

Coordination and motor skills

Helping your child build skills through meaningful practice

Children develop movement skills at different rates.

If a skill feels much harder, takes extra effort, or gets in the way of everyday life, an assessment can help. Coordination differences alone do not mean a diagnosis.

1 Skills include



Whole-body movement: balance, stairs, running, jumping and ball play.
Hand skills: drawing, cutlery, scissors and fastenings. New movement sequences can also take more time to learn.

2 What you might notice



Frequent trips or bumps; difficulty learning playground or ball skills; extra time or effort for dressing, stairs or school tasks; tiredness, frustration or avoiding activities. These signs are not a diagnosis.

3 When to seek support



Ask for advice if difficulties persist or affect play, self-care, sport or learning. Start with your GP, child health nurse or paediatrician. A physiotherapist or OT can assess specific movement and daily skills.

4 How physiotherapy may help



Choose a goal that matters to your child. Practise the real task in manageable steps, adjust the challenge and share helpful strategies with family, school or other professionals when useful.

5 Try at home



Use play your child enjoys. Practise one useful skill at a time, make it achievable, and build the challenge gradually. Allow time, notice effort and adapt or pause if your child is tired or uncomfortable.

6 Diagnosis and early support



DCD is one possible diagnosis and needs a broader assessment. Movement skills vary widely under five, but concerns can still be discussed and practical support can begin before a diagnosis is confirmed.



Seek timely medical advice if your child loses skills

they had already gained, develops new weakness or marked asymmetry, or has a sudden change in movement.