

Switch It Up

Activity

Resource: PlaySport

Division(s): Primary Junior

TGfU Category: Zone Games

Locations: gymnasium, multipurpose room, outdoor space (e.g., field, tarmac)

Game/Sport Connections

Zone games are activities that involve controlling an object, keeping it away from opponents, and moving it into position to score. Both offensive and defensive players share the same playing area as they work to prevent the other team from scoring. By playing these games, participants develop skills and tactics to play other zone games or games that require the application of similar skills, concepts, and strategies (e.g., soccer, handball, ultimate Frisbee, football, basketball, hockey, goalball, wheelchair basketball, lacrosse).

Activity Overview

Participants learn about and practise moving effectively to maintain and gain possession of a space.

Key Movement Skills, Concepts, and Strategies

Throughout the activity, consider highlighting the following skills, concepts, and strategies for gaining and maintaining possession of a space. Note that this list is not exhaustive and further learning opportunities may arise during the task.

Movement Skills and Concepts

- Locomotion and spatial awareness: applying travelling skills by moving from one position to another, while knowing when to move (e.g., switching positions with another participant while preventing the participant in the middle from taking the corner position).
- Relationship: understanding where to move to gain possession of a corner (e.g., moving in a structured environment where defenders have to move quickly to keep possession of corner positions).

Movement Strategies

- Decision making: deciding on the optimal time to switch positions in order to be successful as a participant in maintaining a corner (e.g., when the participant in the middle isn't watching, quickly switch positions with another participant in a corner).
- Performance: demonstrating skills and tactics in order to be successful (e.g., as a participant in the middle, being able to observe when a participant in a corner position is about to switch positions and moving quickly into the open spot).

Considerations

- Incorporate some or all of the variations listed in the "Variations" section while planning the activity. This will help to best meet the diverse backgrounds, identities, needs, and interests of participants and maximize the fun, inclusion, participation, and success of everyone.
- To elevate participant voice and choice, periodically pause the activity and share the variations with participants. Ask them to determine how they would like to change the activity to maximize the fun, inclusion, meaningful participation, and success for everyone. Encourage participants to add any variations of their own.

Equipment

4 objects per group to mark each corner of the playing area (e.g., cones, pylons, floor markers, skipping ropes, floor chalk, hula hoops, carpet squares, lines on the floor)

Safety

- Inspect the equipment and activity area to identify and remove hazards. Check that the activity surface provides sufficient traction.
- Establish the boundaries for the designated playing area at a safe distance from walls and obstacles. Share the boundaries with participants.
- Review the safety rules and activity instructions with participants prior to the activity.
- Instruct participants to be aware of their surroundings, including the locations of other participants during play.

How to Play

- Divide participants into groups of 5 or 6.
- Assign each group to a designated playing area. Have groups create the shape of a square in their designated playing area by marking corners with objects (e.g., cones, pylons, floor markers, skipping ropes, floor chalk, hula hoops, carpet squares, lines on the floor). Groups determine the size of their square and may adjust it throughout the period of play.
- Ask a participant to volunteer to begin in the middle of their square. Other participants stand or sit in each corner of their square. If there are 6 participants per group, 1 participant waits on the sidelines away from play. This is called the “waiting area.”
- Have groups determine the way participants move (e.g., slide, skip, hop, wheel). Groups can change the way they move at any point during play.
- Participants in the corners attempt to switch places with one another without having the participant in the middle notice and take their position.
- Teach or review how to play Rock, Paper, Scissors. If 2 participants go to the same corner, they play one round of Rock, Paper, Scissors and the winner stays. Players do not have to arrive at the same time. This rule helps avoid collisions and makes the game fair for participants who move more slowly than others.
- The participant without a corner goes to the middle and the game continues.

- If someone is waiting, the new player joins the activity and the player without a corner joins the waiting area.
- Encourage participants to switch frequently (e.g., every 10 seconds) to allow several opportunities for the participant in the middle to attempt to take over a corner position.
- Switch up the participant in the middle after a predetermined length of time to provide all participants with the opportunity to take over a corner position.
- After a period of play, provide participants with some or all of the variations. Ask them to decide how they might change the game to enhance the fun, inclusion, and participation for everyone. Encourage participants to add any variations of their own.
- Consider having groups share their variations and select another variation to try with their group.

Video: Visual Depiction of the Activity Instructions

[Video link](#)

Pause for Learning

- Throughout the activity, ask open-ended questions to help participants refine their movement skills, strategies, and tactical solutions. Examples include:
- As a participant in a corner, how do you keep possession of a corner of the square?
- When playing in the middle, what strategy do you apply to successfully take over a spot in a corner?
- Which games or sports have you played or know about that use similar rules and strategies to the ones used in this game?

Variations

- Add more participants per group and allow more than 1 participant to occupy each corner (as long as 1 participant always remains in the middle).
- Increase the number of participants in the middle.
- Add in a “caller” role. The participant in the middle (the “caller”) puts their hand up, pulls their arm down like they are pulling a switch, and calls out, “Switch!” When players hear “switch,” they move to find a

new corner.

- Allow participants to choose to be the caller throughout the rounds of play with other players vying for spots.
- Participants switch after predetermined, consecutive turns in the middle decided by each group (e.g., 3 – 5 turns).