

Vestibular development: Autumn leaf fun

Try these autumn-themed activities to help stimulate children's vestibular development.

Learning aims

- Good posture and balance
- Movement sensation
- Visual tracking
- Muscle tone
- Language development
- Self-care and independence
- Self-regulation.



Resources

- Autumn leaves
- Blankets
- Pillows
- Balls
- Imagination!

What is the vestibular system?

The vestibular system is a sensory processing system relating to movement and balance. It has a huge impact on children's physical, emotional and learning skills.

Jumping, rolling, tumbling, hopping and swinging are great vestibular activities which challenge the body's ability to adjust to changes in gravitational pull and movement.

Try the following activities to help develop and stimulate children's vestibular sense at your nursery.

Activity Outline

- Set up an obstacle course with piles of leaves at each station requiring the children to conduct different movement activities to get to each station
 - The children could jump, spin or run to get through the piles of leaves
- Try rolling logs or tyres back, forward and side to side through the piles of leaves
- You could take the children on a nature walk and try to catch leaves as they fall from the trees
 - Encourage children to notice the smell and sights of leaves as they move their bodies and heads to catch the falling leaves
- Scatter small sized piles of leaves around your setting and encourage children to bounce a ball into them
- Create a leaf swing and ask children who would like to take part
 - Find a safe spot in your setting and using a strong blanket, ask a child to lay or sit on the blanket. Gather up all corners of the blanket and carefully swing the child onto a pile of leaves.

Special consideration

Before creating your leaf swing, carry out a risk assessment and consider your outdoor area and staffing to ensure children can have fun while keeping safe. You could also carry this out indoors over a pile of pillows.