

First Turns

A free taster lesson for Year 1 and Year 2. Pupils learn to hold and turn a rope, then jump a long rope, ready to start the double bounce.

YEAR GROUPS
Year 1 and 2

LESSON
1 × 45 min

SPACE
Hall or playground

ROPES
2.1m, one each

By the end of the lesson

- ✓ Every pupil has jumped a turning long rope
- ✓ Every pupil has turned their own rope overhead
- ✓ Pupils hold the rope correctly, ready to skip
- ✓ Pupils land softly on the balls of their feet

National Curriculum links (KS1 PE)

- ✓ Master basic movements, including jumping
- ✓ Develop balance, agility and coordination
- ✓ Apply skills in a range of activities
- ✓ Take part in cooperative activities

Class kit

30 × 2.1m skipping ropes

One for each pupil, for children up to about 1.47m (4'10") tall.

10 × 2.5m skipping ropes

For taller pupils. Check every rope's length first.

2 × 2.8m adult ropes

One for the teacher and one for the teaching assistant.

2 × Long ropes (4.5m or 7.5m)

A double dutch pair gives you two 4.5m long ropes.

Get the rope right

- ✓ **Length:** stand on the middle of the rope. The handles should reach just below the armpits.
- ✓ **Too long?** Tie a knot a couple of centimetres below each handle.
- ✓ **Hands:** waist height and in front of the body. Never up by the shoulders.

Keep it safe

- ✓ Skip only in your own space, well apart from others.
- ✓ After a trip, step back through the rope. Never swing it back over the head.
- ✓ Bounce on the balls of the feet with bent knees.
- ✓ Before you start: jewellery off, long hair tied back, trainers on. Check that the floor is dry, flat and clear.

Where next?

SIX MORE LESSONS

The Skipping Foundations unit takes Years 1 and 2 to skipping on their own and in a long rope.

LEARN THE SKILLS

Step-by-step guides on the basics and long rope games at skip-hop.co.uk.

SET A SCORE

Finish with a 30-second challenge and enter it free at vsl.org.uk.

First Turns

45 minutes

Hall or playground

One 2.1m rope each + 2 long ropes

We are learning to

- ✓ Hold my rope correctly and stand ready
- ✓ Turn the rope forwards and backwards
- ✓ Jump a turning long rope

Success looks like

- ✓ Hands at waist height, in front of me
- ✓ The rope goes over and lands at my feet
- ✓ I jump the long rope on my toes

1

5 min

Warm up: Bouncy feet

Jog around the space. On "bounce", do small, springy bounces on the toes with soft knees. Can we bounce so quietly no one hears us?

2

6 min

Rope ready

Size each rope. Handles the right way up, arms in front at waist height, body tall. Reset anyone holding the handles up by their ears.

3

10 min

Turn and step (no jumping)

Rope behind the heels. Arms go down, back, up and over in one slow circle so the rope lands at the toes. Step over and repeat. Then backwards from the "penguin position": rope in front, arms back.

4

4 min

Add the jump

Small, springy jumps without a rope first, then jump the rope as it reaches the toes. In pairs, one skips and the other says one thing that went well.

5

15 min

Long rope: jump it, then Under the Moon

Half the class in long rope groups of 7 or 8, half practising turn and step. Swap halfway. Turners bring the rope in, one turn for every two bounces. Then Under the Moon: "Ready, in you go, NOW!"

6

5 min

Cool down and Top Tips

Calf stretches and slow walking. Pupils tell a partner their Top Tip for safe skipping.

Make it easier / harder

- ✓ **Easier:** Funky Monkey: swing the loop along the floor and step over it
- ✓ **Harder:** join the turns without a stop, saying "turn, jump, bounce"

Keep it safe

- ✓ Skip only in your own space
- ✓ Step back through the rope after a trip
- ✓ Wait for the long rope well clear of the turners

Teaching points

Turn slowly, in a circle · Hands low, never behind the ears · Step over, don't swing back · Quiet feet are good feet
Watch the skills: skip-hop.co.uk/skipping-skills-the-basics/ · skip-hop.co.uk/long-rope-games/ · Key words: turn, step, bounce, turner

Teacher notes

Lesson one is all about the double bounce. Pupils who find it hard almost always catch up within a few weeks.

Common mistakes and quick fixes

1 Hands up by the ears

Lower the hands to the hips and turn the rope slowly, in a circle. Repeat the turn and step at the start of each lesson.

2 Swinging the rope back over

Anyone behind can be hit in the face. Teach "step back through" from day one, every time the rope stops.

3 Heavy landings

Heels and straight legs strain the back and legs. Noisy landings are the easiest sign to listen for.

4 Backwards before forwards

That's normal. The backwards turn is a more comfortable movement. Praise it, then go back to forwards.

Other ways in

- ✓ **Funky Monkey:** both handles in one hand, the other hand tucked under the armpit. Circle the rope along the floor and step over it.
- ✓ **Partner skipping:** the teacher turns the rope face to face with the pupil, so the pupil only has to jump.

Turning the long rope

- ✓ Turn the rope so the runners go **with** it, not against it.
- ✓ **Check:** turners point their arms at the queue. Arms go **down** first.
- ✓ One turn for every two bounces gives the jumper a double bounce.

Key questions

- ✓ Where should your hands be?
- ✓ How do you know your space is safe?
- ✓ Are you bouncing on the balls of your feet?
- ✓ Are your knees bent?
- ✓ How could you improve?

Plenary: Pupils share their Top Tip for safe skipping with a partner. Collect the tips for a playground display.

Including everyone

Wheelchair users turn their own rope over the head and roll under it, or take the turner role and call the timing.

Visual or sensory needs: use a bright or beaded rope, a slower turn, a clap or visual count, and a quieter spot.

Co-ordination difficulties: stay with the floor-rope steps, Funky Monkey or partner skipping as long as needed.

Teacher's evaluation

Children who did well

Children who need further support

Please note: These activities are suitable for most pupils when led by a teacher. Use your own judgement, and seek advice where needed, on whether they suit your group and individual pupils, including any with medical conditions. Follow your school's PE policy and the afPE Safe Practice guidance.