

# Progression Ideas

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**The width and depth of a movement vocabulary is dependent on the coach / teacher being creative. The use of Static to Dynamic; Slow to Fast; Simple to Complex; Unloaded to Loaded; Amplitude manipulation are tools that can help this creativity. The following information is a summary of how these elements can be delivered.**

Teachers and coaches are being held responsible for the creation of an appropriate physical journey to well-being and/or sports performance participation. In essence, there are 3 main pillars of this **physical** journey – mechanical, metabolic and behavioural (some people think the pillars are just sports-specific technical and tactical but I am afraid that this singularity of thought has failed). The cornerstone of mechanical efficiency is the creation of a wide and deep movement vocabulary that has been learned by an exposure to a range of processes (the implicit to explicit learning continuum that contains such processes as: Constraint manipulation, Outcome based and External attention learning, the use of Analogies, etc); and has been delivered relative to the individual's unique maturation journey.

The practitioner's delivery toolbox should contain a variety of tools that allow them to select and teach an appropriate type and level of exercise to the individual in the class or in the coaching session. Unfortunately, too many coaches and teachers have only three tools in their possession:

- (a) Volume (lots and lots of mindless repetitions that just get the kids tired)
- (b) External resistance (a Barbell a Dumbbell or Medicine Ball or Sand-Sack)
- (c) Volume and External Resistance together.

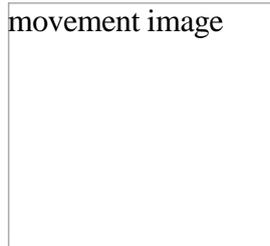
No doubt that there will be some adaptation to these methods but they are limited when put into the context of most individual and team field, court and flotation sports and the physical competence they will need to do them. In many sporting situations they will have to execute the movement pattern in various directions, at various speeds, at various amplitudes, in multiple planes while doing other actions like lifting, reaching, carrying, catching, passing, jumping, kicking, pulling, pushing, etc. Sometimes they will have to do all these movements while reacting to opposition or to a ball in flight. If this is the world they will have to live in then it is up to us to give them a vocabulary of movement experiences that prepare them for this environment.

To illustrate some of these tools let us look at the Squat movement where the athlete conducts the 'triple-flexion' movement (sitting on a chair) and 'triple-extension' movement (standing up from the chair). It would be remiss to think that this single plane (sitting and standing) movement pattern will be sufficient to aid the athlete along the pathway to what they will face in the sports-performance setting (apart from Power-lifting athletes).

By all means start the journey with the conventional Double-Leg Squat to parallel where the following will be seen.

1. Head up, Chest up
2. Back straight and parallel to Shins
3. Feet Shoulder width apart, Heels down

4. Thighs parallel to the floor.
5. Ankle, Knee and Hip aligned



It is suggested that before you start to reach for the volume and external resistance tools you might want to consider the following:

**Change the Amplitude of the movement –**

Shallow; Deep – and all stations in-between.

**Change the Speed of the movement –**

Static; Slow; Fast – and all stations in-between

**All the above + Change the position of the Feet –**

Wide stance; Wide stance Toes out; Wide stance Toes in; Wide stance one Foot ahead (L&R); All the above – to Toes.

Narrow stance; Narrow stance one Foot ahead (L&R); All the above to Toes

**All the above + change the Trunk position –**

Bend; Rotate; Bend and Rotate

With Broomsticks

With Medicine Balls

**All the above + change Arm position / action**

Hands behind Head

Hands ahead

Hands overhead

Hands across Chest

Catch an object

Catch and throw / pass an object

Bounce a ball

Juggle a ball

With wide Arms

With tight to body Arms

Push an object up; out

Pull an object or an elastic rope high to low; low to high; diagonally low to high; diagonally high to low

**All the above + change how they arrive in and leave the position**

Land from a small jump (Forwards, Backwards, Sideways (L&R), Restart in all directions e.g. Jump forwards x 2 and jump backwards once to the Squat landing

Land from a small Hop

Land from a small Leap

Land off a box

Land on a box

Walk, brake and stop into a Squat – multiple directions

Jog, brake and stop into a Squat – multiple directions

Run, brake and stop into a Squat – multiple directions

Land going up-hill

Land going down-hill

### **All the above + followed by a jump**

For height

For distance

With 90 Rotation

With 180 Rotation

With 360 Rotation

The coach will not have to always show them all these variations or coach them robotically. Challenge the athlete to change a body part or shape or speed and applaud their creativity. Let them observe another athlete's solution – they have great observation and mimicking skills that help create the vocabulary.

*“Can you be taller in shape?”*

*“Pretend to sit in a chair”*

*“Can you be smaller in shape?”*

*“Can you change the position of your Arms?”*

*“How many can you do in 5 secs?”*

*“Can you land quietly?”*

*“Can you land with a loud noise?”*

*“Who can do this in s-l-o-w motion?”*

*“What happens if you close your eyes?”*

*“In pairs, copy what your partner does”*

*“Do the movement to this music”*

With all these puzzles to solve the athlete will amass a wide and deep movement vocabulary from which their developed proprioception (knowing and controlling where they are in time and space), balance, coordination in this Squat pattern will be available to them. Whatever you find helpful here for the Squat movement can be applied to the other foundation movement of Lunge, Pull, Push, Brace, Rotate, Hinge and Landing. You will have noticed that even though the Squat was the centre of attention in this document you can see many of the other foundations movements involved. You can also see some of the Running, Jumping, Throwing and Catching elements being integrated. This is the beauty of a movement curriculum, it links so many things together.

The opportunities for the delivery of this movement curriculum are basically

- (a) In PE lessons
- (b) movement breaks in the classroom
- (c) in sports specific sessions as part of the warm-up
- (d) as movement breaks throughout the main part of the training session
- (e) as 'homework' where the student / athlete explores the movements in their own time.

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