



SAMPLE



abc Ball Skills Instructor Guide

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Introduction for abc Ball Skills

The **abc Ball Skills Instructor Guide** focuses on bringing the fundamentals of reading and language skills to the playground or gym.

Children participate in a variety of fun player introductions, warmup drills, progressions and games that teach and reinforce ball skills as well as reading and language skills.

abc123 brings athletics and academics together. abc123 uses a set of 26 low-compression balls that are a bit larger than a traditional yellow tennis ball. The balls are marked with a lowercase letter on one side and the corresponding number on the opposite side. Children select a marked ball to use while rolling, catching, tossing, or bouncing balls as they work on anticipation, balance, timing, running and more.

Children work together and through cooperative game play learn and reinforce reading and language skills such as letter recognition, rhyming, parts of speech, phonics and more while promoting fun, participation, cognitive behavior and critical thinking.

A flexible lesson plan format is used. **The flexible lesson plan** enables instructors to modify all player introductions, warmup drills, progressions and games, based on skill and improvement levels.

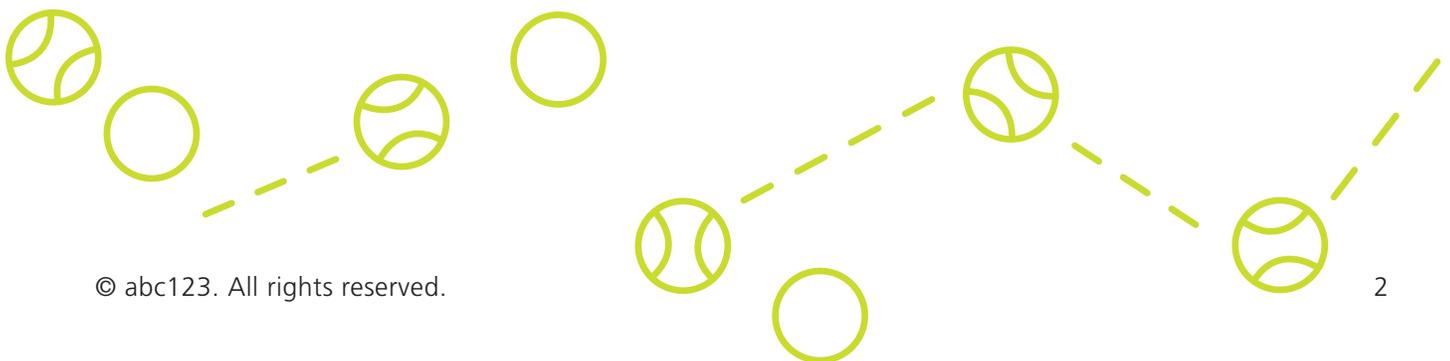
The **lesson** starts with player introductions and a warmup drill. Instructors select a player introduction from the games section. A standard dynamic warmup is suggested.

The ball skills progressions or developmental drills are clearly outlined and defined. The progressions build ball skills while reinforcing reading and language skills. The progressions can be made easier or more difficult by adding or taking away height, distance, speed and movement. The reading and language skills can be modified by substituting skills such as using the letter on the ball to form words, forming words using letters in sequence or forming words using categories such as fruits or vegetables.

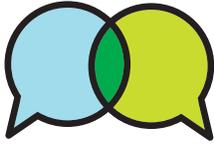
Games are a fun way to reinforce skills. A section of games are provided with adaptations/ variations making it easy for instructors or parents to select a game and play.

Lastly, a cheer is suggested. Children leave with a **smile**.

Fun, exercise, reading & language are merged, children love it!

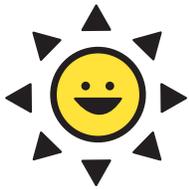


Flexible Lesson Plan Checklist



[✓] Player Introductions, page 5

Welcome the players. Games to introduce each other and learn about each other. A good time to take attendance, make announcements and explain what skills will be worked on.



[✓] Warmup Drills, page 8

Dynamic warmup drills to warm up all muscle groups. Players focus, get moving and ready to learn. A standard warmup is suggested and provided.



[✓] Ball Skills Progressions, page 11

Teaching players and developing specific ball skills. The progressions are the ball skills curriculum along with skills that reinforce language and reading.



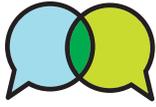
[✓] Games, page 52

Players play games and relays as they work on the FUNDamentals of ball skills along with language and reading.



[✓] Cheer, page 78

Time to review or recap what was worked on. Thank the players for coming and make announcements. After the cheer, players leave with a **smile!**



[1] LETTER INTRO ABC
One Ball Per Circle

1. **Instructor** has players form a circle or circles. Players are standing up holding hands next to each other.
2. **Instructor** has players drop their hands and sit down with their legs crossed, about two feet apart.
3. **Instructor** hands a ball to a player in each circle to start.
4. All players have both hands on the floor — palms up facing in front of them ready to catch a rolled ball.
5. **Instructor** (and players with a ball) start by saying their name and word of something healthy that starts with the first initial of their first name and then roll the ball with their dominant hand to another player. **(Example — My name is Pat and I like plums.)**
6. The player that the ball is rolled to catches the ball with both hands and play continues until all players have a turn.

Adaptation/Variation: Players use the last letter of their name or first letter of their last name. Change category players have to name. Use more than one ball at a time.

[2] LETTER GRAB ABC
One Ball Per Player

1. **Instructor** has players form a circle or circles.
2. Players are sitting down with legs crossed.
3. **Instructor** places balls in the middle of circle.
4. **Instructor** calls “Go” — On “Go” — players run and get a ball then run back and sit down.
5. **Instructor** goes around the circle and each player says their name and something healthy that starts with the letter on their ball.

Adaptation/Variation: Use different categories.

Insider Tip:

Having the players form circles increases interaction. Players are on equal ground. It is easy to monitor and to see and hear each other.



[3] **OVERHEAD PASS THE LETTER
& JOG ABC**
One Ball

- 1.** **Instructor** has players form a line (if more than eight players, form two teams).
- 2.** Players A (first players in line) select a ball and the team lines up behind Player A.
- 3.** Player A starts to jog with team around the gym. Team is following behind.
- 4.** As Player A is jogging, Player A tosses the ball over their head to the next player in line. As Player A tosses the ball, Player A says a word that starts with the letter on the ball.
- 5.** The player the ball is overhead tossed to catches the ball and continues to toss the ball overhead to the next player saying another word that starts with the letter on the ball.
- 6.** Tossing overhead, catching and saying words that start with the letter on the ball continues until the last player has the ball. That player runs to the front. Players start over with the next letter in sequence.

Adaptation/Variation: Players can let the ball bounce before they catch. Players can pass the ball. Use more than one ball at a time. Use a category (like vegetables) that start with a letter.



[1] Roll & Catch 1

ROLL & CATCH — FRONT — ROLL BACK ABC

One Ball per Pair

UNDERHAND THROW:

- Determine dominant hand (pencil hand)
- Face target
- Step towards target using opposite foot
- Use pendulum arm motion with the throwing arm (like bowling)
- Follow through to the sky or ceiling with the throwing hand
- **For rolling — the ball is placed on the ground with fingertips and let go — no bouncing**

(If players have trouble stepping with their opposite foot, have the player raise their dominant [pencil] hand and tap their leg with their other hand so they know what foot to step with.)

1. All players are lined up along a back line. **Instructor** pairs up the players. Player A selects a ball. Players A & B are facing each other six feet apart.
2. Player A bends and rolls the ball to Player B. Player B bends and catches the rolled ball.
3. Player B bends and rolls the ball back to Player A. Player A bends and catches the rolled ball.
4. **After the players have tried a few times — Instructor tells the players:** As Player A starts the first roll, Player A says the letter on the ball. When Player B returns the ball, Player B says the letter on the ball. After a set number of times, **Instructor** asks the players to switch roles.

Adaptation/Variation: Players can move closer or farther apart depending on players' ability.

[1] Roll & Catch 2

ROLL & MOVE TO CATCH — RIGHT SIDE TO RIGHT SIDE — ROLL BACK ABC

One Ball per Pair

UNDERHAND THROW:

- Determine dominant hand (pencil hand)
- Face target
- Step towards target using opposite foot
- Use pendulum arm motion with the throwing arm (like bowling)
- Follow through to the sky or ceiling with the throwing hand
- **For rolling — the ball is placed on the ground with fingertips and let go — no bouncing**

(If players have trouble stepping with their opposite foot, have the player raise their dominant [pencil] hand and tap their leg with their other hand so they know what foot to step with.)

1. All players are lined up along a back line. **Instructor** pairs up the players. Player A selects a ball. Players A & B are facing each other six feet apart.
2. Player A bends and rolls the ball aiming for the right foot of Player B. Player B moves and bends and catches the rolled ball.
3. Player B bends and rolls the ball back to Player A aiming for the right foot of Player A. Player A moves and bends and catches the rolled ball.
4. **After the players have tried a few times — Instructor tells the players:** As Player A starts the first roll, Player A says the letter on the ball. When Player B returns the ball, Player B says the next letter in sequence. Players continue saying letters in sequence. After a set number of times, **Instructor** asks the players to switch roles.

Adaptation/Variation: Players can move closer or farther apart depending on players' ability.



abc Ball Skills Instructor Guide
SECTION FOUR: abc Ball Skills Games

[33] RIGHT AND LEFT RALLY ABC
One Ball per Pair

1. **Instructor** pairs up players.
2. Player A has a ball and is on one side of a designated line and Player B is on the opposite side of the designated line.
3. Players A and B are about three feet from the line.
4. Player A underhand tosses the ball to Player B's right or left side with a head height arc to bounce to Player B.
5. Player A is calling out which side they are tossing to L (left) or R (right). Player B has to catch the bounced ball with that hand.
6. After a while, **Instructor** has players switch roles.

Adaptation/Variation: Distance can be changed due to players' ability. Use two balls. Continuous rally.

Insider Tip:

Ropes or caution tape can be used as a center line or target.

[34] ROLL & HIT ABC
One Ball per Pair

1. **Instructor** pairs players.
2. Player A selects a ball.
3. Players are facing each other six feet apart, forming aisles.
4. **Instructor** asks the players to roll the ball back and forth to each other while counting in sequence starting with the letter on their ball.
5. **Instructor** walks through the aisle.
6. Players are trying to touch the **Instructor's** feet with their rolled ball as the **Instructor** walks through the aisle.
7. When the **Instructor** is touched with a rolled ball, the players who rolled the touched ball say the name of an animal that starts with the letter on their ball. **All of the players and Instructor have to make the named animal sound.**

Adaptation/Variation: Adjust space between players based on players' ability.



abc Ball Skills Instructor Guide
SECTION FOUR: abc Ball Skills Games

[35] SEQUENCE RUN ABC
All Balls

1. **Instructor** has players lined up behind each other in teams.
2. **Instructor** places balls in box/bag or designated spot, one for each team at the opposite side of the gym or area.
3. **Instructor** calls out "Go" and Player A from each team runs to the box/bag and picks **one** ball and runs back.
4. Player B continues and does the same until all team players have **one** ball.
5. The team must then arrange the balls in alphabetical order on the floor and sit down.
6. Once the **Instructor** agrees that the balls are in alphabetical order, the members of the team **run together to return the balls back to the box/bag.**
7. After the balls are back, the players run back and sit down at their starting position.
8. **First team back and sitting down is the winner.**

Adaptation/Variation: Each team player has to say a word that starts with the chosen ball.

[36] SPIDER GAME ABC
Four Balls per Player, Dots or Marked Area (Tape) per Player, Basket for Balls

1. **Instructor** has players spread out evenly in a large circle.
2. Dots or marked area for each player.
3. Balls are placed in basket and in center of circle.
4. **Instructor** calls "Spider." All players run to get a ball (one at a time) then run back and place the ball on their dot or marked area.
5. Players run back to get another ball. Players are trying to get four balls on their dot or marked area.
6. When a player has four balls on their dot, and is sitting down, they are **FIRST**. **Instructor** asks the player to say a word that starts with the letter on each ball. If the player is correct, that player is out and calls "Spider" for the next round.
7. If players are skilled enough, players can steal balls from other players' dots to prevent a player from accumulating four balls.

Adaptation/Variation: Adjust space between players based on ability. Use more balls. Players say a word using categories.