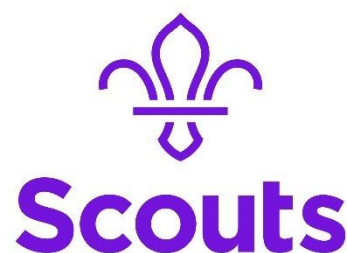


# Skipping skills

Follow this six week plan to develop your skipping skills.

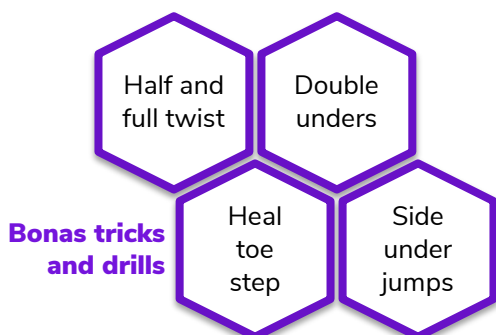


This table provides examples of activities to help you achieve your Skills Challenge Award. These suggestions are based on the Skipping skills taster session and are just one of the many ways you can achieve the award. This specific plan is useful for anyone in need of some guidance (perhaps you're brand new to this activity) and anyone who'd rather not come up with their own development timetable.

Week	Challenge	Signed off (leader/parent/carer)
1	<p><b>The basic jump</b> Many are probably already familiar with this basic two-footed jump suitable for beginners. It's the simplest step a skipper can learn.</p> <p>Practise first without your rope. Get into the proper posture: Your feet should be close together so that they're less than shoulder width apart. Your shoulder blades and elbows need to be pulled back so your hands are in line with the plane of your body, and somewhere around 10 inches from your hips.</p> <p>Bend your knees slightly and practise bounding (jumping) on the balls of both your feet. There's no need to lift your knees up high for this jump. Repeat some low bounds on the spot. If you're comfortable with this motion, then you're ready to pick up your rope.</p> <p>Grasp the skipping-rope handles, and rotate your wrists to generate velocity and revolve the rope around the body. Take two-footed bounds as the rope passes underneath you, giving it plenty of room to pass. Adjust to the rhythm of your rotations and continue at a comfortable pace.</p> <p><b>The alternating foot jump</b> Another drill that is frequently used by beginners. Like the basic jump, the alternating foot jump is great for building up speed.</p> <p>This time you're going to alternate the feet each time the rope passes beneath you.</p>	
2	<p><b>Single foot hops</b> The aim is to continuously jump over the rope on one foot. This drill enhances balance, and increases calf muscles and endurance.</p>	

	<p>Before trying with the skipping-rope, check that you're comfortable balancing on one leg; put your arms out to the sides and take some small jumps on one leg, swap to the other and try to stay on the same spot. Gradually increase your bounding height to make sure that, when you introduce the rope, you clear it as it passes beneath you.</p> <p>Once you're comfortable, pick up your rope to begin your drill. After 30 seconds, swap feet.</p> <p>If your bounds feel strong and equal and you're comfortable, increase your speed (how fast you skip) and duration (how long you skip for). However, if you're feeling any weakness or wobbliness, try slowing down and skipping for less time until you build up stamina.</p>	
<b>3</b>	<p><b>Side to side jump / Front to back jump</b></p> <p>The aim is to jump left to right or back and forth as you skip, while keeping your posture upright and wrist motion the same. This drill is great for improving quickness and agility, as well as core strength.</p> <p>Practise first without your rope. Get into the same posture as you would with a basic jump. Next, take small bounds from left to right. It's a good idea to picture a centre line on the ground to help keep you orientated when you're bounding side-to-side. You'll need the same posture and position for your front-to-back jump. Practise these small bounds back and forth too without your rope. Once you're happy with your rhythm, then you're ready to pick up your rope.</p> <p>When you're confident with your pace, you can challenge yourself by making bigger jumps back and forth or side to side. Your upper body should stay as central as possible, while your lower body adjusts to the bigger jumps.</p>	
<b>4</b>	<p><b>Mummy kicks</b></p> <p>These are a variation of the alternating foot jump where you take a small kick out in front of you with each bound. It's an effective drill for engaging your hip flexors and hamstrings.</p> <p>Position yourself as you would for the alternating foot jump. As you bound, extend each leg in front of you and point your toe up towards your knee as the rope passes beneath you. Land on the balls of your feet.</p> <p>The higher you kick, the more you'll engage your hip flexors and hamstrings, but you'll need to watch that your feet don't get too close to the arc of your rope.</p>	
<b>5</b>	<p><b>Criss-cross</b></p> <p>This skill is a little tougher to master but very popular, and a great one to show off your skills in a routine.</p>	

	<p>While doing your basic jump, you'll cross your arms so that the left handle is on your right side, and vice versa. This crossover should happen nice and low near your hips. You should be extending your wrists as far out in the opposite direction as possible and pointing your thumbs downwards to make sure you have a nice large arc in your rope. It doesn't matter which arm is layered on top - whichever is comfortable is fine. It's okay to hunch over a little as you do this.</p> <p>Try practising nice and slowly: basic skip, cross skip, basic, cross, etc.</p> <p><b>Side swing</b> This is a really simple exercise that actually gives you a chance to take a rest while still engaging your upper body.</p> <p>There are two variations: a one-handed or a two-handed kind. Neither involve jumping through the rope – instead you'll be swinging it around your body at the same pace as your regular bound.</p> <p>For the two-handed swing: Bring your left hand over to the right side of your body to meet your right hand at your hip. Swing the rope together in a full rotation on this side, but towards the end bring your hands across your body to the other side for a full rotation. You may also want to swing the rope together across the front of your body to mix things up.</p> <p>For a one-handed swing: Repeat the same swinging motions but hold both handles in the one hand.</p>	
<p><b>6</b></p>	<p><b>Combine your drills and tricks for a showcase routine</b></p> <p>Pick a song of your choice and develop a routine to share what you've learnt. This should be no less than one minute and should include an attempt at each of the skills you've developed. Feel free to add bonus tricks and drills as you please.</p>	



\*For all of the activities above we recommend watching some video tutorials demonstrated by fitness professionals online for examples of best practice.

\*\*If there's any stress, strain or increasing discomfort during any of these exercises, drills or tricks, be sure to put down the rope, consider why this may be and contact a healthcare professional if needed.