

CARTWHEELS

Often children find lateral movements more difficult to master than forward or backward movements.

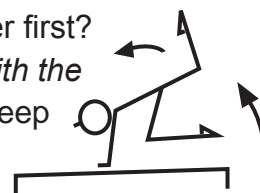


A suggestion for teaching the basics of the cartwheel follows using a bench...

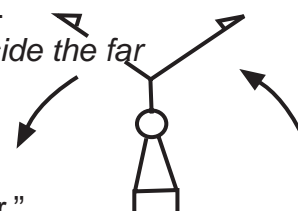
- 1 Stand with feet on the floor - hands gripping each side of the bench.
“Can you bunny-hop across the mat to land your feet on the floor the other side?”



- 2 “Can you do the same thing, but this time swing one leg over first?
(*The leg which swings over first, lands first. - always start with the same leg leading*) Decide which is your favourite side and keep repeating it.”



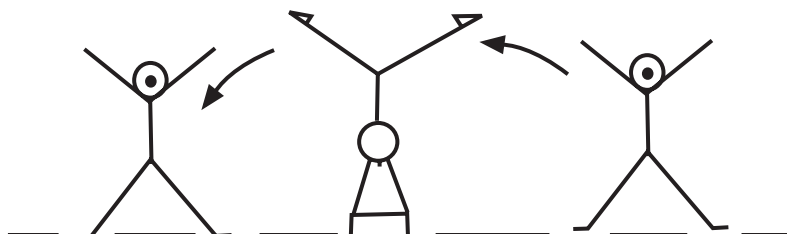
- 3 Through discussion and demonstration, children discover that whichever foot pushes from the floor, the same hand grips the bench first.
(*Nearest hand grips the near side of the bench and the other side the far side*)



- 4 “Gradually begin to straighten your legs and swing them higher.”

- 5 “Now stand up on the floor. Stand **SIDEWAYS TO THE BENCH** with the swinging leg furthest away and do the same action straightening your legs as much as possible.”

- 6 “As you land, push from the hands and swing the other leg across and past the landed leg to land in a straddle position, sideways on to the bench.”



A CARTWHEEL

Once a child is confident and competent at performing the cartwheel over the bench it should be transferred directly to the floor.

On the floor the child should remember to:-

- (a) Start and finish facing sideways.
- (b) Reach forward, repeating the movements practised on the bench.
- (c) Try to improve the shape and flow by lifting hips higher and getting legs straighter and further apart.
- (d) Move in the following pattern - “Along the floor: take off foot, first hand down, second hand down, landing foot down”. (*foot, hand, hand, foot*)

N.B. A useful guide to give children when performing a cartwheel is to say “start by standing sideways with arms up by ears and finish standing sideways with arms up by ears”.

Very important

The movement is an entirely sideways one, and the performer should land facing in exactly the same direction as the one in which s/he started. From beginning to end, the child should travel sideways along a straight line. The arms must be very firm and tense to take the weight of the body and fingers should be pointing outwards, away from the body.

