

Numbered Cones for Physical Education

**Games, Drills, and Exercises
For Fun and Fitness**

by Joe Dinoffer

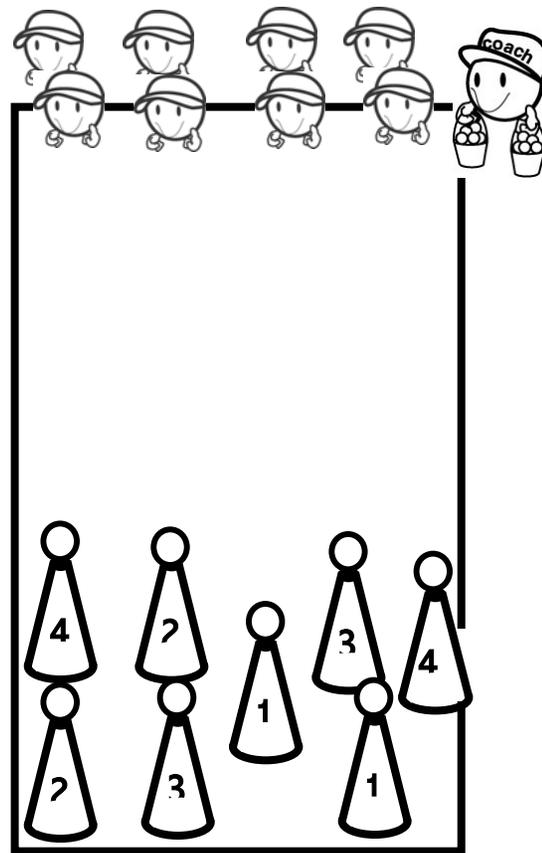
President, Oncourt Offcourt, Ltd.

About the Author

Joe Dinoffer has had an extensive "world class" career in the tennis industry, having conducted clinics and exhibitions in over 50 countries, personally logging over 30,000 hours of instruction in English, Spanish, and German. He is a USPTA and PTR Master Professional, a distinction that has been awarded to only a handful of tennis professionals in the world. He is also the founder and president of Oncourt Offcourt, Ltd., a company exclusively serving the needs of tennis, fitness, and physical education coaches with innovative training aids and educational tools.

Joe is the author and editor of 9 books, 18 DVDs and hundreds of magazine articles, having written numerous articles for *Tennis Tennis Life*, and *Racquet Sports Industry Magazine*. He has also appeared numerous times on television on The Tennis Channel in the United States.

#1 Retrieve and Return Relay

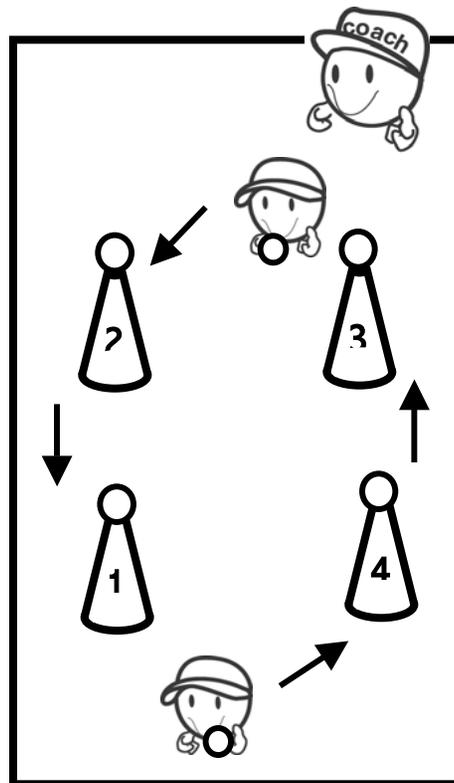


INSTRUCTIONS: Divide the children into four groups. Number the groups one to four and stand them at a starting line. On the other side of the play area spread out the numbered cones and place a tennis ball on each cone. On command from the coach, the first child of each group runs to retrieve the ball from one of their team's cones. That first runner crosses the start line and hands the ball to the second child who then runs and replaces it. That child returns empty handed and tags the next in line who retrieves it again.

When each child in the line has either retrieved or returned a ball on one of the team's cones, they repeat the sprint again with the next cone, until all cones are completed.

HELPFUL TIPS: To arrange it so the last child's ball goes in the coach's bucket, start the first runner with a ball in hand if needed.

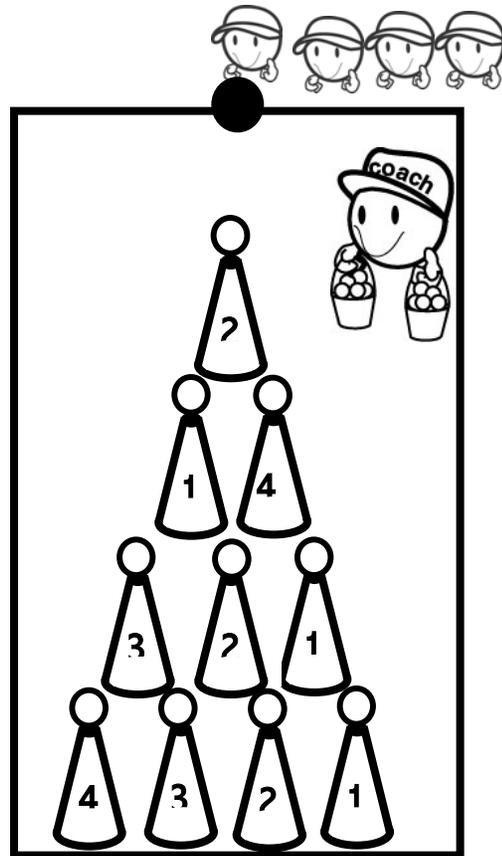
#2 Cone and Ball Tag



INSTRUCTIONS: Set up two and four cones for each pair of children with one ball on each cone and one ball in each child's hand. Blow a whistle and the children sprint in sequence from cone to cone, switching the ball in the hand with the ball on the cone at each one. Continues until one child is tagged. If a ball or cone falls, the game ends and children rotate or perform another drill before they come back to "Cone and Ball Tag." Options:

1. Play to seven points. Tag someone for three, and drop a ball or knock a cone over and lose one. Same as option #1 but see how many points can be accumulated in 60 seconds. To keep things moving quickly, as soon as a cone is flipped over or a ball is dropped, the coach counts to three and blows a whistle to start play again just as it began.

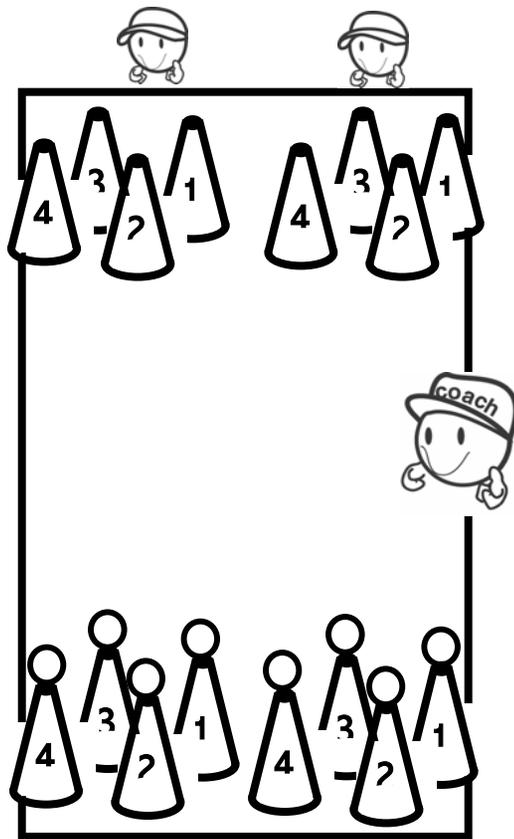
#3 Bowling for Dollars



INSTRUCTIONS: For this game you need to set up the numbered cones like bowling pins with tennis balls (or something similar) on top. Divide the children into teams and rotate them through the following tasks:

1. Bowler - Rolls the ball at the cones. Each child gets two turns as in regular bowling.
2. Pin-setter - Resets pins and balls after each player's turn. Also retrieves the "bowling ball" (suggest using a playground ball) and returns it to the bowler.
3. Scorekeeper - Tallies all cones knocked down by the numbers on the cones. However, any balls that roll outside the designated playing area deduct two points from the score. This rule ensures that the balls will be rolled with control and not excessive power.

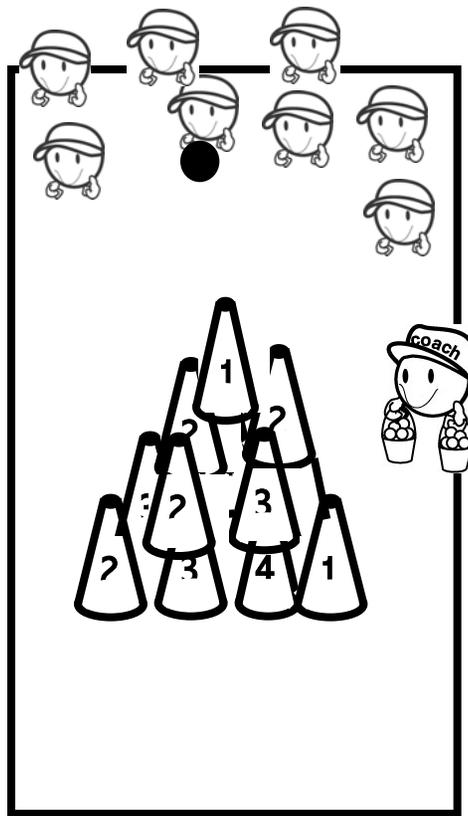
#4 Shuttle Run



INSTRUCTIONS: Shuttle runs come in many varieties. The unique feature of using numbered cones is that they create instant organization. Line up a set of four cones for each runner on each end of the running area. On the cones opposite the children, put a ball on each cone. Time the children who run from the starting point and bring one ball at a time back and place it on the same numbered cone. When all four balls are moved the exercise is finished. If a ball drops or a cone is knocked over, add five seconds to their time.

Instead of running normally, you can also try some of these alternatives: skipping, side shuffling, hopping, crab-walking, or even limiting the number of strides to get them to explode with long extended steps. You can also create a sequence of different movements for each numbered cone.

#5 Cone Mountain

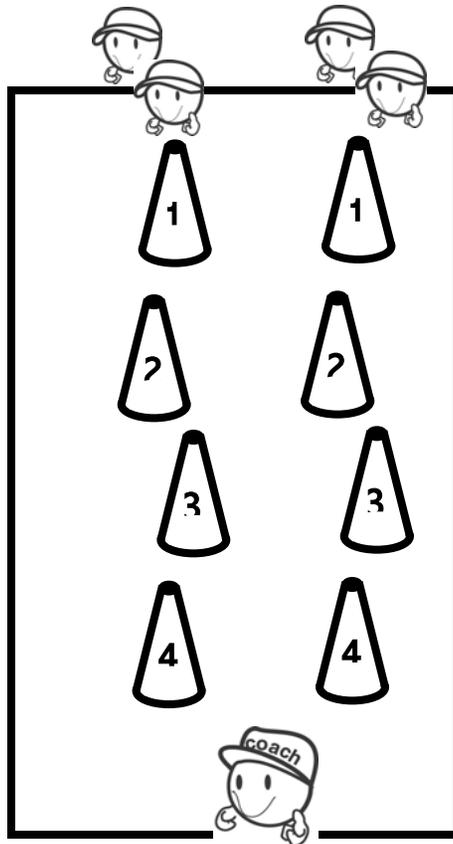


INSTRUCTIONS: This game is a problem solver and you will need as many cones as you can find. Divide your group into teams of four and give each team one-fourth the number of available cones to work with. The competition is for them to take three minutes and cooperate within their teams to stack the cones as high as possible.

When the three minutes are up, award two prizes, one for the tallest cone mountain and one for the tallest after it faces the hurricane of another child trying to blow it down.

To determine the second prize winner, allow one representative ten seconds to blow another team's mountain down. Then, when one representative from each team has blown upon another team's mountain, the highest cone mountain remaining wins second prize. Give out stickers or just a standing ovation from the other children as prizes.

#6 Slalom Race

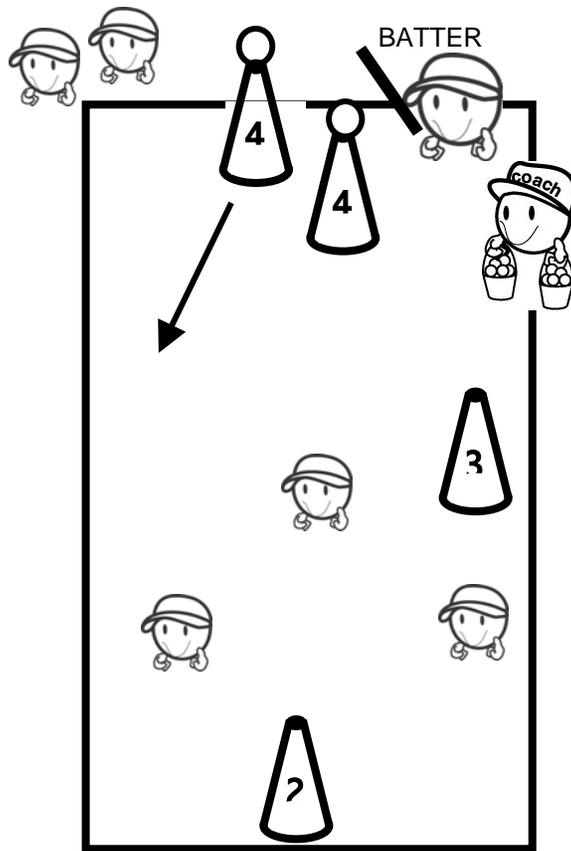


INSTRUCTIONS: Pretend you are watching a slalom snow ski race and you will know exactly how to run this exercise. Set up a number of cones as the slalom course. Then establish a starting line plus a turn around line about ten feet past the last cone.

Divide the children into teams and have them run the course relay-style, one after another. Have each child run the course by weaving in and out of each cone and then sprint to the turnaround line before returning. After completing the return run, have them tag the next teammate to run the course. The team that completes the course first and sits down is the winner.

Instead of running normally, you can also try some of these alternatives: skipping, side shuffling, hopping, crab-walking (part of the way), or even limiting the number of strides to get them to explode with long extended steps.

#7 T-Ball Baseball

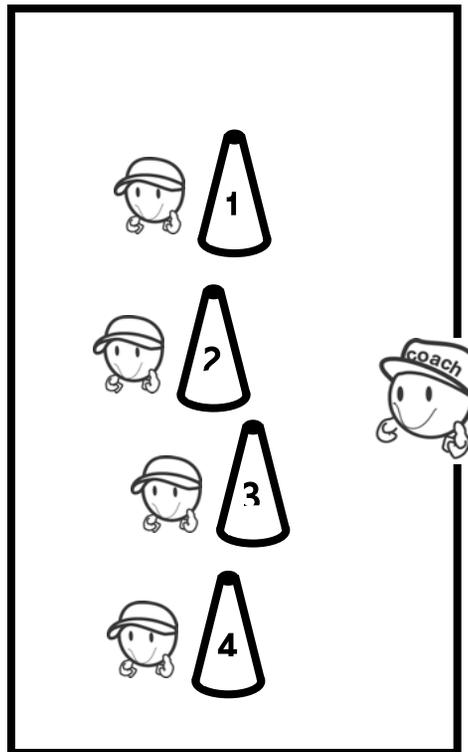


INSTRUCTIONS: Think baseball with a twist. For this game, you will need cones, tennis or foam balls, and a foam or plastic bat). Start by placing a ball on the home plate cone to be hit.

After the hit, the batter has to first pick up the ball from the cone next to home plate and run to first base and place the ball there. The fielders, on the other hand, can make the hitter "out" by placing the ball that was hit onto that same base to which a runner is racing before the runner places his or her ball there.

In other words, as runners advance, they have to place their ball on the base they are running towards before the fielder can do it. All other baseball rules apply, including getting a batter out by catching balls directly out of the air. The benefit of foam balls is not only safety, but also that the balls won't travel as far when hit.

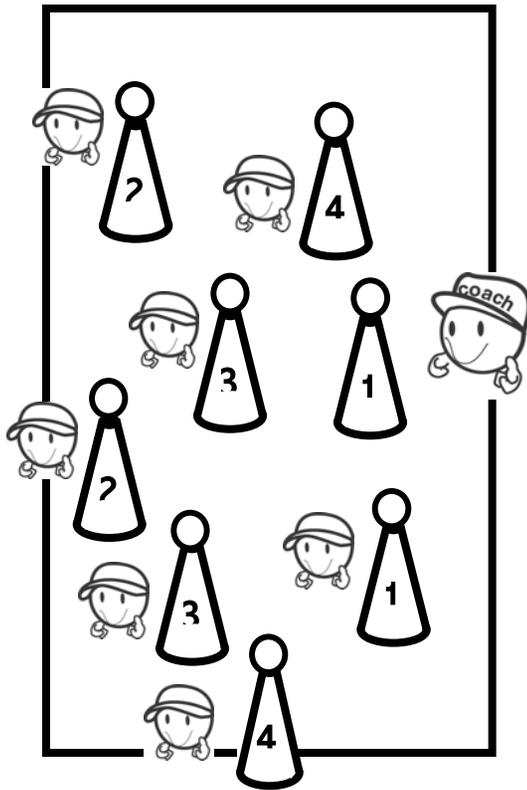
#8 Plyometric Variations



INSTRUCTIONS: Plyometric exercises build upper leg strength to develop speed and agility for all sports. Place one cone besides each child as seen in the diagram. In this exercise, have the athletes perform a lateral jump back and forth over the cone, with both feet together. Try five in a row and increase to fifteen or twenty. Make sure the jumps are over the cone, not around it. Here are some options:

1. Hop with one foot sideways.
2. One foot or two, forwards and backwards.
3. Perform the same exercises as listed above with multiple cones lined up.
4. Same as above with two or more cones placed side-by-side so the child has to jump over a wider obstacle. To ensure safety, have the child jump next to the cone first, and then over the cone itself.

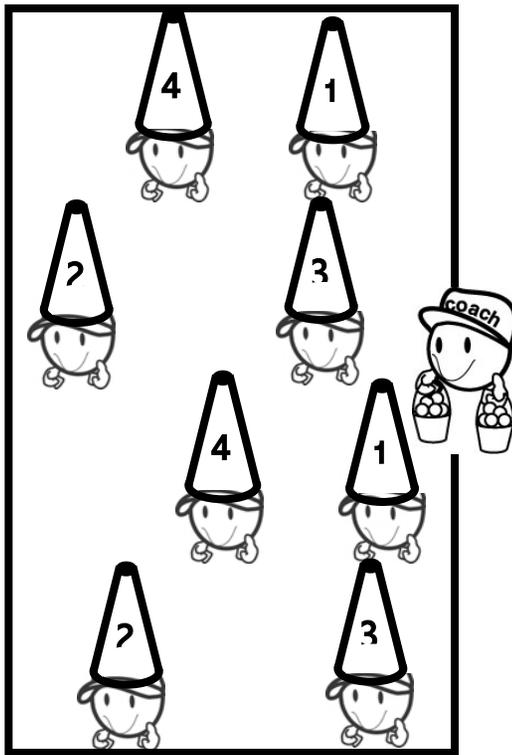
#9 Simon Says



INSTRUCTIONS: Simon Says is one of the greatest game concepts of all time. In this situation, use the rules of Simon Says to create exercise patterns in an enjoyable atmosphere. Here are some options to get you started. You'll quick see that the variations are practically endless.

- 1.Hop next to a cone but aware of jumping high enough to get over it.
 - 2.Hop over it with one or two feet.
 - 3.Ball tosses while jumping.
 - 4.Ball toss, pick up the cone and catch it.
 - 5.Pair up with a partner and toss and catch two balls.
 - 6.Balance on one foot while tossing and catching a ball in the cone.
- Run in circles around the cone in one direction or the other, with the leader changing directions.

#10 Cone Head Balance Tag

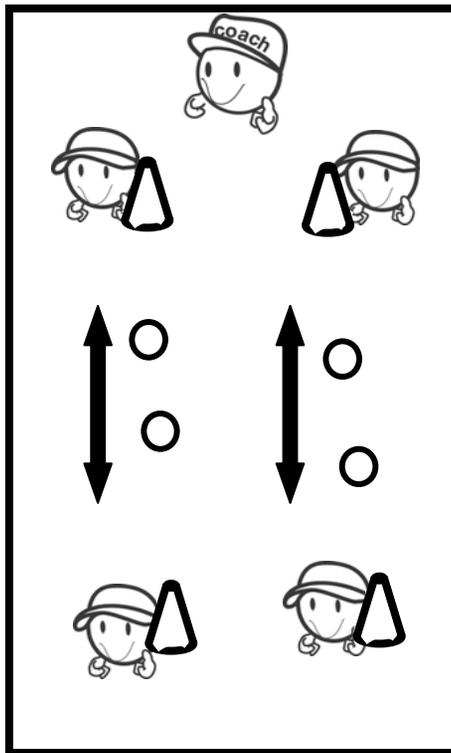


INSTRUCTIONS: There's nothing like a simple game of tag while balancing a cone on your head to add interest and fun to any skill building class. Spread the group around the play area and give each one a single cone to put on their heads. The only rule to add is that if anyone's cone falls off their head they immediately become "it" and no one is allowed to use their hands to keep it on. If the "it" person loses their own cone, they must tag two people before changing positions with the second one they tag. Instead of running normally, you can also try some of these alternatives:

- Skipping
- Side shuffling
- Hopping

You can also try partner tag, train tag, etc. And, to create an even greater balancing challenge, put a ball on top of the cone.

#11 Cone Tricks

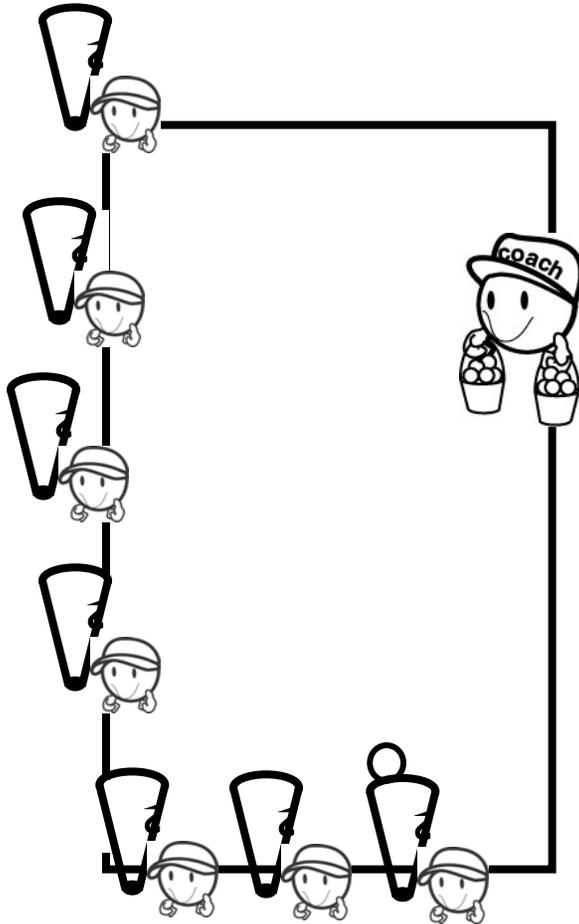


INSTRUCTIONS: This group of tricks are as exciting to watch as they are to try out. The props needed are cones and balls. The varieties are truly endless, but here are a few to get you started.

1. Toss the ball out of the cone and then catch it again.
2. Toss the ball out of the cone and then spin in a full circle before catching the ball inside the cone.
3. Toss the cone and the ball into the air, catch the cone and then catch the ball inside it.
4. Pair up with someone else and toss and catch one ball back and forth; then two balls at the same time (see the diagram).

These exercises can be made competitive by seeing which player in a group can succeed the most in two minutes.

#12 Jog and Toss



INSTRUCTIONS: This exercise is a perfect warm-up. Studies show that warm-ups are critical to injury prevention, since a warm-up exercise that raises the core body temperature by one degree reduces the risk of injury by ninety percent.

The unique feature of this warm-up idea is that it's fun, as compared to just jogging in place or in circles around a playing area.

Line up the children and give each one cone to hold. Have them slowly jog in a circle around the training area and give the first child a ball that tosses it back over his or her head to the next child. That next athlete must catch the ball in their cone and then take it out and toss it to the next player in line.

As soon as the ball reaches the end of the line, that last person sprints to the head of the line and continues the pattern.