

CRITICAL ELEMENTS for Motor Skills



The Nebraska Physical Education Standards focus on developing competency in movement patterns and skills through clearly articulated learning progressions. Motor skill competency is essential for participation in physical activity and for health-enhancing fitness (SHAPE America, 2014). The critical elements listed below are the foundation for skill development and highlighted throughout grades 1-5. Research shows that student engagement increases when self-efficacy and confidence increases. Within the standards document, you will find these critical elements for motor skills denoted with an E, M, or A. These letters indicate the level of proficiency:

- **Emerging:** Introduce and Practice
- **Maturing:** Competency achieved; practice for refinement
- **Applying:** Skills & knowledge acquired; apply in various settings

Research shows that student engagement increases when self-efficacy and confidence increases. If mastered, the critical elements can improve students' perceived self-confidence and increase learning engagement and participation (SHAPE America, 2014). Each skill is broken down into critical elements for demonstration, assessment, self-reflection, and specific, corrective feedback purposes.

Grade 1

Walking

- Hold your head high and eyes looking in the direction of walking,
- Relaxed and wide shoulders. Moving shoulders naturally.
- Body and limbs move in a straight line in the direction of the movement.
- Long strong spine, gently tighten your stomach muscles.
- Feet are straight when in contact with the ground (not turned in or out).
- Swing your arms freely with slight bend at elbows and move in opposition to legs.
- Walk smoothly, rolling your foot from heel to toe.

Hopping (p. 76)

- Take off on one foot and land on the same foot.
- Upward push and absorption of landing shock is accomplished by the ankle.
- Arms push up and down (to lift and for balance).
- Knee seldom straightens fully.

Sliding (p. 79)

- Trunk faces in forward direction; head is turned sideways in direction of travel.
- Lead leg lifts and moves sideways to support weight.
- Rear foot closes quickly to supporting foot.
- Body is momentarily airborne.
- Arms are lifted, extended to the sides.

Galloping (p. 78)

- Trunk faces in forward direction.
- Lead leg lifts and moves forward to support weight.
- Rear foot closes quickly to supporting foot.
- Lead leg lifts to repeat action.
- Arms in are front, bent slightly.

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Grade 2

Skipping (p. 82)

- a) Step and hop on one foot and then on the other foot.
- b) Arms move in opposition to feet.
- c) Arm and leg lift on hopping action.
- d) Feet alternate lead.

Running (p. 80)

- a) Arm-leg opposition throughout action.
- b) Toes point forward.
- c) Foot lands heel to toe.
- d) Arms swing forward and backward – no crossing of midline.
- e) Trunk leans slightly forward.

Throwing Underhand (p. 138)

- a) Face target in preparation for throwing action.
- b) Arm back in preparation for action.
- c) Step with opposite foot as throwing arm moves forward.
- d) Release ball between knee and waist level.
- e) Follow through to target.

Jumping Rope

- a) Proper grip and posture.
- b) Two foot jump landing on balls of feet.
- c) Slight bend of knees.
- d) Continuously swings rope and jumps.

Grade 3

Leaping (p. 83)

- a) Takeoff is on one foot, and landing is on opposite foot.
- b) Legs extend for height and distance.
- c) Arms extend and lift for airborne time.
- d) Knee bends to absorb force on landing.

Jumping and Landing (Horizontal plane) (p. 89)

- a) Arms, back, and knees bend in preparation for jumping action.
- b) Arms extend forward as body propels forward.
- c) Body extends and stretches slightly upward while in flight.
- d) Hips, knees, and ankles bend on landing.
- e) Shoulders, knees, and ankles align for balance after landing.

Jumping and Landing (Vertical plane) (p. 92)

- a) Hips, knees, and ankles bend in preparation for jumping action.
- b) Arms extend upward as body propels upward.
- c) Body extends and stretches upward while in flight.
- d) Hips, knees, and ankles bend on landing.
- e) Shoulders, knees, and ankles align for balance after landing.

Balance

- a) Full extension of free body parts.
- b) Proper alignment over base of support.
- c) Tight muscles on balances.
- d) Stillness maintained.

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Weight Transfer (from feet to hands)

- Entire weight momentarily supported on hands.
- Hands maintain stationary contact with the floor.
- Feet return to floor without losing balance.

Grade 4

Throwing Overhand (p. 156)

- Side to target in preparation for throwing action.
- Arm back and extended, and elbow at shoulder height or slightly above in preparation for action; elbow leads.
- Step with opposite foot as throwing arm moves forward.
- Hip and spine rotate as throwing action is executed.
- Follow through toward target and across body.

Catching (p. 150)

- Extend arms outward to reach for ball.
 - Thumbs in for catch above the waist.
 - Thumbs out for catch at or below the waist.
- Watch the ball all the way into the hands.
- Catch with hands only; no cradling against the body.
- Pull the ball into the body as the catch is made.
- Curl the body slightly around the ball. (Specific only to certain catches.)

Dribbling/Ball Control with Hands (p. 193)

- Knees slightly bent.
- Opposite foot forward when dribbling in self-space.
- Contact ball with finger pads.
- Firm contact with top of ball.
 - Contact slightly behind ball for travel.
 - Ball to side and in front of body for travel.
- Eyes looking "over," not down, at ball.

Kicking Along the Ground (p. 171)

- Arms extend forward in preparation for kicking action.
- Contact with the ball is made directly **behind** center of ball.
- Contact the ball with shoelaces, or top of foot, for kicking action.
- Trunk leans back slightly in preparation for kicking action.
- Follow through with kicking leg extending forward and upward toward target.

Kicking in the Air (p. 171)

- Arms extend forward in preparation for kicking action.
- Contact with the ball is made directly **below** center of ball.
- Contact the ball with shoelaces, or top of foot, for kicking action.
- Trunk leans back slightly in preparation for kicking action.
- Follow through with kicking leg extending forward and upward toward target.

Punting (p. 176)

- Use a step-hop approach, becoming momentarily airborne.
- Arms extend forward and drop the ball as kicking leg moves forward.
- Extend kicking leg and foot; contact the ball with shoelaces, or top of foot, for punting action.
- Trunk leans backward in preparation for punting action.
- Follow through with kicking leg extending forward and upward just beyond waist level.

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Volleying Underhand (p. 205)

- a) Face the target in preparation for the volley.
- b) Opposite foot forward.
- c) Flat surface of hand contacts the ball.
- d) Contact with ball between knee and waist level.
- e) Follow through upward and to the target.

Striking with Short Implement (p. 222)

- a) Racket back in preparation for striking.
- b) Step on opposite foot as contact is made.
- c) Swing racket or paddle low to high.
- d) Coil and uncoil the trunk for preparation and execution of the striking action.
- e) Follow through for completion of the striking action.

Grade 5

Volleying Overhead (p. 209)

- a) Body aligned and positioned under the ball.
- b) Knees, arms, and ankles bent in preparation for the volley.
- c) Hands rounded; thumbs and first fingers make triangle (without touching) in preparation.
- d) Ball contacts only the finger pads; wrists stay firm.
- e) Arms extended upward on contact; follow through slightly toward target.

Striking with Long Implement (side-arm pattern) (p. 228)

- a) Bat up and back in preparation for the striking action.
- b) Step forward on opposite foot as contact is made.
- c) Coil and uncoil the trunk for preparation and execution of the striking action.
- d) Swing the bat on a horizontal plane.
- e) Wrist uncocks on follow-through for completion of the striking action.

Page Number References:

Holt/Hale, S.A., and Hall, T. J. 2016. *Lesson planning for elementary physical education: meeting the national standards & grade-level outcomes*. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.