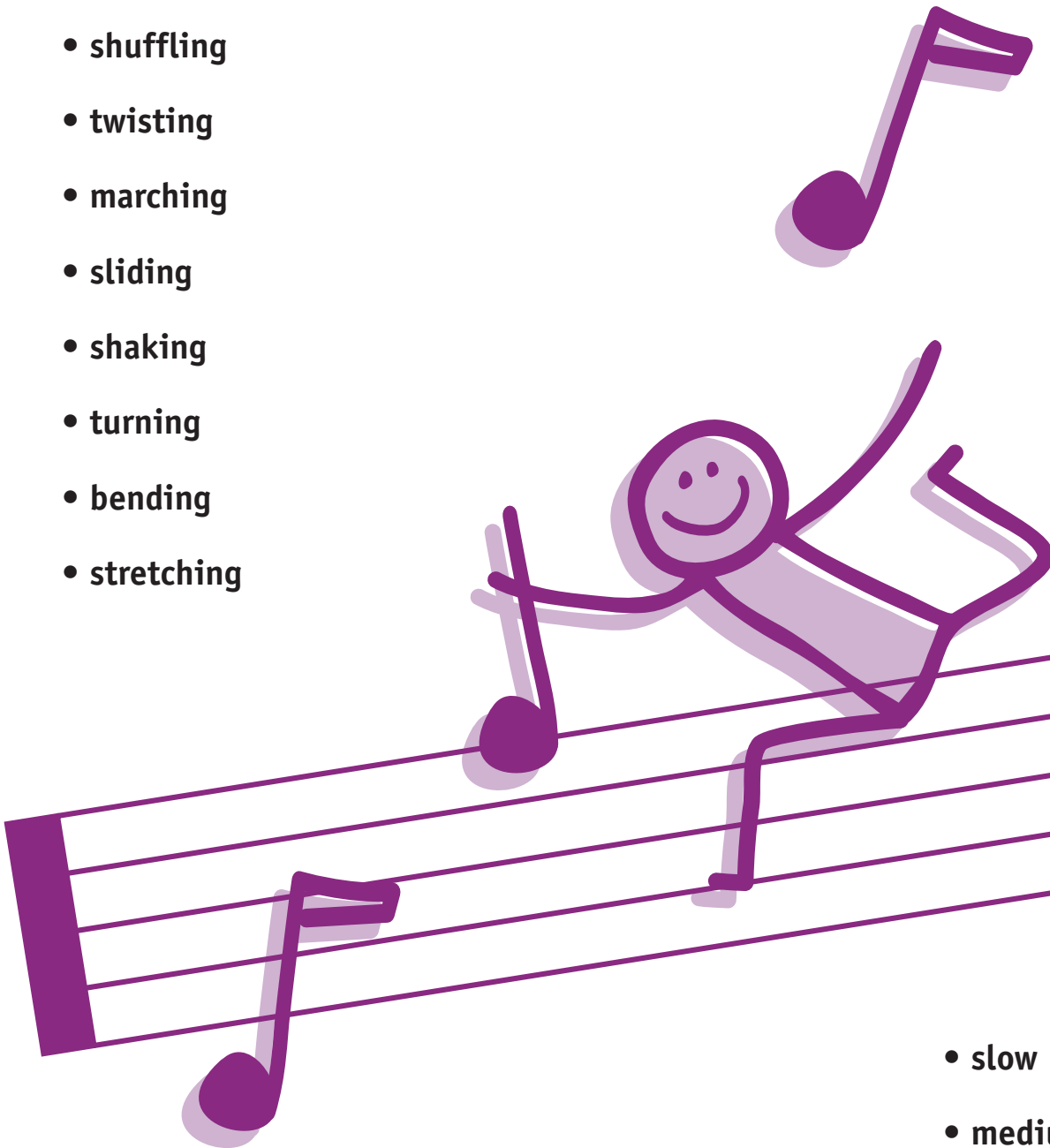


RHYTHMIC MOVEMENT & BALANCE

- dancing
- shuffling
- twisting
- marching
- sliding
- shaking
- turning
- bending
- stretching



- slow
- medium
- fast

READY, SET, DANCE!

Check out these books at your local library.

Barn Dance

by Bill Martin Jr. and John Archambault

Animal Boogie

by George Shannon

Barnyard Dance

by Sandra Boynton

My Daddy is a Pretzel

by Baron Baptiste

Baby Danced the Polka

by Karen Beaumont and Jennifer Plecas

Clorinda

by Robert Kinerk

Zin! Zin! Zin a Violin

by Lloyd Moss

Three Cheers for Tacky

by Helen Lester

My Mama had a Dancing Heart

by Libba Moore Gray

Hilda Must be Dancing

by Karma Wilson and Suzanne Watts

Freeze Dancing

2 or more players

What you need: Music

How to: Put on some music or make your own, and let your child dance. Explain to your child that when you stop the music, everyone freezes. Start dancing when the music comes on again. If you have a portable tape player or radio, play outside.

Moving to Music

There are a variety of cassette tapes and CD's just for children, and many have traditional songs that have movements to go with them. You can teach your child the traditional movements if you know them, or you and your child can make up your own. For example:

"Skip to My Lou"

Show your child how to skip around, pretend to fly for "Flies in the buttermilk...", etc.

"Ring-Around-the-Rosy"

Join hands with your child, circle around, and then fall down.

"Ten in the Bed"

Show your child how to roll on the ground or floor for "Roll over, roll over."

"Wheels on the Bus"

Show your child how to circle his arms for the wheels going around; jump up and down for the people going up and down; move her arms back and forth for the wipers going swish; walk or run backwards to move on back, etc.

"Head, Shoulders, Knees & Toes"

Have your child touch his head, shoulders, knees, toes, etc. whenever he hears those words. Let him follow your movements if he needs help.

"The Ants Go Marching"

Have your child march around. Create movements to go along with the words that your child can follow — pretend to climb a tree, pick up sticks, etc. Have your child stomp her feet for "Boom, Boom, Boom,..."

Tight Ropes

1 or more players

What you need: Sidewalk chalk or masking tape

How to: Make a straight line with chalk on a safe sidewalk or driveway or in the dirt using a stick. Have your child walk along the line, as if he is on a tight rope or balance beam. Let him try walking forwards, backwards and sideways along the tight rope, or hop on and off. Inside, make a line using masking tape on the floor.

Variation: “Balance Trail” — Instead of a straight line, make a trail or path with some twists, turns and corners. Draw brooks to cross, logs to jump on and so on. Have your child follow the winding path.

Hula Twist

1 or more players

What you need: Large plastic hoop for each player (to make your own, see “Toys that Encourage Physical Play,” page 16)

How to: Let your child spin the hoop around her waist — try it fast, try it slow. Try it high, try it low! Try it to music! Try it in the yard, in the house!

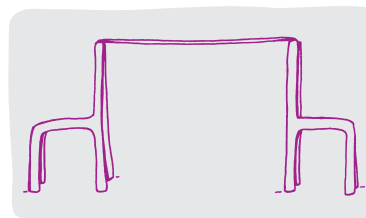
Limbo

1 or more players

What you need: 2 chairs, masking tape or string

How to: Make a limbo “pole” by placing 2 chairs about 4 feet apart, back-to-back, and attaching tape or string across the top of each chair. Have your child pass underneath the pole, doing the “limbo.” Lower the tape or string for each round.

Variation: If you have 3 or more people playing, you can also use a jump rope, having 2 people hold the ends while the other person passes under the rope. Children can listen to music and dance while they play.



Mirror Me

2 or more players, best with an even number of people

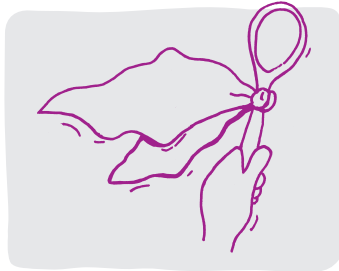
How to: Face one another. As one person moves, the other person does the same, as if they are a mirror image.

Marching Band

1 or more players

What you need: Containers with lids, dried beans, spoons, pots and pans, rubber bands

How to: Make some instruments using dried beans in a closed container to shake, spoons to bang on pots, rubber bands to stretch over open containers and twang. Let each child have her own instrument. March around the neighborhood or in the house.

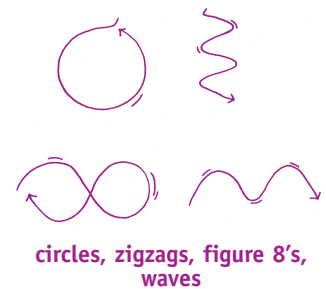


Scarves and Ribbons

1 or more players

What you need: For each player — scarves or ribbons that can be held in your child's hand or tied to a wooden spoon.

How to: Move around outdoors with scarves or ribbons. Vary movements from slow and gentle to quick and lively. Move with just one scarf or with several. Try making circles, zigzags, figure 8's and waves with the scarves. If you have a portable radio or tape player, try moving to different types of music using the scarves or ribbons, or play Scarves and Ribbons inside to music.



Balancing Act

2 or more players

How to: Find an open area of yard or floor where you can play safely and comfortably. Get down on the ground with your child and ask him to try these balancing skills with you. The more often you practice with your child, the better he'll get.

Start out balancing on all fours, with hands, knees and feet touching the ground.

Then ask your child to balance on just his hands and feet.

Ask him to raise one leg.

Raise one arm.

Raise one leg and opposite arm at the same time.

Ask him to balance on two knees and one elbow.

Balance on one knee and one elbow.

Ask your child to make up his own combinations of body parts to balance on.
