Exercises for kids

Peabody · checked 2026-10-29

Peabody's Gym has 70 free exercises for kids, each one drawn so you can see it move: squats, push-ups, planks, bear crawls, jumps, carries and stretches. Every move has cues in a child's own words, the common mistake drawn beside the right way, an easier and a harder version, and a no-jump swap.

All 70 exercises for kids

Move your own body

You are the only thing you lift.

- Exercise: Squat · Ages: 4 to 14 · You need: nothing · Counted in: reps · What it trains: strength, bendiness, balance
- Exercise: Chair stand · Ages: 4 to 10 · You need: a chair · Counted in: reps · What it trains: strength, balance
- Exercise: Wall Push-Up · Ages: 4 to 12 · You need: a wall · Counted in: reps · What it trains: strength, putting it together
- Exercise: Glute Bridge · Ages: 4 to 14 · You need: nothing · Counted in: reps · What it trains: strength, bendiness
- Exercise: Bear Crawl · Ages: 4 to 14 · You need: nothing · Counted in: metres · What it trains: putting it together, strength, staying power
- Exercise: Crab Walk · Ages: 4 to 14 · You need: nothing · Counted in: metres · What it trains: putting it together, strength, quick changes
- Exercise: Duck walk · Ages: 4 to 12 · You need: nothing · Counted in: metres · What it trains: strength, bendiness, balance
- Exercise: Step-up · Ages: 5 to 14 · You need: a step · Counted in: reps · What it trains: strength, balance, keeping going
- Exercise: Plank · Ages: 5 to 14 · You need: nothing · Counted in: a hold · What it trains: strength, staying power, balance
- Exercise: Inchworm · Ages: 5 to 14 · You need: nothing · Counted in: reps · What it trains: bendiness, strength, putting it together
- Exercise: Superman · Ages: 5 to 14 · You need: nothing · Counted in: reps · What it trains: strength, staying power
- Exercise: Tuck-up · Ages: 5 to 14 · You need: nothing · Counted in: reps · What it trains: strength, putting it together
- Exercise: Donkey kick · Ages: 5 to 14 · You need: nothing · Counted in: reps · What it trains: strength, balance, putting it together

- Exercise: Squat hold · Ages: 6 to 14 · You need: nothing · Counted in: a hold · What it trains: strength, staying power, bendiness
- Exercise: Lunge · Ages: 6 to 14 · You need: nothing · Counted in: reps · What it trains: strength, balance, putting it together
- Exercise: Knee Push-Up · Ages: 6 to 14 · You need: nothing · Counted in: reps · What it trains: strength, staying power
- Exercise: Sit-up · Ages: 6 to 14 · You need: nothing · Counted in: reps · What it trains: strength, staying power
- Exercise: Hang · Ages: 6 to 14 · You need: a climbing frame · Counted in: a hold · What it trains: strength, staying power
- Exercise: Wall sit · Ages: 6 to 14 · You need: a wall · Counted in: a hold · What it trains: strength, staying power
- Exercise: Bridge march · Ages: 6 to 14 · You need: nothing · Counted in: reps · What it trains: strength, balance, putting it together
- Exercise: Push-Up · Ages: 7 to 14 · You need: nothing · Counted in: reps · What it trains: strength, staying power
- Exercise: Side plank · Ages: 7 to 14 · You need: nothing · Counted in: a hold · What it trains: strength, balance, staying power
- Exercise: Hollow hold · Ages: 7 to 14 · You need: nothing · Counted in: a hold · What it trains: strength, staying power, putting it together
- Exercise: Forward roll · Ages: 7 to 14 · You need: a cushion · Counted in: reps · What it trains: putting it together, balance, quick changes
- Exercise: Feet up the wall · Ages: 8 to 14 · You need: a wall · Counted in: reps · What it trains: strength, balance, putting it together
- Exercise: Knees-up hang · Ages: 8 to 14 · You need: a climbing frame · Counted in: reps · What it trains: strength, staying power, putting it together
- Exercise: Hanging shrug · Ages: 8 to 14 · You need: a climbing frame · Counted in: reps · What it trains: strength, putting it together

Move something else

Pick a thing up, carry it, throw it, put it down.

- Exercise: Granny toss · Ages: 4 to 14 · You need: a soft ball · Counted in: reps · What it trains: springiness, aim, putting it together
- Exercise: Picking Things Up Safely · Ages: 5 to 14 · You need: a ball · Counted in: reps · What it trains: strength, putting it together, bendiness
- Exercise: Chest pass · Ages: 5 to 14 · You need: a soft ball, a wall · Counted in: reps · What it trains: springiness, aim, putting it together
- Exercise: Press it up · Ages: 6 to 14 · You need: a ball · Counted in: reps · What it trains: strength, balance, putting it together

- Exercise: Squat holding it · Ages: 7 to 14 · You need: a ball · Counted in: reps · What it trains: strength, balance, bendiness
- Exercise: Pull it to your chin · Ages: 7 to 14 · You need: a ball · Counted in: reps · What it trains: strength, springiness, putting it together
- Exercise: Overhead throw · Ages: 7 to 14 · You need: a soft ball, a wall · Counted in: reps · What it trains: springiness, aim, putting it together
- Exercise: Carry it · Ages: 8 to 14 · You need: a backpack, two books · Counted in: metres · What it trains: strength, staying power, balance
- Exercise: Dip and drive · Ages: 8 to 14 · You need: a ball · Counted in: reps · What it trains: springiness, strength, putting it together
- Exercise: Squat with a towel up · Ages: 8 to 14 · You need: a towel · Counted in: reps · What it trains: bendiness, balance, strength
- Exercise: Ball slam · Ages: 8 to 14 · You need: a soft ball · Counted in: reps · What it trains: springiness, strength, putting it together
- Exercise: Drag the basket · Ages: 8 to 14 · You need: a basket · Counted in: metres · What it trains: strength, staying power, springiness
- Exercise: Farmer carry · Ages: 9 to 14 · You need: a jug · Counted in: metres · What it trains: strength, staying power, balance
- Exercise: Hold it overhead · Ages: 9 to 14 · You need: a cushion · Counted in: a hold · What it trains: strength, staying power, balance

Go somewhere

Run, hop, climb, skip: get your heart going.

- Exercise: Run · Ages: 4 to 14 · You need: nothing · Counted in: metres · What it trains: keeping going, speed, staying power
- Exercise: Jog on the spot · Ages: 4 to 14 · You need: nothing · Counted in: secs · What it trains: keeping going, staying power, putting it together
- Exercise: March · Ages: 4 to 10 · You need: nothing · Counted in: reps · What it trains: putting it together, keeping going, balance
- Exercise: Skipping · Ages: 4 to 14 · You need: nothing · Counted in: metres · What it trains: putting it together, springiness, balance
- Exercise: Gallop · Ages: 4 to 12 · You need: nothing · Counted in: metres · What it trains: putting it together, quick changes, keeping going
- Exercise: Bunny hop · Ages: 4 to 14 · You need: nothing · Counted in: reps · What it trains: springiness, putting it together, balance
- Exercise: Stair climb · Ages: 5 to 14 · You need: a step · Counted in: reps · What it trains: keeping going, strength, staying power
- Exercise: Sprint · Ages: 6 to 14 · You need: nothing · Counted in: metres · What it trains: speed, springiness, keeping going

- Exercise: High Knees · Ages: 6 to 14 · You need: nothing · Counted in: secs · What it trains: speed, keeping going, putting it together
- Exercise: Shuttle run · Ages: 6 to 14 · You need: a shoe · Counted in: reps · What it trains: quick changes, speed, keeping going
- Exercise: Jump Rope · Ages: 6 to 14 · You need: a jump rope · Counted in: reps · What it trains: putting it together, keeping going, springiness, speed
- Exercise: Heel flicks · Ages: 6 to 14 · You need: nothing · Counted in: secs · What it trains: speed, keeping going, putting it together
- Exercise: Side shuffle · Ages: 6 to 14 · You need: nothing · Counted in: secs · What it trains: quick changes, putting it together, keeping going
- Exercise: Long jump · Ages: 6 to 14 · You need: chalk · Counted in: reps · What it trains: springiness, balance, aim
- Exercise: Rope, one foot at a time · Ages: 7 to 14 · You need: a jump rope · Counted in: reps · What it trains: putting it together, keeping going, speed, balance

Get bendy

Reach further than you did yesterday.

- Exercise: Arm circles · Ages: 4 to 14 · You need: nothing · Counted in: reps · What it trains: bendiness, putting it together
- Exercise: Leg swings · Ages: 4 to 14 · You need: a wall · Counted in: reps · What it trains: bendiness, balance
- Exercise: Cat and cow · Ages: 4 to 14 · You need: nothing · Counted in: reps · What it trains: bendiness, putting it together
- Exercise: Reach for your toes · Ages: 4 to 14 · You need: nothing · Counted in: a hold · What it trains: bendiness
- Exercise: Butterfly · Ages: 4 to 14 · You need: nothing · Counted in: a hold · What it trains: bendiness
- Exercise: Downward Dog · Ages: 5 to 14 · You need: nothing · Counted in: a hold · What it trains: bendiness, strength
- Exercise: Calf stretch · Ages: 5 to 14 · You need: a wall · Counted in: a hold · What it trains: bendiness
- Exercise: Heel to bottom · Ages: 6 to 14 · You need: a wall · Counted in: a hold · What it trains: bendiness, balance
- Exercise: Towel over your head · Ages: 6 to 14 · You need: a towel · Counted in: reps · What it trains: bendiness, putting it together

Hold still and aim

The hardest moves are sometimes the slowest ones.

- Exercise: Stand on one leg · Ages: 4 to 14 · You need: nothing · Counted in: a hold · What it trains: balance, strength
- Exercise: Walk the line · Ages: 4 to 14 · You need: chalk · Counted in: metres · What it trains: balance, aim, putting it together
- Exercise: Tiptoe walk · Ages: 4 to 12 · You need: nothing · Counted in: metres · What it trains: balance, strength
- Exercise: Target toss · Ages: 4 to 14 · You need: a beanbag, a basket · Counted in: reps · What it trains: aim, putting it together
- Exercise: Jump and Land · Ages: 5 to 14 · You need: nothing · Counted in: reps · What it trains: springiness, balance, aim, putting it together

36 of them need nothing at all

Squat, Squat hold, Lunge, Push-Up, Knee Push-Up, Plank, Side plank and Hollow hold and 28 more need no equipment of any kind — just a bit of floor the size of a child lying down with their arms out.

63 of them are quiet enough for a flat

Nothing jumps, nothing stamps, nothing drops: Squat, Chair stand, Squat hold, Lunge, Step-up and Push-Up and 57 more. If somebody lives downstairs, the Gym's front page has a Quiet chip that shows only these.

The ten things fitness is made of

Being fit does not mean being good at one thing. Fitness School explains the ten parts of it, and the most interesting fact about them: four get better because a child's body changes, four because their brain learns, and two need both.

- Part of fitness: Keeping going · What it means: How long you can keep going without stopping. · How it is built: the body changes · Exercises: 13, such as Step-up and Run
- Part of fitness: Staying power · What it means: How long your energy lasts before you run out. · How it is built: the body changes · Exercises: 19, such as Squat hold and Push-Up
- Part of fitness: Strength · What it means: How hard your muscles can push or pull. · How it is built: the body changes · Exercises: 41, such as Squat and Chair stand
- Part of fitness: Bendiness · What it means: How far you can bend and reach. · How it is built: the body changes · Exercises: 17, such as Squat and Squat hold
- Part of fitness: Springiness · What it means: How fast you can be strong — a jump, a throw. · How it is built: both · Exercises: 13, such as Chest pass and Pull it to your chin

• Part of fitness: Speed · What it means: How quickly you can do the same thing over and over. · How it is built: both · Exercises: 7, such as Run and Sprint
• Part of fitness: Putting it together · What it means: Making two or three moves into one smooth one. · How it is built: the brain learns · Exercises: 37, such as Lunge and Wall Push-Up
• Part of fitness: Quick changes · What it means: How fast you can swap from one move to another. · How it is built: the brain learns · Exercises: 5, such as Crab Walk and Forward roll
• Part of fitness: Balance · What it means: Staying over your own feet without wobbling. · How it is built: the brain learns · Exercises: 28, such as Squat and Chair stand
• Part of fitness: Aim · What it means: Putting your body, or a ball, exactly where you meant to. · How it is built: the brain learns · Exercises: 7, such as Chest pass and Overhead throw

Easier and harder: every exercise fits the child

The right version of a move is the hardest one a child can still do properly — one step past that and they are practising the wrong shape, which makes them worse at it rather than better. So a wall push-up is not a lesser push-up; for the child it fits, it is the correct one. Every move page lists both directions, and every jumping move has a no-jump swap and, where it makes sense, a seated one.

Is this safe?

There is no barbell, dumbbell, kettlebell, bench or bar anywhere in the Gym — the words are not even in its data, so a future workout cannot reach for one. The heaviest thing a child ever picks up is a ball, a towel, or a backpack with a book or two in it, and only from 3rd grade; nothing goes overhead with anything in the hands below 4th grade, and nothing anywhere puts weight on a head or a neck. The two youngest levels have no clock to race. Every workout that leaves the ground teaches landing first, in its own warm-up, and every workout page carries the same five stop signals — dizzy, chest hurts, can't catch your breath, a sharp pain in one spot, feeling sick — read aloud before any clock starts.

Why there is nothing here about weight

The Gym never mentions weight, shape, size or calories, and never suggests eating less. About sixty of those words are refused in the code itself, in every line a child reads, including the spoken ones. What it says instead is strong, fast, springy, steady and bendy — and that food is fuel.

Questions

How much exercise does a child need?

About an hour a day of moderate-to-vigorous activity for 6-to-17-year-olds, and it does not have to be in one go — the 2018 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans count ten minutes here and twenty there. On at least three days a week some of it should be muscle-strengthening and some bone-strengthening. For 3-to-5-year-olds the advice is simply to be active throughout the day.

Which exercise should a child start with?

A squat, and then landing. Squat is the shape behind sitting, standing and jumping, and Jump and Land is the one most worth learning carefully, because landing softly is what keeps a springy child in one piece.

Can a child exercise every day?

Moving every day is good. Doing the hardest thing every day is not, because the getting-stronger part happens on the rest days, mostly during sleep. Mix a hard one, an easy one and some stretches.

Where do these exercises come from?

The way this section thinks about fitness — ten general physical skills, three ways to move, "do it right, do it right every time, then do it fast", and ending a session with a game — comes from CrossFit's published training model and its CrossFit Kids program. Peabody is not affiliated with them. The safety rules here are our own, and in several places stricter.

Nothing is sent anywhere

The Gym is free, with no ads and no sign-up. There is no camera, no pose detection and no leaderboard. What your child has done and their own best times stay on their own device and are never sent anywhere, so there is nothing to lose and no account to make.

Free at peabody.kids/exercises-for-kids