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Active After-school Communities

Helping kids and communities get active

Playing for Life – Table Tennis



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The authors and contributors of the *TOPS - Table Tennis in Schools Program* manual.

Disclaimer

This resource has been designed for use with students aged 4 to 12. It assumes that each student is healthy and has no medical condition, disability, illness, impairment or other reason that may impact, limit, restrict their involvement in sport or other physical activity. A student should not be allowed to participate in an activity if any medical, physical or other factor indicates that they are not suited to that activity.

Where there are any queries or concerns about such matters, the consent of the student's parent or guardian should be obtained before allowing participation. While care has been taken in the preparation of this resource, the publisher and authors do not accept any liability arising from the use of this resource, including, without limitation, from any activities described in the resource.

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LESSON PLANS

OTHER INFORMATION

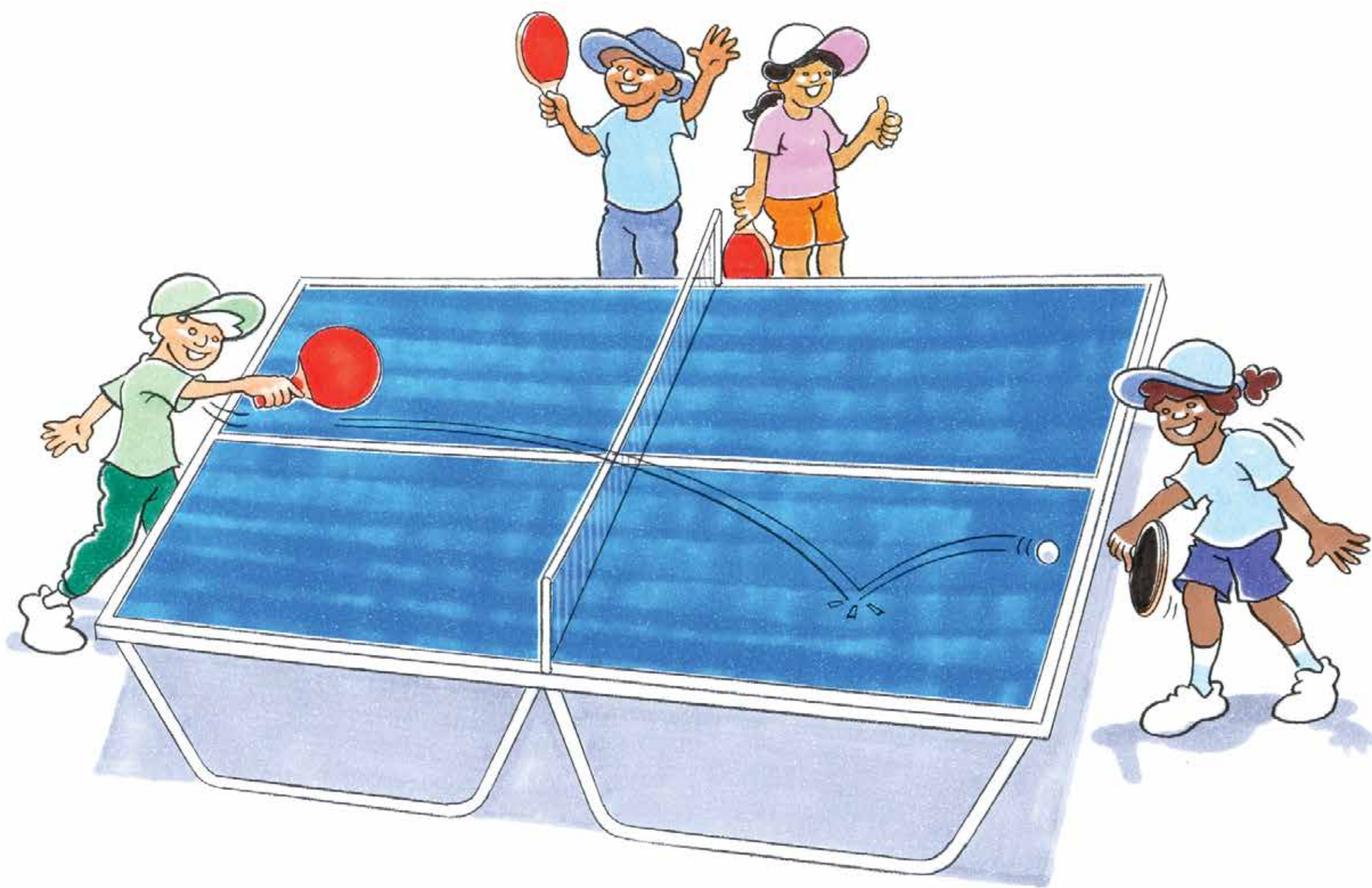


Introduction to Table Tennis



Did you know?

- Table Tennis became an Olympic sport in the 1988 Summer Olympics in Seoul
- Table Tennis is both an Olympic and Paralympic sport
- Table Tennis is the national sport in China, where millions of people play
- Elite players can hit the ball at speeds over 160km/hour



The *Playing for Life – Table Tennis* manual consists of seven sequential game-based lessons designed to assist coaches and teachers, with any level of Table Tennis understanding, to deliver fun and inclusive games to primary school-aged children. The lessons can be conducted with and without Table Tennis tables, using basic and readily available equipment.

The *Playing for Life – Table Tennis* manual is a combination of games from the *TOPS – Table Tennis in Schools Program* developed by Table Tennis Victoria/Table Tennis Australia and the Playing for Life resource kit developed by the Australian Sports Commission.

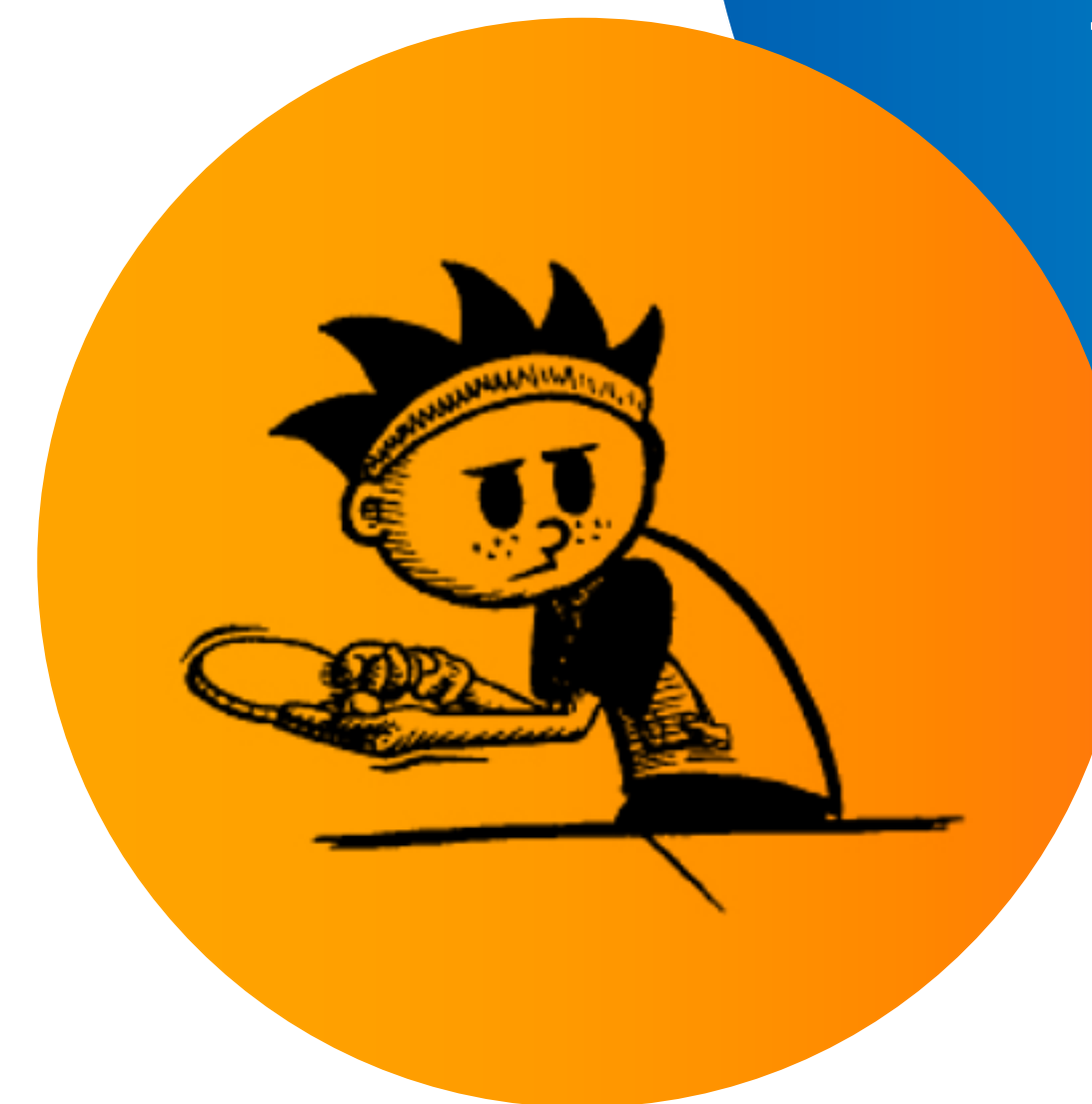
Introduction to Table Tennis



Did you know?

The *Playing for Life – Table Tennis* manual aims to provide fun, safe and engaging activities to ensure maximum participation for all children regardless of their ability. It represents a ‘taster’ to the sport of Table Tennis. Any player or coach who would like to pursue further involvement in the game can contact their state Table Tennis association (see contact details on page 64).

In this manual, diagrams similar to this image indicate information from the TOPS - Table Tennis in Schools manual.



Introduction to Table Tennis



Tips for delivering Playing for Life — Table Tennis

- 1** Table Tennis is best played indoors when using table tennis balls, because the wind outdoors can affect the flight of the ball.
- 2** Most games in the manual can be conducted without the need for a Table Tennis table.
- 3** Duplicate games and circuits to ensure maximum participation.
- 4** You should be aware that you have a legal responsibility to provide a 'duty of care' to the participants of the program and you must ensure that you provide an adequate level of direct supervision.
- 5** Keep instructions as brief as possible to ensure participants are quickly engaged in the activity.



Introduction to Table Tennis



Golden rules of safety

- 1** Check the playing area is free of hazards and is a safe distance away from walls and fixed objects.
- 2** Ensure the surface is a safe and appropriate surface for the activities.
- 3** Check there is a safe distance between groups of participants and tables .
- 4** It is recommended that there is space of at least two metres at either end of the table for the players.
- 5** Make sure all equipment is appropriate, safe and working correctly.
- 6** Always check equipment that has been set up by others before you use it.
- 7** Always provide clear instructions for the game and use of equipment.
- 8** Instruct participants on safety when at the table: no leaning on the table.
- 9** Ensure participants care for rackets: no picking of the rubber on the racket.
- 10** Remind players to beware of table corners when moving around the tables.

Introduction to Table Tennis



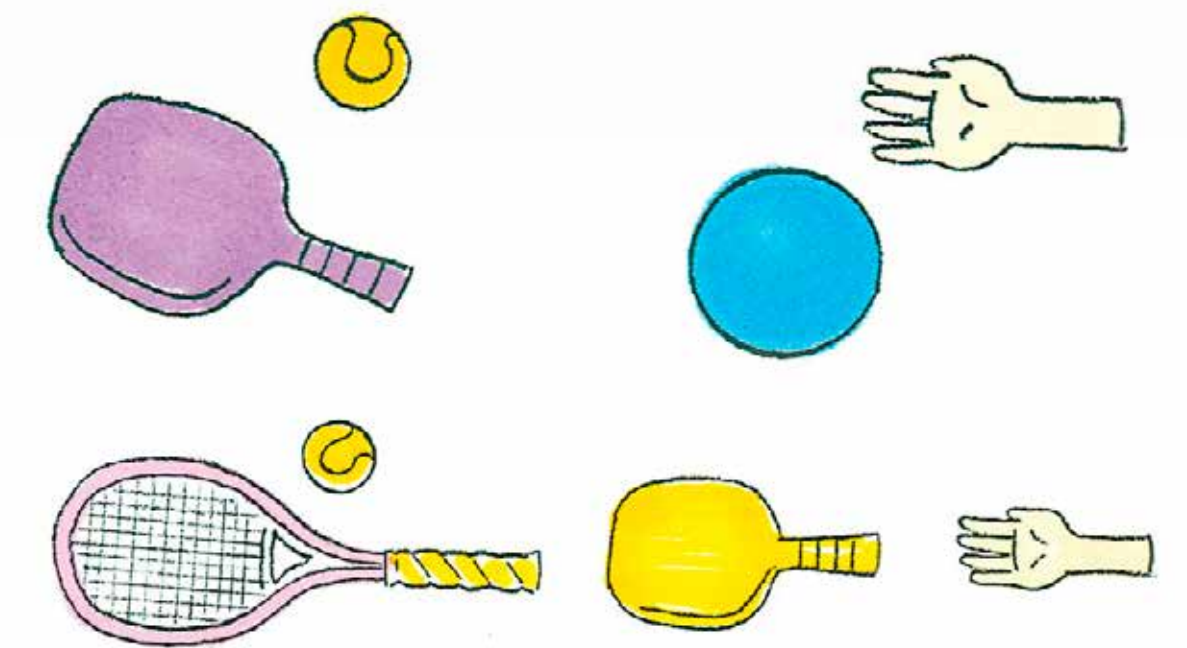
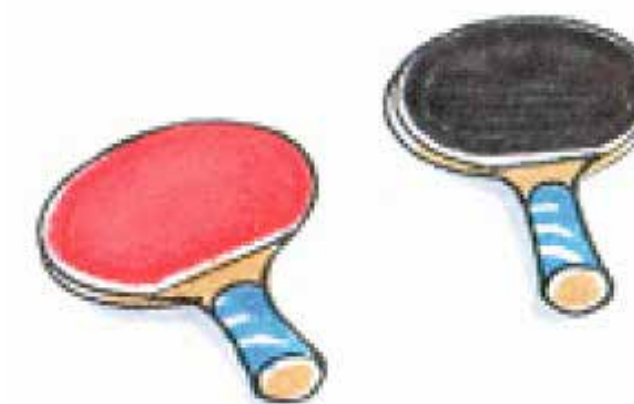
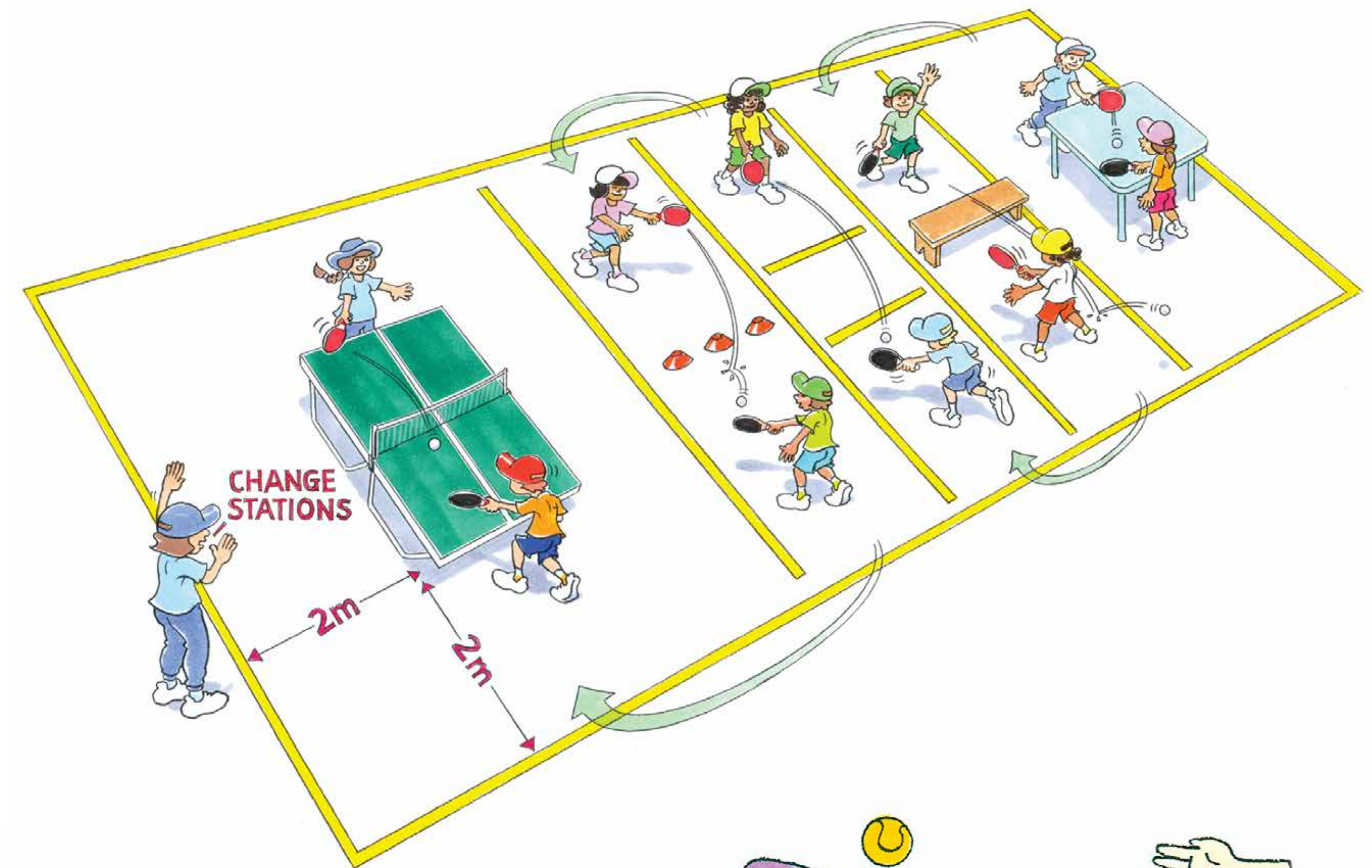
Table Tennis equipment modifications

Tables and nets

- School tables and trestle tables (ensure sturdiness and enforce safety rules)
- Books, pieces of wood and folded paper can be used as a net

Table Tennis rackets and balls

- Table Tennis rackets are always red on one side and black on the other
- Table Tennis uses a ball that is 40mm and made of celluloid or similar plastic
- Larger-sized Table Tennis balls or balloons are an easier alternative
- Games being played on the floor can also use tennis balls or similar



Introduction to Table Tennis



Table Tennis basic terms

A rally

is the period during which the ball is in play.

A serve

is played from behind the table with the server hitting the ball so that it bounces on their half of the table before going over the net and bouncing on their opponent's half of the table.

Service rule

each player has two serves in a row before it is the opponent's turn.

A let

is called when the ball hits the net during a serve. When a 'let' is called, the server may have another serve.

A game

is played with two (singles) or four (doubles) players and is won when a person or team reaches 11 points. Games can also be played with a time limit (for example a player or team leading after five minutes is the winner). If scores are level, then the game is determined with serves alternating after each point. The first player or team two points in front of their opponent wins the game.

Introduction to Table Tennis



Rules

Scoring

The server's score is always called first. A point is scored each time a rally is won. If both players reach ten points, players alternate with one serve each and the first player two points ahead of the other player wins the game.

Five common ways to win a point

- 1 The opponent fails to make a correct service
- 2 The opponent fails to make a correct return
- 3 The opponent serves or hits the ball over the court or beyond the end line without touching the court
- 4 The opponent's free hand touches the playing surface
- 5 The doubles opponent strikes the ball out of the sequence established by the server and first receiver

Doubles rules

In doubles, all players successively take it in turns to hit the ball. At each change of service, the previous receiver becomes the server, while the previous server swaps sides with their partner who becomes the receiver.

Table Tennis skills



Skills

Grip

The method used to hold the racket

- The shakehand grip is easiest to use for young children
- The forefinger and thumb should lie roughly parallel to the straight edge of the rubber



Shakehand Grip
Forehand



Shakehand Grip
Backhand

Basic ready position

The stance used for returning a serve

- Feet should be shoulder width apart with knees bent and a slight lean forward
- Racket should be table height and in front of the body



Serve

The skill used to start a rally

- The ball starts in a flat palm and is tossed up and hit on the way down
- The ball must contact both sides of the table



Table Tennis skills



Skills

Service return

The action of the opponent to return the service

Forehand drive

The hard, straight attacking stroke made on the forehand side of the racket

- The racket should be held above the elbow and move from the ready position into a backswing
- The ball should be contacted with an upward brushing action
- The racket follows through forward and up, close to head height as if saluting



Ready Position



Backswing



Forward Movement



Follow Through

Backhand drive

The hard, straight attacking stroke made on the backhand side of the racket

- The racket is held in front of the body in the ready position
- The racket moves in the direction of the ball and upward



Ready Position



Backswing



Forward Movement



Follow Through

Playing for Life — what is it?



Key concepts

Playing for Life is an approach to coaching that uses games rather than drills to introduce the skills and tactics of the particular sport or structured physical activity being delivered. Each session is designed purposefully, so that the games progressively introduce and develop the particular skill that is the focus of the session.

The game is the focus

Players develop sporting skills and tactics by playing fun games rather than traditional drills

Coach is a facilitator

The coach sets challenges for the players to find solutions through games rather than instructing players on how to perform a skill

Player role modelling

Coaches use players during the game to demonstrate good technique and skilful play

Discrete coaching

Allows players needing extra assistance to be discretely coached on the side in an unobtrusive way while the game is in progress

Ask the players

Questioning players is a valuable strategy to engage the students in changing the activity or providing feedback on whether the game is achieving desired outcomes

Playing for Life — what is it?



CHANGE IT

Vary any one or more of the following game elements to maximise participation and better meet student needs and game objectives.

It is more important to remember the concept of CHANGE IT than to remember what each letter represents.

If it's not working ...
CHANGE IT!!

C	Coaching style	I	Inclusion
H	How you score/win	T	Time
A	Area		
N	Numbers		
G	Game rules		
E	Equipment		

Overview of lessons

	LESSON 1	LESSON 2	LESSON 3	LESSON 4	LESSON 5	LESSON 6	LESSON 7
SKILL FOCUS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grip • Ready position • Basic rally 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forehand drive • Backhand drive • Basic rally 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service • Service throw 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Singles games 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doubles games 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Singles and doubles games 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Singles and doubles games
START OUT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frost and Thaw tag • Racket tapping 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flip it • Stork tag 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dribblers and robbers • Continuous tennis • Hit and catch 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Throw, throw, throw • Pirate's gold 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shark attack 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form a group • Hit the square 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flip it • Round the table
GET INTO IT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Triangle roll • 2 square bounce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wall tennis • Pepper • Roller ball 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bucket and hoop 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rally around 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ten pin knockdown • King and Queen of the court 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Round the table • Top table 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doubles games
FINISH UP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put it away! • What did you learn? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did you learn? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let's see it 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four corners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let's see it 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put it away! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let's see it • What did you learn?



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Behaviour Management

Good behaviour management and strategies to deal with misbehaviour are essential to carrying out a coaching session. Strategies aimed at conducting effective and safe sessions go a long way to preventing misbehaviour.

Common causes of misbehaviour

Inappropriate behaviour and/or a lack of interest and attention may be caused by:

- insufficient equipment for group size
- limited supervision and lack of interest shown by the coach
- activities which are slow to start, due to too much talking by the coach
- activities that run for too long
- children waiting in long lines for their turn
- activities that are boring and not challenging enough
- unclear rules and expectations.

In other words, sometimes the coach's program, organisation or style can contribute to disruptive behaviour.

Strategies to prevent misbehaviour

- Create a team atmosphere: be positive and encouraging and give feedback.
- Ensure children have a clear understanding of rules, routines and appropriate behaviour. Manage inappropriate behaviour as soon as it occurs.

- Understand pre-existing rules and routines, and what strategies and approaches work well with a particular group or individual.
- Learn about any children with physical, behavioural, emotional or social problems.
- Look for good behaviour and reward through praise and privileges.
- Provide fun and variety, and high levels of activity.
- Challenge more experienced children and make discrete allowances for those less skilled.
- Use inclusive coaching practices, that is, adapt and modify coaching practices to ensure all children have the opportunity to participate.
- Remember to use the CHANGE IT principle.
- Plan activities that follow on from each other, thus reducing waiting time.



How to manage misbehaviour

The following table provides a suggested routine for dealing with misbehaviour. Ensure you are consistent and patient in following the suggestions as some misbehaviour may need time to correct.

Misbehaviour presents	Quietly correct Depending on the severity of the misbehaviour, it may be appropriate to address the behaviour in front of the group, to demonstrate the standards expected.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do so without delay. • Non-verbal cues may be appropriate. • Join in and partner with the misbehaving child without comment. • Divert the child's attention. • Ask a skill-related question, such as: 'How is that serve coming along?' • Remind the child discretely of group rules and appropriate behaviour. • Address the behaviour of the child, not their character.
Misbehaviour still an issue	The coach's next step...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relate the problem back to team rules. • Explain how their behaviour is impacting others. • Ask the child: 'What are you doing?' and: 'Is this against the rules?'. Follow on with: 'What should you be doing?'
Misbehaviour continues	Explain the consequences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be polite, calm, brief and specific. • Do not use punishment, blame, shame, sarcasm or cause pain. • Do not ignore the child. • Forgive and forget. • Remove the child from the activity; use a time-out away from other children but close enough to supervise. • Provide an opportunity for the child to rejoin the group, if they agree to abide by the rules.
Referral		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the problem is not rectified, refer the matter to an appropriate person.



Over Competitiveness

A desire to win at all costs may promote negative behaviours and discourage the cooperation and participation of others.

Identifying behaviours

Children may:

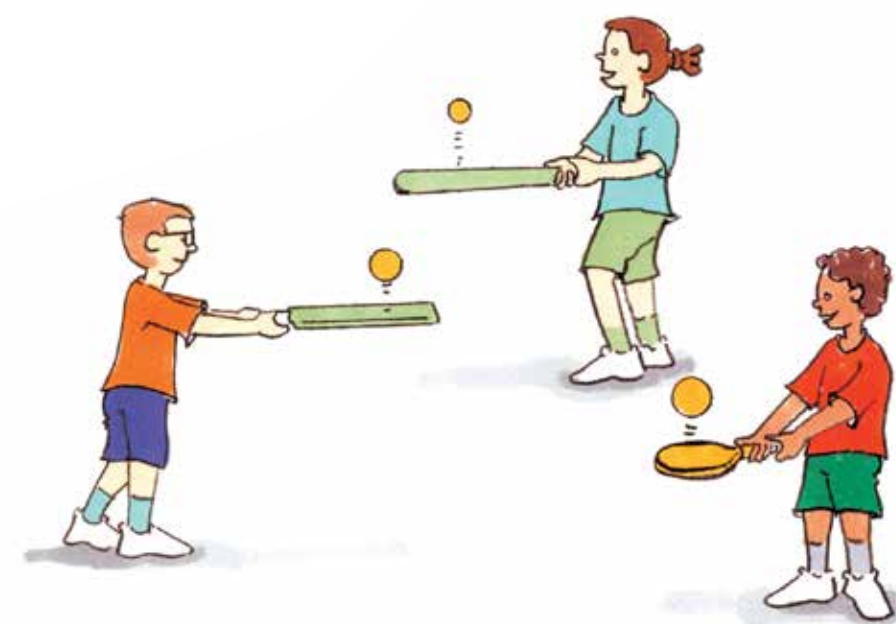
- Not cooperate during group activities
- Break rules to win the game
- Criticise other children and their abilities
- Disrespectfully celebrate a win

What you can do

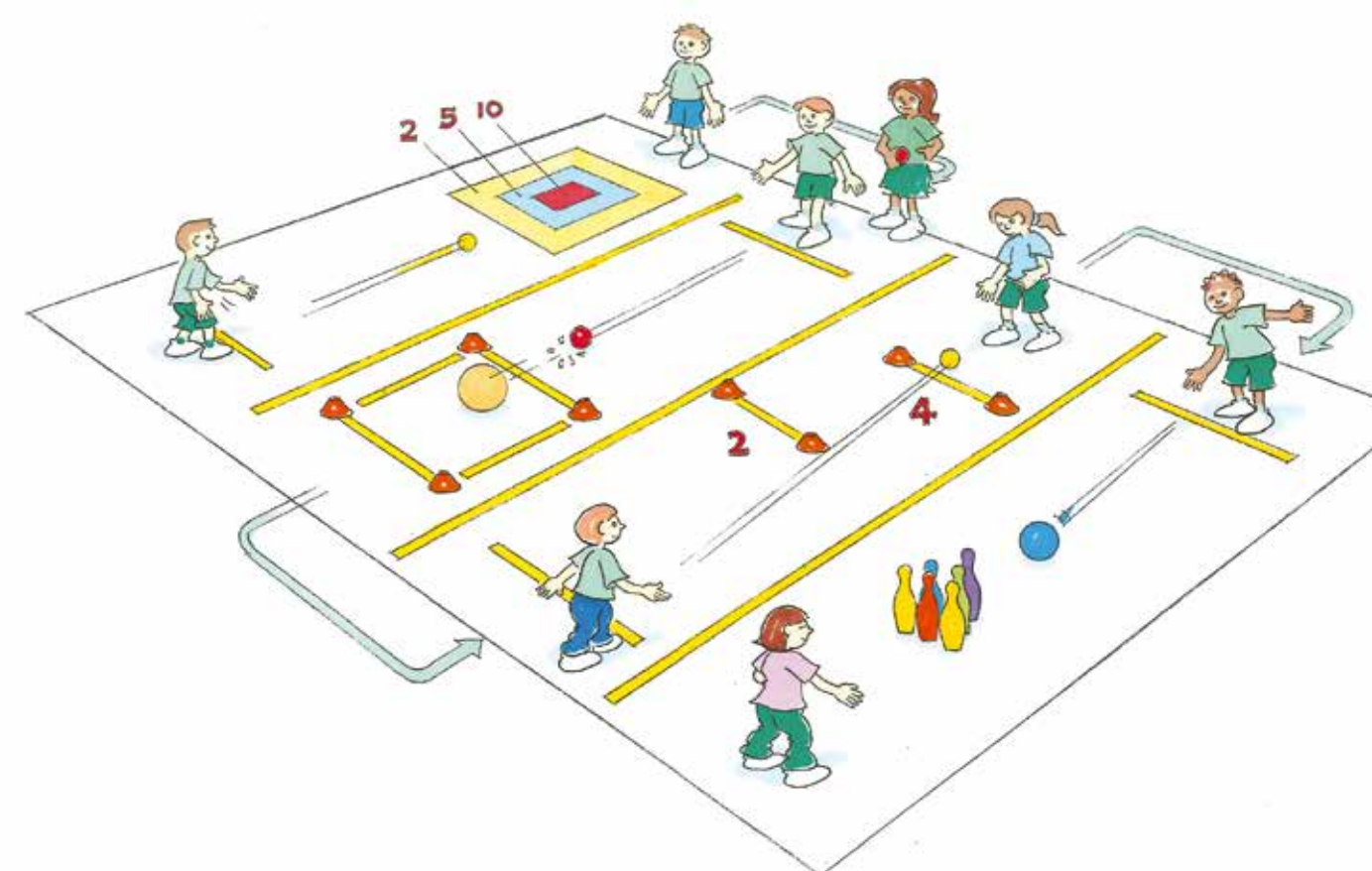
Simple changes to activities may help to address over competitive behaviours. Remember to address a child's behaviour and not their character, and be a good role model at all times.

- Highlight examples of cooperative play and good sportsmanship. Issue bonus points to reward desirable behaviour.

- Reduce emphasis on scoring and set other types of challenges, for example, individual challenges rather than team challenges.



- Use activities in which personal bests can be achieved.
- Use small group activities, or circuits, to narrow children's attention to their own performance.



- Encourage team building routines, such as handshakes and three cheers at the end of the game.
- Select a 'spotter' who rewards sportsmanship.

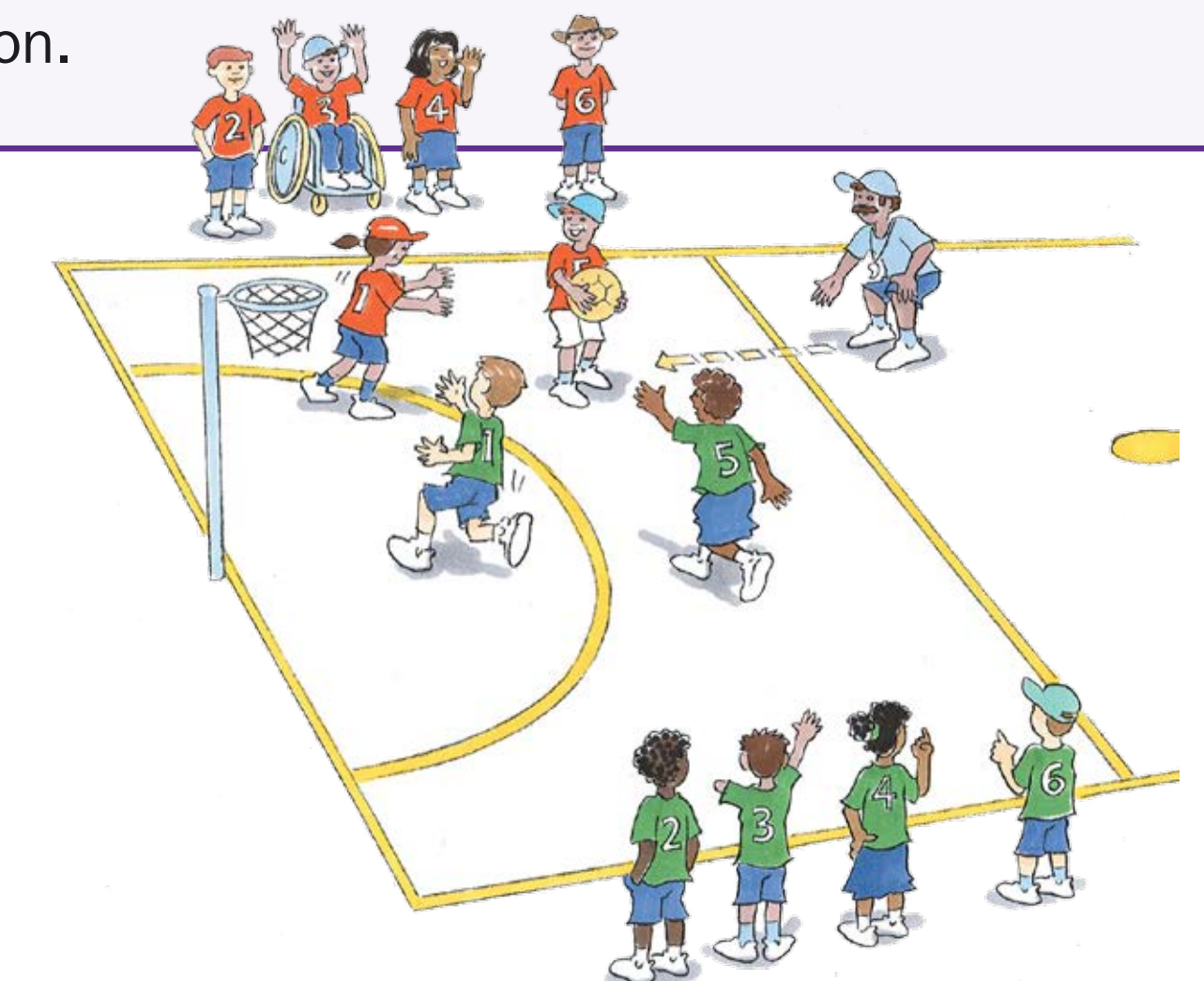


Example:

During a netball game one of the players, Rachel, was becoming increasingly frustrated and yelling at her team-mates each time they made an error. This resulted in the team becoming discouraged and no longer enjoying the game.

This behaviour escalated until the coach, Roger, decided to stop the game, and introduce a game of Numbers netball where the focus was on team work and cooperation.

Roger observed that Rachel was not offering any encouraging comments, but, when it was her turn to shoot, the other children gave plenty of encouragement. Roger strongly encouraged the team's supportive behaviour until, eventually, Rachel started providing positive comments, even when a player missed their shot. Roger then rewarded Rachel's behaviour through praise, and felt ready to try another game of netball.



Domineering Behaviour

All groups will include children of varying skill levels, abilities and experience, who may intentionally or unintentionally dominate sessions. This can become disruptive to the coach and affect the involvement of others.

Identifying behaviours

Children may:

- Assume team leader roles and direct other children
- Dominate discussions and questions by the coach
- Continually influence the pace and direction of activities
- Intentionally or unintentionally ignore those less skilled in the group
- Dominate the games or activities

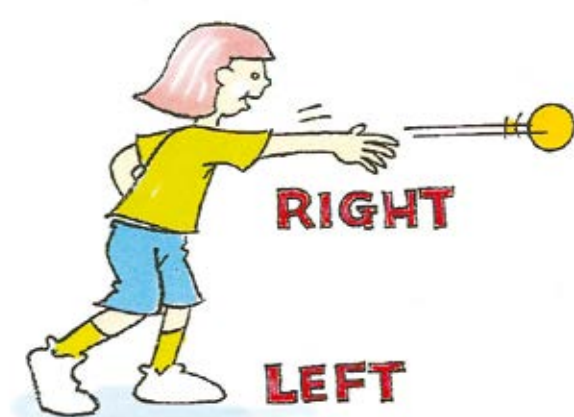
- Highlight examples of cooperative play and issue bonus points to reward desirable behaviours.



What you can do

Simple changes to activities may help to address domineering behaviour in group activities. Remember to address a child's behaviour and not their character, and be a good role model at all times.

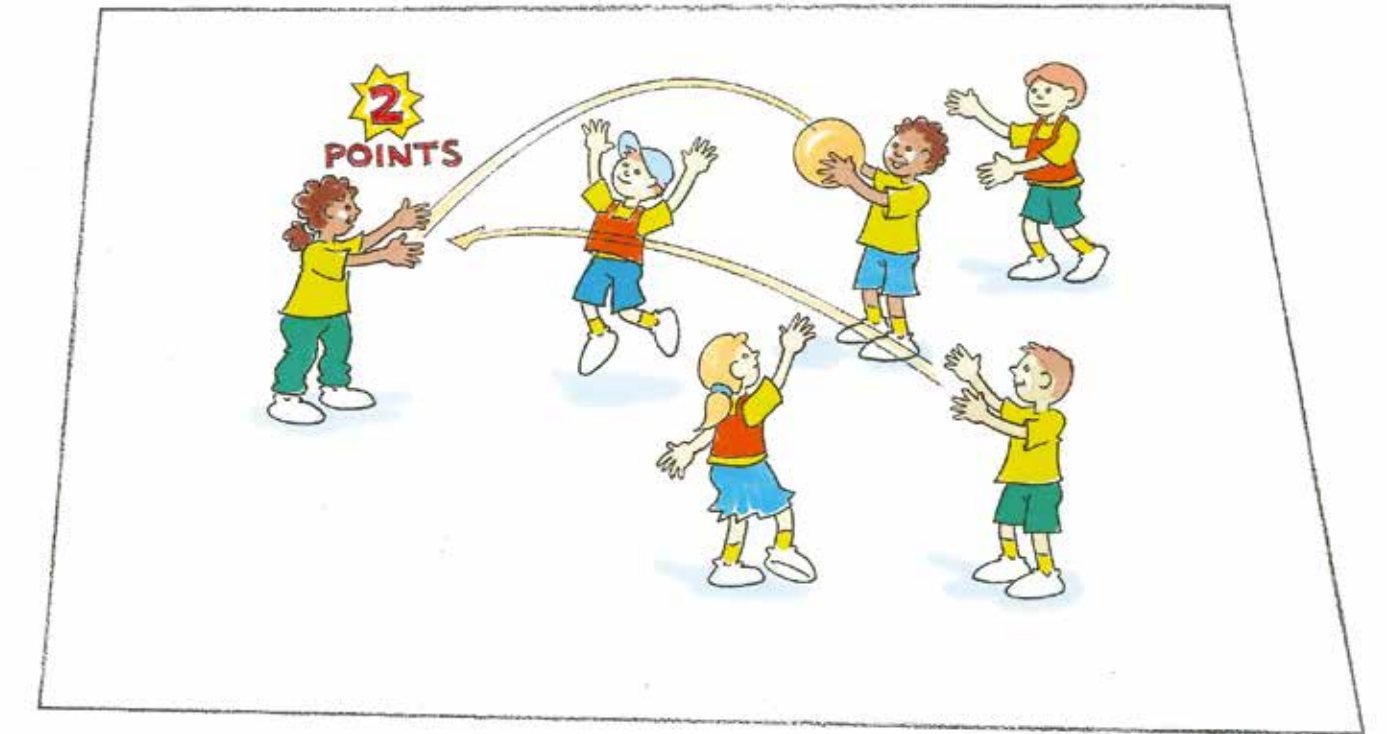
- Use smaller groups and evenly space out more experienced children between teams.
- Allow more experienced children to demonstrate a skill.



- Score in a way that allows children to individually challenge themselves to achieve success.
- When questioning children about changing an element of an activity, use responses such as: 'That was a very valuable suggestion, does anybody else have another idea that we could use?'. Recognising comments in this manner will help to increase esteem and create an environment in which others feel comfortable contributing.



- Delegate extra roles to more experienced children as part of an activity, such as keeping count of the number of passes, to provide more of a challenge.



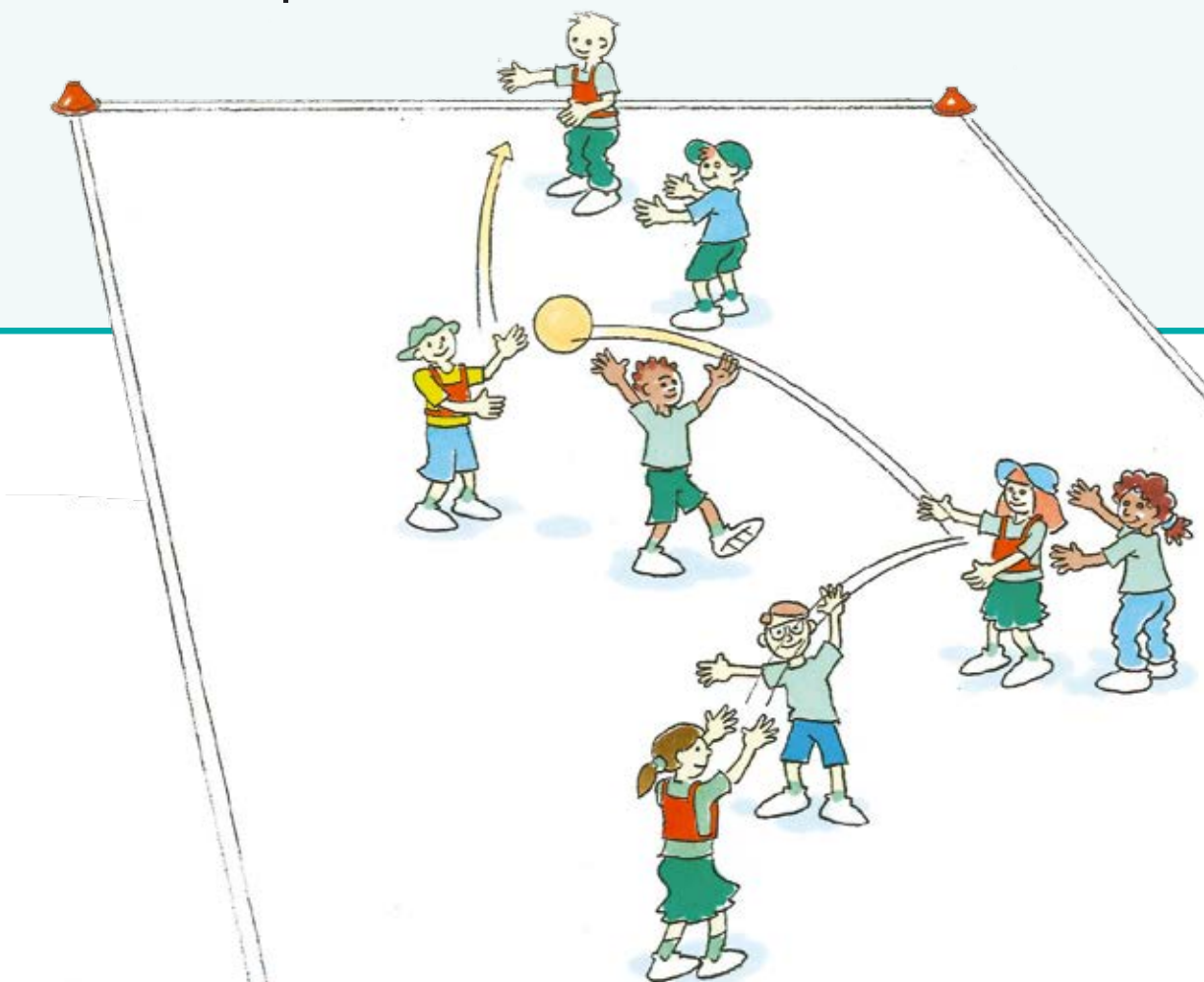
Example:

Susie decided that the children would play a game of hockey as part of the day's session. She knew that a couple of the children, Jodie and Ryan, had played for the school team and had a greater skill level than the others. Susie broke the group into two teams, with Jodie in one and Ryan in the other. As the session progressed, Susie observed children losing interest and getting frustrated as Jodie and Ryan were dominating the game. Susie paused the game and asked the

group what changes could be made, to ensure every player got to touch the ball. They decided if the ball was passed to three different team-mates before scoring, that team should receive bonus points.

Once the game started again Susie saw a big change: Jodie and Ryan were doing their best to include their team-mates in order to get those bonus points.

ALTERNATIVES



Non-participation

Children may not participate in activities for a number of reasons. As these reasons may not be obvious, understanding and patience are essential, to ensure all children feel they have an opportunity to get involved.

Identifying behaviours

Children may:

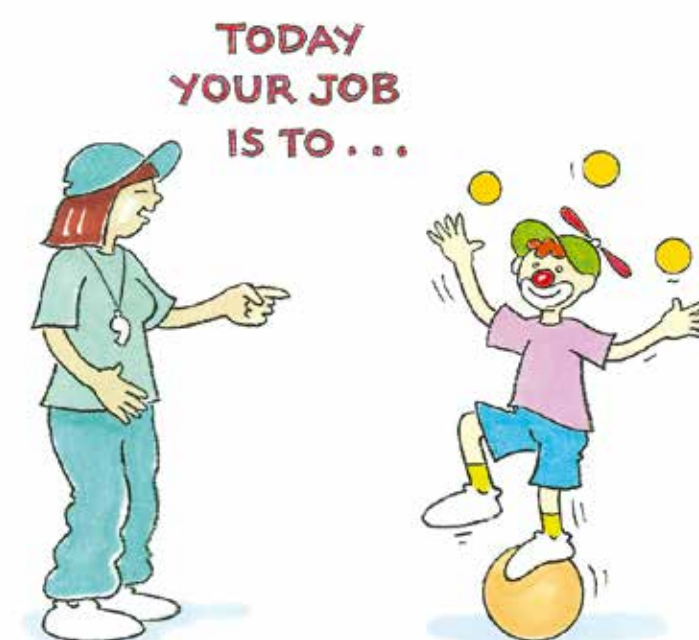
- Refuse to participate in activities
- Not agree to play certain roles as part of games
- Make no effort or attempt to engage with other children

What you can do

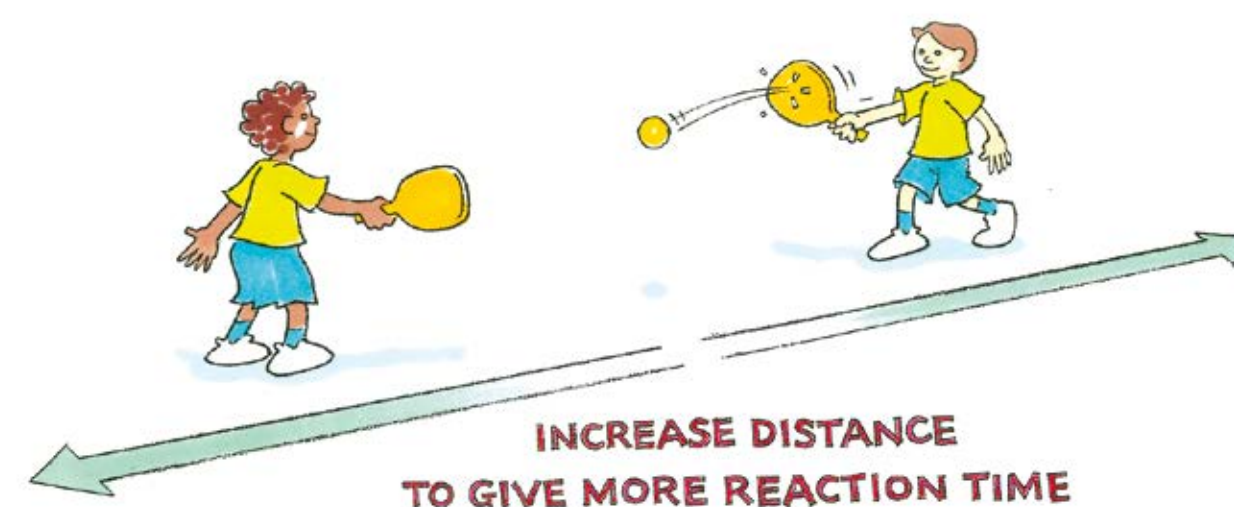
Once illness or injury or cultural considerations have been ruled out, simple changes to activities may help to encourage participation. Remember to address a child's behaviour and not their character, and be a good role model at all times.

- Partner with the child to encourage their involvement in the activities.

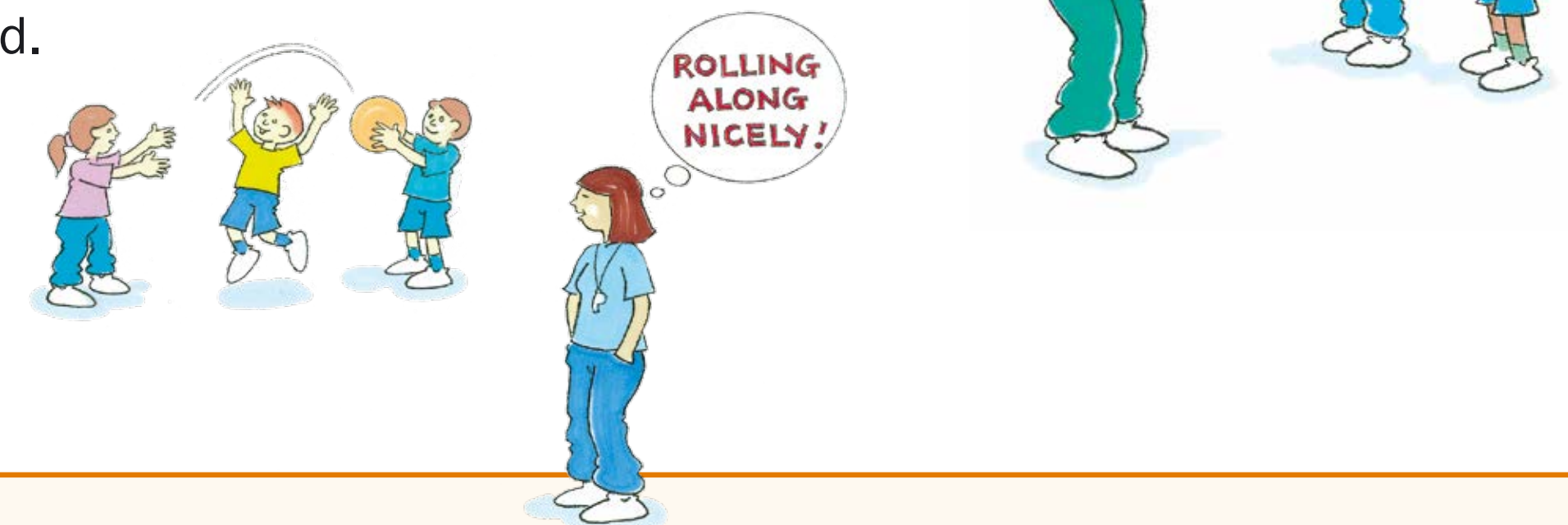
- Ask one of their friends, or a more experienced child from the group, to encourage their participation in the activities.
- Think of new and varied roles that can be played: for example, scorer or umpire.



- Look for signs of interest during the activities, to invite participation.
- Use changes that increase or decrease complexity of the activity to provide more opportunities for success.



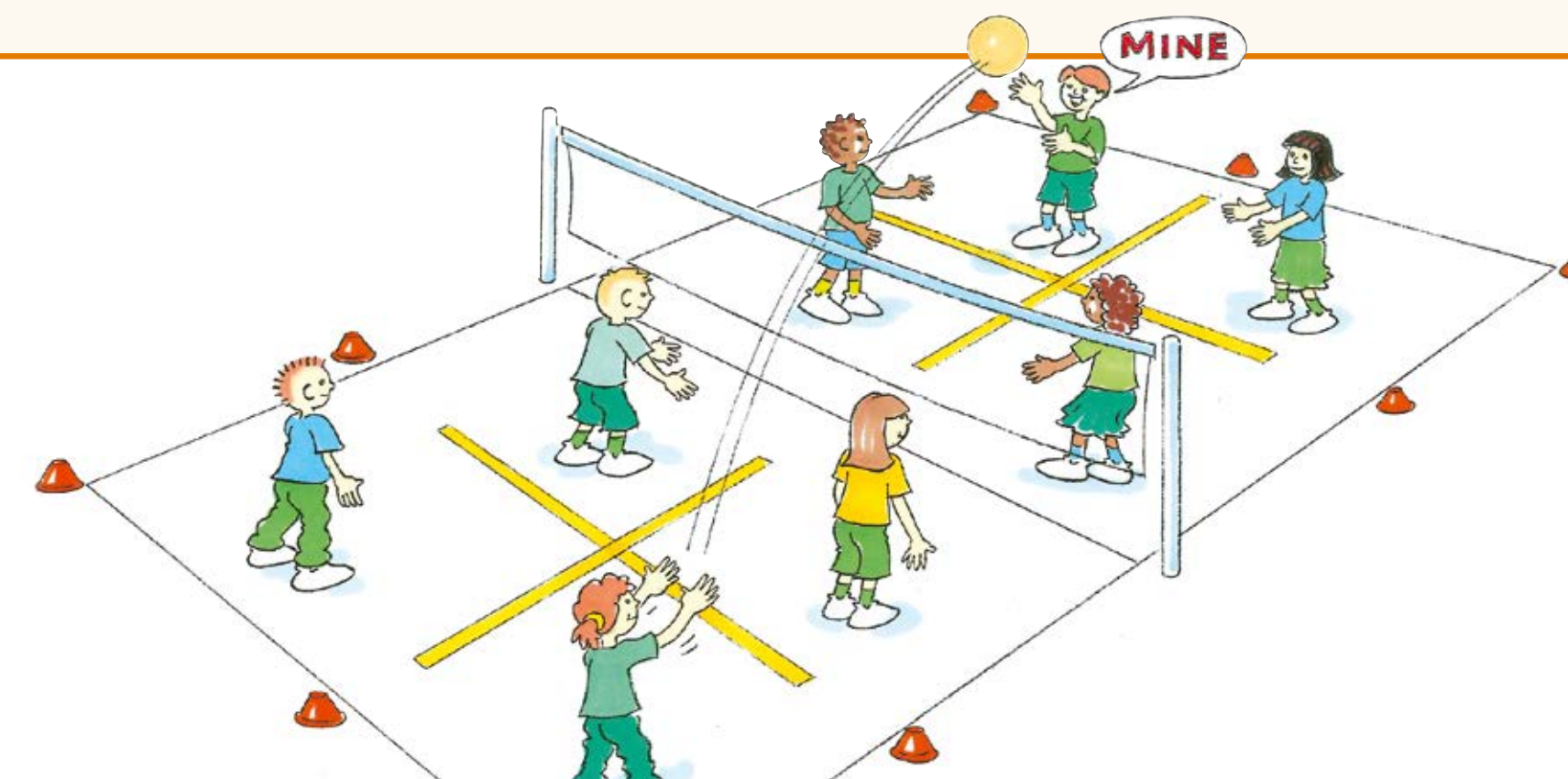
- Ensure the fun element is emphasised.
- Create ownership by asking the child for a suggestion on how to improve or change the activity.
- Provide encouragement once the child is involved.



Example:

After a five minute warm up, Sarah brought her group of children together to introduce the next activity: volleyball. Peter immediately tensed up and said, 'I don't want to play this game, I don't like volleyball'. The last time Peter played volleyball he was unable to serve the ball over the net, but the other children could. Peter wanted to avoid further embarrassment and so sat out.

After a quick one-on-one discussion with Peter, Sarah changed one of the game rules to allow children to serve from different spots around the court. Sarah made the rule for the whole group, not just Peter, so all of the children could choose the spot they felt most comfortable with to make a serve. After watching the game with this new rule in play, Peter decided to join in, and Sarah provided encouragement throughout the session.



Playing for Life — Table Tennis

1

SKILL FOCUS

1. Grip
2. Ready position
3. Basic rally

TIME

60 minutes

SAFETY

Refer to 'Golden rules of safety' section of this manual

AREA

This lesson can be delivered without tables in a suitable area (preferably indoors)

EQUIPMENT

- Marker cones
- Table Tennis rackets or similar for each player
- Table Tennis balls for each player
- Tennis balls for each player

OPTIONAL EQUIPMENT

Balloons and tables

ACTIVITIES

- Frost and Thaw tag **10 minutes**
- Racket tapping **10 minutes**
- Triangle roll **15 minutes**
- 2 square bounce **15 minutes**
- Put it away! **5 minutes**
- What did you learn? **5 minutes**

[RETURN TO LESSON OVERVIEW](#)



Frost and Thaw tag

One player is Frost and is the chaser. Another player is Thaw. All players except Frost hold a racket in the shakehand grip. Frost tries to tag as many of the other players as possible.

LESSON 1

- START OUT
- 10 MINUTES

SKILL FOCUS

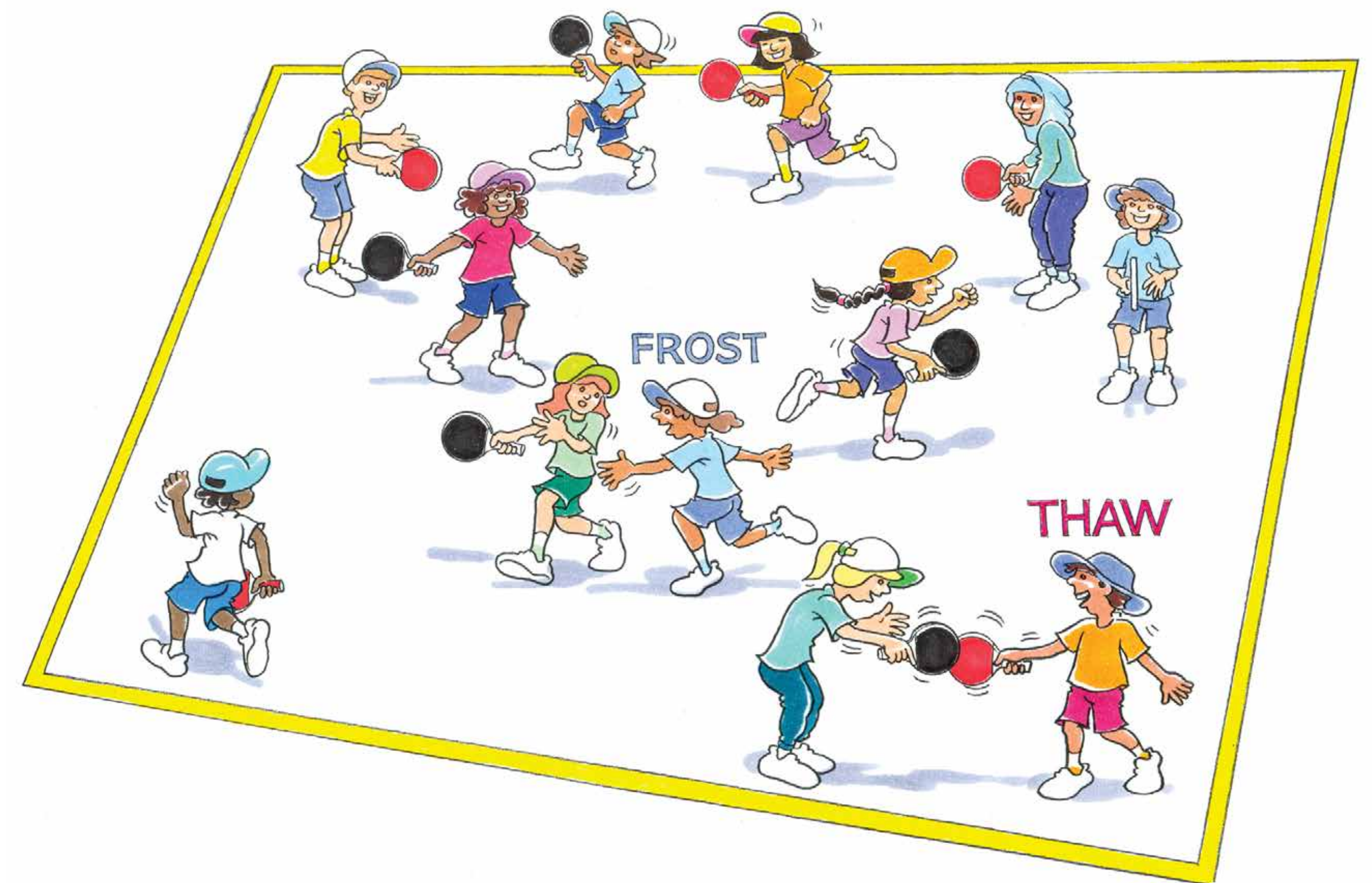
- Ready position
- Shakehand grip

EQUIPMENT

- Marker cones to define playing area and a Table Tennis racket for all players except *Frost*

What to do:

- Play one Frost and Thaw to every ten children
- All players except Frost hold a Table Tennis racket and run to avoid Frost
- Once tagged, players must freeze in the ready position
- Thaw can melt frozen players by pretending to shake hands while each player is holding their racket in the shakehand grip
- Players can then rejoin the game



Tips

- Look for role models to demonstrate correct shakehand grip on the racket with the forefinger and thumb across the bottom edge of the rubber

Change it

- Vary the travelling skills: skip, side step or walk
- Two Frosts work together but must hold hands throughout — encourage players to choose their own partner

Racket tapping

Each player has a racket and ball. The aim is to keep tapping the ball into the air or on the ground with the racket for as long as possible. Many variations are possible.

LESSON 1

- START OUT
- 10 MINUTES

SKILL FOCUS

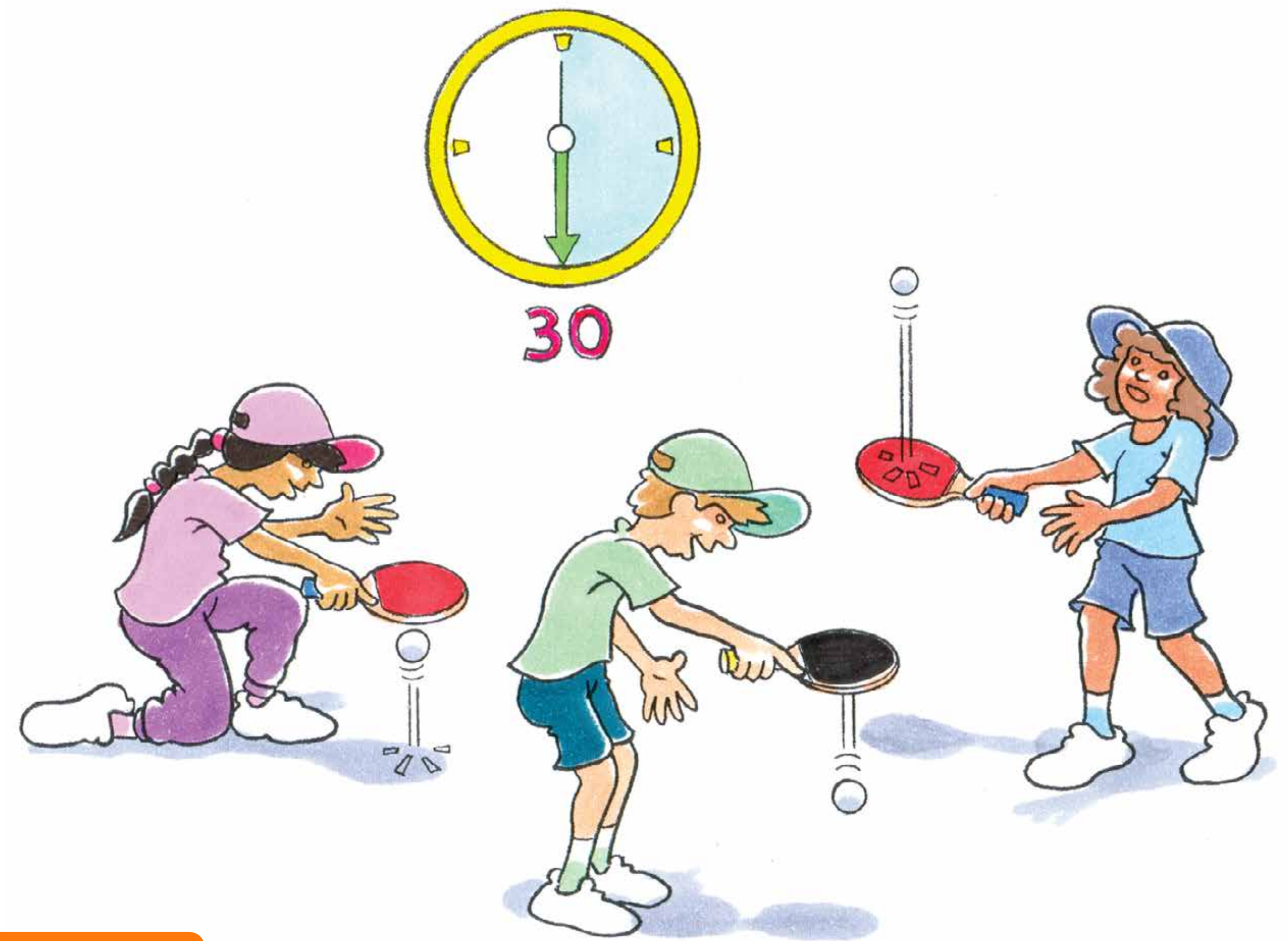
- Grip/hand-eye coordination
- Free exploration with the racket and ball

EQUIPMENT

- One racket and ball per player. Can substitute a ball with a balloon

What to do:

- Players move around and choose ways to tap the ball with the racket
- Coach asks 'How many times can you tap the ball in 30 seconds? Can you do anything to beat your own score in the next 30 seconds?'



Tips

- Resting the ball against the thumb makes it easier to balance
- Look for role models to demonstrate various tapping actions and balance

Change it

- Players attempt to balance the ball on the racket while moving or on the spot
- Players tap the ball alternating between forehand and backhand sides of the racket

Triangle roll

Players in threes stand or sit on the points of a triangle and use their racket to roll the ball to one another (can be played in pairs).

LESSON 1

- GET INTO IT
- 15 MINUTES

SKILL FOCUS

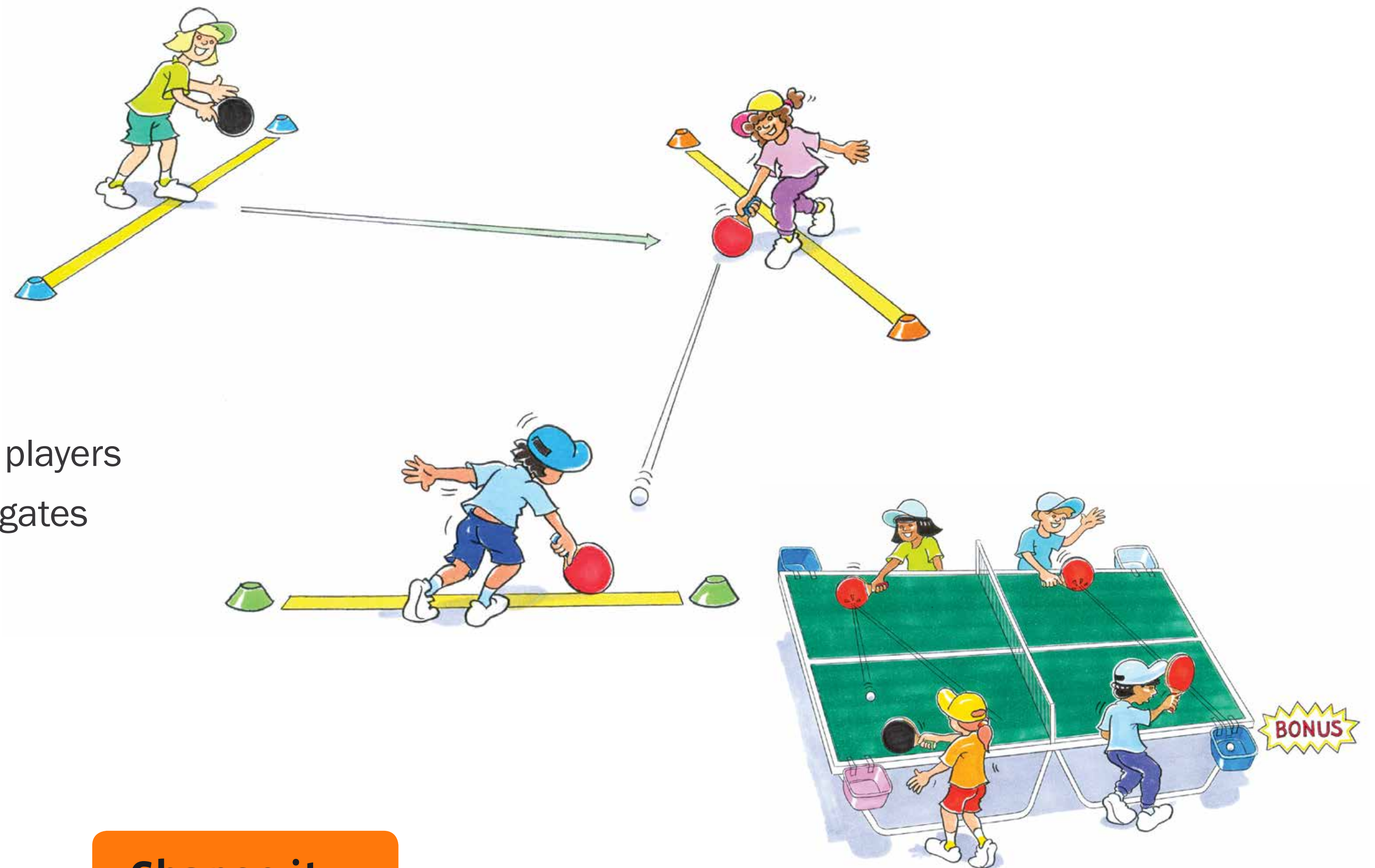
- Basic rally

EQUIPMENT

- Marker cones; Table Tennis racket and ball; Table Tennis table is optional

What to do:

- Groups of three form a triangle 2 to 3 metres apart
- Each player has a racket and one ball per group of three players
- Players attempt to roll the ball between another player's gates



Tips

- Emphasise: flat racket, don't scrape the table, ball rolling with minimal noise

Change it

- Play in pairs or groups of four
- Score a point if the ball rolls through an opponent's gate
- Change partners when coach calls, 'Time!'

2 Square bounce

A court is divided into two with a player in each half.
The server throws the ball into the receiver's half.
The receiver tries to catch the ball after one bounce, (play 1 v 1).

LESSON 1

- GET INTO IT
- 15 MINUTES

SKILL FOCUS

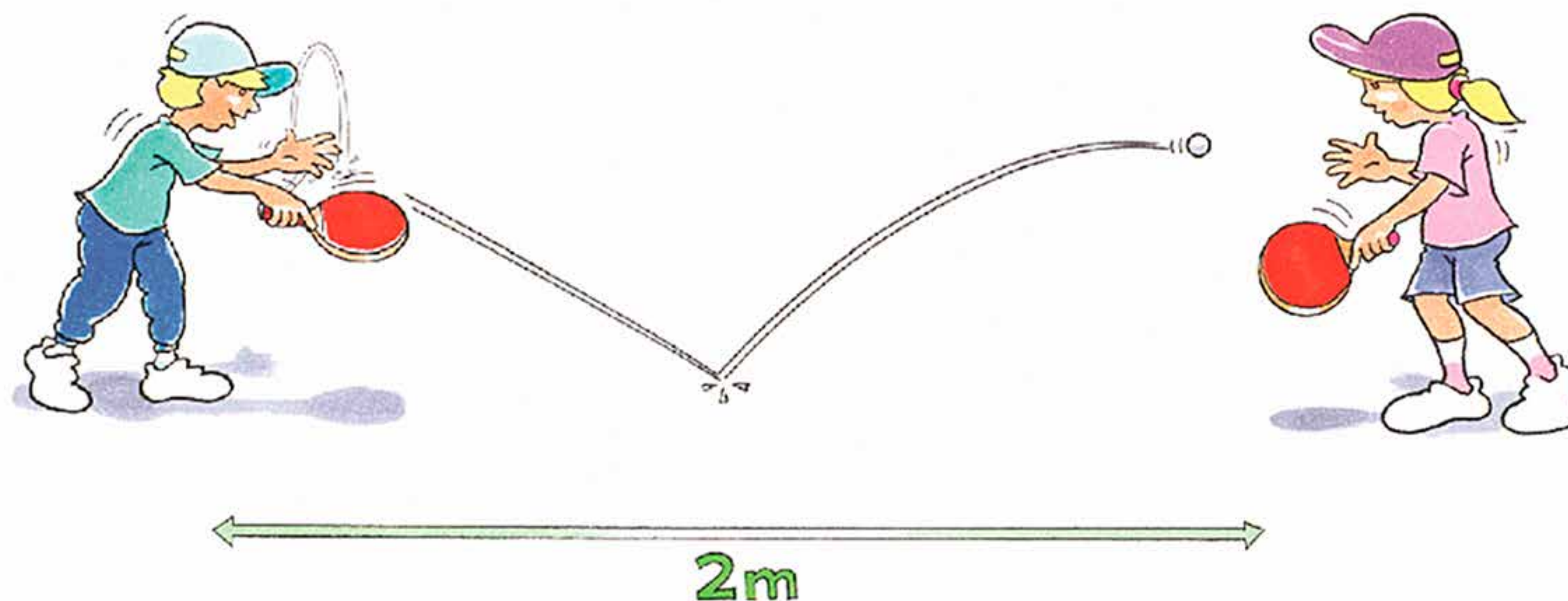
- Introduces a basic rally and returning to ready position between shots

EQUIPMENT

- One Table Tennis racket per player (optional); one ball or Table Tennis ball per pair; Table Tennis tables or similar (optional)

What to do:

- In pairs, players mark out a space similar to the size of a Table Tennis table
- Players stand in position as shown. The player with the ball serves
- The ball must cross the line above waist height
- Play continues (like handball) until one player cannot return the ball after one bounce, or the ball is out of court, or the receiver drops the ball
- The serve alternates between players



Tips

- Encourage players to get into the ready position to receive the ball

Change it

- Allow two bounces
- Play on a table without rackets

Put it away!

Gather up the equipment and store it properly.

LESSON 1

- FINISH UP
- 5 MINUTES

SKILL FOCUS

- Introduces safety rules such as safe 'traffic flow', acting sensibly and being aware of others

What to do:

On your signal, children can:

- put away rackets, balls, equipment
- attempt to throw balls into a bucket or storage bag
- practice balancing balls on their rackets while putting the equipment away.



What did you learn?

Ask questions to reinforce the key skills or tactical points.

LESSON 1

- FINISH UP
- 5 MINUTES

Coach asks:

- 'Why do we stand in the ready position in Table Tennis?'
- 'Can someone show me how to hold the racket?'
- 'What is a rally?'
- 'How do we ensure the racket remains in good condition?'



Playing for Life — Table Tennis

2

SKILL FOCUS

1. Forehand drive
2. Backhand drive
3. Basic rally

TIME

60 minutes

SAFETY

Refer to 'Golden rules of safety' section of this manual

AREA

This lesson can be delivered without tables in a suitable area (preferably indoors)

EQUIPMENT

- Marker cones
- Table Tennis racket for each player
- Table Tennis balls
- Wall area

OPTIONAL EQUIPMENT

Balloons and tables

ACTIVITIES

- Flip it 5 minutes
- Stork tag 10 minutes
- Wall tennis 10 minutes
- Pepper 15 minutes
- Roller ball 15 minutes
- What did you learn? 5 minutes

[RETURN TO LESSON OVERVIEW](#)



Flip It

Players are separated into two teams. Half the players place their rackets with the red side up (red team) and the other half with the black side up (black team). On a signal, players run around trying to flip over the other group's rackets to match their own team's colour.

LESSON 2

- START OUT
- 5 MINUTES

SKILL FOCUS

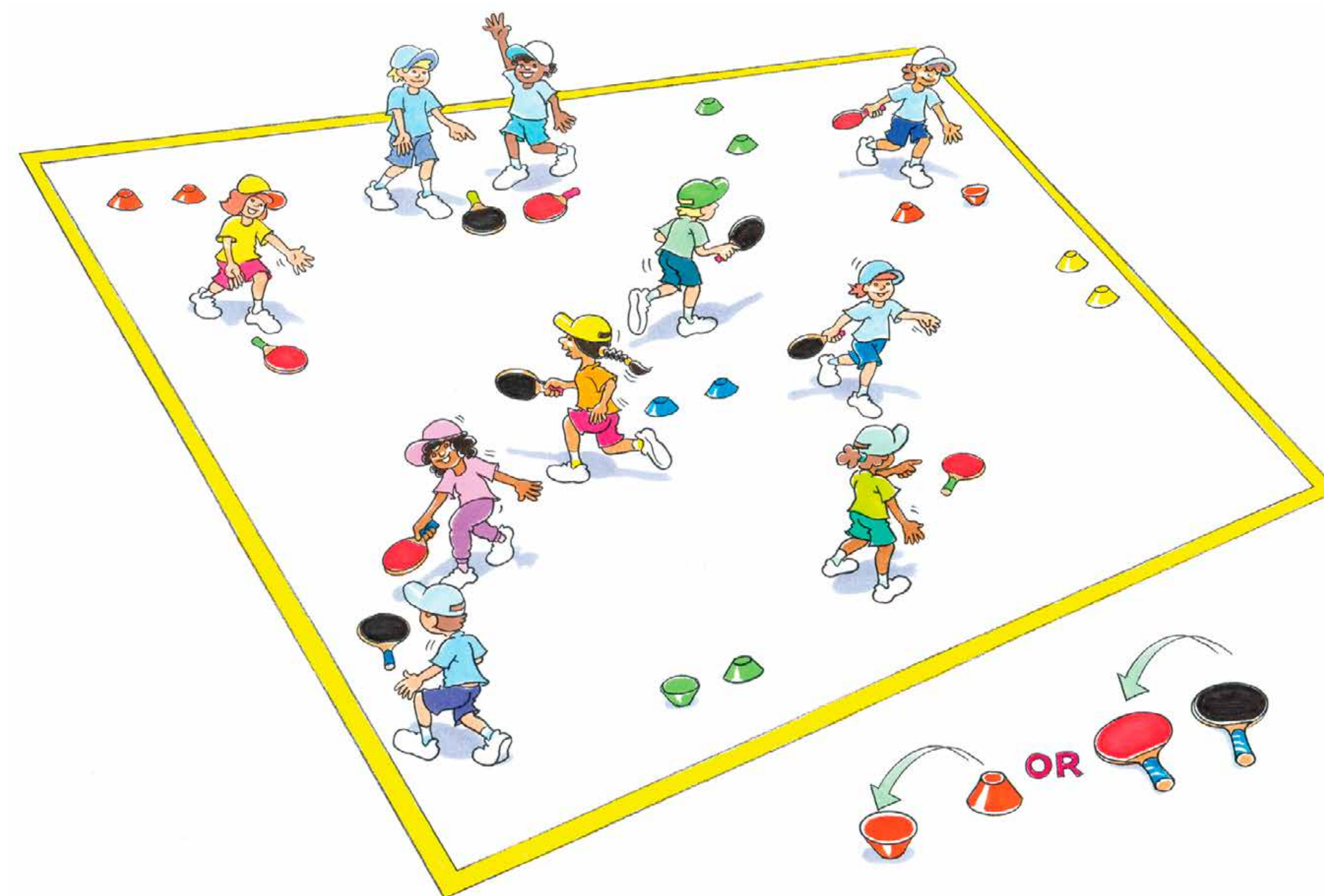
- Warm-up
- Spatial awareness

EQUIPMENT

- Table Tennis rackets that have a red and a black side OR one field marker per player

What to do:

- Divide players into two teams
- Play for a set time (for example, 45 seconds)
- The team with the most rackets with their colour showing wins
- Play best of three games



Tips

- Players should adopt actions to avoid bumping heads

Change it

- Use field markers instead of rackets
- Ask players for rule changes as needed

Stork tag

Taggers chase runners. If runners are tagged, they have to stand on the spot in a stork stand. The tagged runner (stork) can be freed by a server who throws a ball. The stork returns the ball to the server with the racket using a forehand drive.

LESSON 2

- START OUT
- 10 MINUTES

SKILL FOCUS

- Forehand drive

EQUIPMENT

- Marker cones to define playing area; Table Tennis racket for all runners; Table Tennis ball or a balloon for servers; Bib to identify taggers

What to do:

- Runners hold a Table Tennis racket and run to avoid being tagged
- One or two taggers wear a bib to identify them
- One or two 'servers' have a Table Tennis ball or balloon to free tagged runners
- Once tagged, runners freeze in a stork stand
- A server throws the ball to the tagged player, who returns the ball to the server using a forehand drive
- They can then re-join the game



Tips

- Forehand drive: start with racket above the elbow and to the side of the body

Change it

- When tagged, freeze in the ready position instead of stork balance
- Server can bounce the ball to the tagged player instead of throwing the ball
- Increase number of taggers and servers as needed

Wall tennis

Two players face a wall. The game is started by bouncing the ball on the floor or on the table and hitting it against the wall.

LESSON 2

- START OUT
- 10 MINUTES

SKILL FOCUS

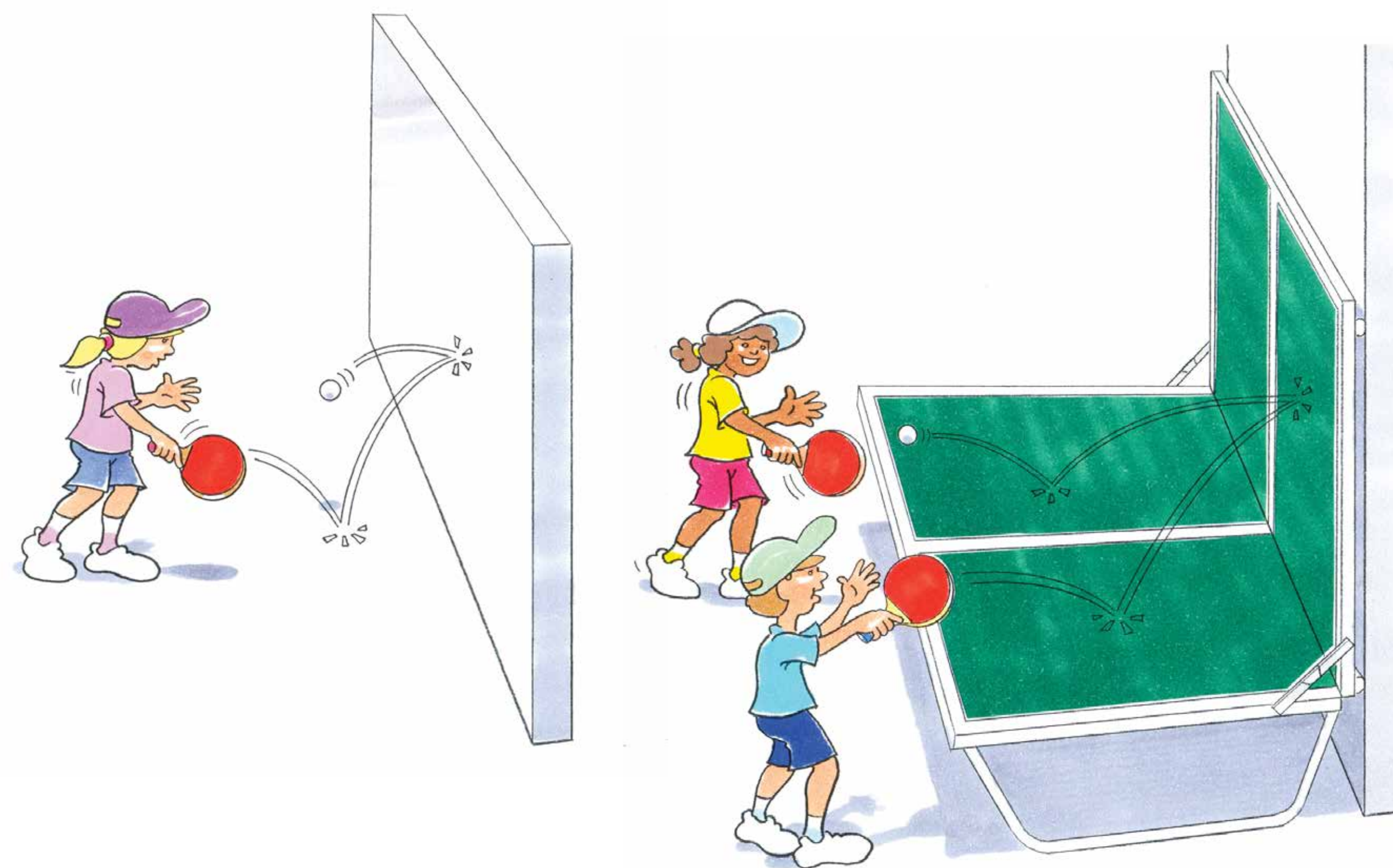
- Forehand and backhand hits
- Basic rally and returning to ready position between shots

EQUIPMENT

- One Table Tennis racket per player; one Table Tennis ball or similar per pair; a wall area and court surface that allows the ball to bounce, or small table against the wall, or half Table Tennis table

What to do:

- Players are divided into pairs and mark out a space near a wall
- Players take turns to hit the ball against the wall
- The ball may bounce more than once on the floor/table (to keep rally going)
- Change pairs every five minutes



Tips

- Encourage players to move out of the way once they have hit the ball

Change it

- One player only: how many times in a row they can hit the ball
- Use a bigger ball and aim higher on the wall
- Use hand instead of a racket
- Place targets on the wall and score a point each time they are hit

Pepper

One hitter and dispersed players. Whoever fields the ball throws it immediately to the hitter. Play in groups of four.

LESSON 2

- GET INTO IT
- 15 MINUTES

SKILL FOCUS

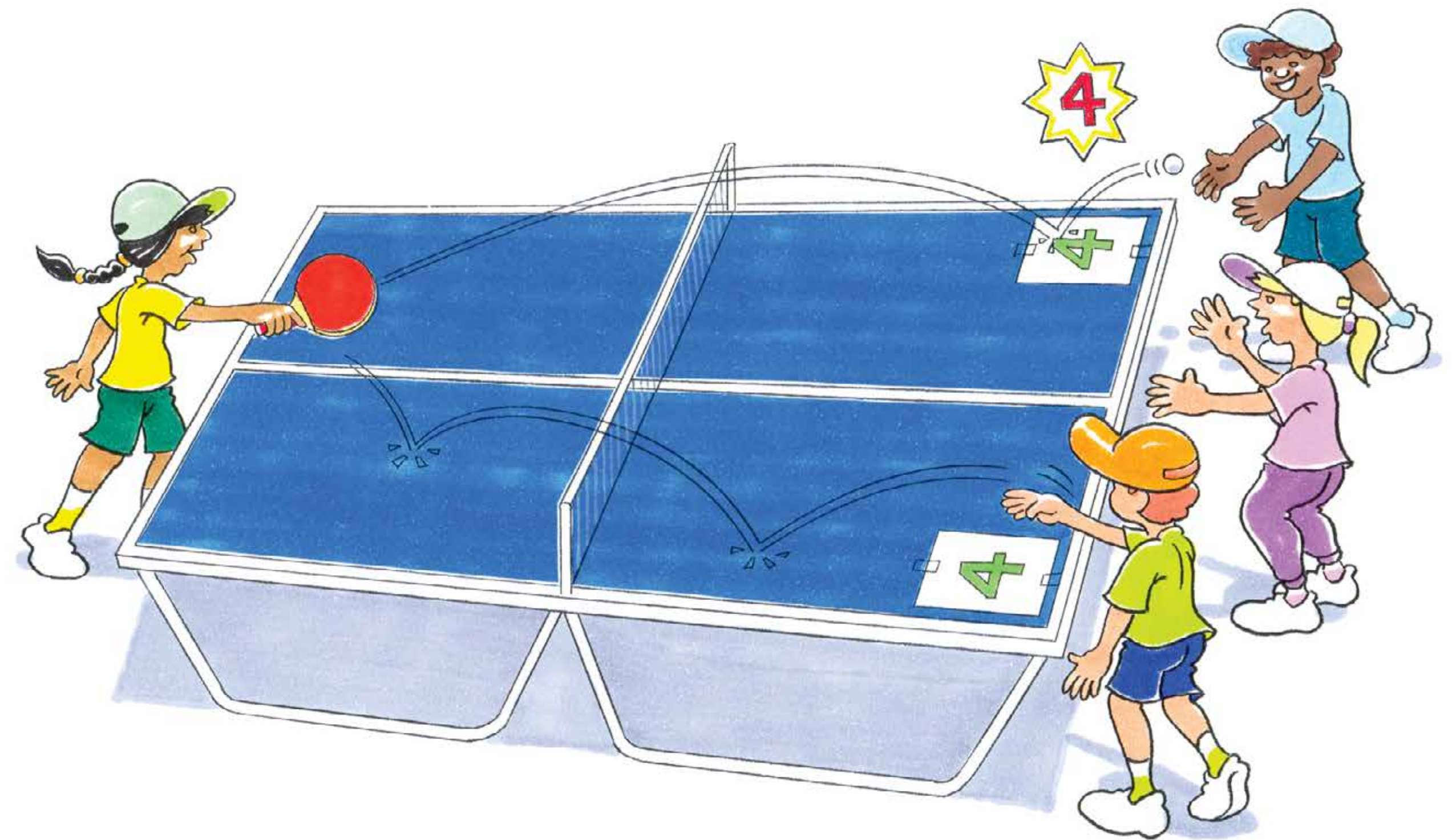
- Forehand or backhand drive
- Grip
- Footwork

EQUIPMENT

- One Table Tennis racket per group; paper (as targets), one Table Tennis ball (or similar) per group, one Table Tennis table (or suitable alternative) per group of four

What to do:

- The hitter starts up one end of the table with the fielders at the other end
- Fielders throw the ball so that it bounces on both halves of the table (serve)
- Hitter uses a forehand or backhand drive to hit the ball into the fielders' end
- Five hits per player then rotate
- Play should be cooperative (the batter tries to hit to fielders)



Tips

- Hitter should always start in the ready position before every shot

Change it

- Score one point for each successful return
- For bonus points, add paper targets to the fielders' end of the table

Roller ball

Players in pairs stand on opposite sides of a table and use their racket to roll the ball to one another, attempting to stop the ball rolling off the edge of the table.

LESSON 2

- GET INTO IT
- 15 MINUTES

SKILL FOCUS

- Basic rally
- Backhand drive

EQUIPMENT

- Table Tennis racket and ball; Table Tennis table (one table for every four players)

What to do:

- Form groups of four players per table
- Pairs stand on opposite sides of a table
- Players attempt to roll the ball to stop it from falling off their side of the table
- Remind players not to scrape the table with their racket



Tips

- Backhand drive — look for feet shoulder width apart and in the ready position
- Start with the racket slightly above the elbow and in front of the stomach

Change it

- Score a point for each time you hit the ball over opponent's line
- Each pair plays for a set time, when coach calls, 'Change partners', player with the most points moves to a new player/table
- Tape a paper cup at each end to score bonus points if it lands in the cup

What did you learn?

Ask questions to reinforce the key skills or tactical points.

LESSON 2

- FINISH UP
- 5 MINUTES

Coach asks:

- 'What was your favourite game today and why?'
- 'Who can show me the forehand (or backhand) drive and how to follow through?'



Playing for Life — Table Tennis

3

SKILL FOCUS

1. Service throw
2. Service

TIME

60 minutes

SAFETY

Refer to 'Golden rules of safety' section of this manual

AREA

This lesson can be delivered without tables in a suitable area (preferably indoors)

EQUIPMENT

- Marker cones
- Table Tennis racket for each player
- Table Tennis balls
- Hoops
- Paper cups as targets

OPTIONAL EQUIPMENT

- Balloons
- Variety of different sized balls
- Tables

ACTIVITIES

- Dribblers and robbers 10 minutes
- Continuous tennis 10 minutes
- 3 hit and catch 10 minutes
- Bucket and hoop 20 minutes
- Let's see it 10 minutes

[RETURN TO LESSON OVERVIEW](#)



Dribblers and robbers

Players (dribblers) with a ball move around the court dribbling. One or two players are robbers and they attempt to intercept dribblers' balls without making body contact. (Play with one robber per five dribblers, for example).

LESSON 3

- START OUT
- 10 MINUTES

SKILL FOCUS

- Warm-up
- Eye-hand coordination

EQUIPMENT

- Table Tennis ball, racket (optional)

What to do:

- On your signal, dribblers must dribble the ball with their racket as they move around the court
- Robbers try to win possession of a ball
- Dribblers who lose possession become robbers and try to gain possession of another dribbler's ball (not the ball they have just lost)



Tips

- Acknowledge dribblers using the shakehand grip with positive feedback
- Remind players to keep the racket below shoulder height

Change it

- Dribble the ball with the hand instead of a racket

Continuous tennis

Players in small groups of three or four serve a ball to land on both sides of the obstacle or table, and run to the back of the line making way for the next player to receive a ball and return it.

LESSON 3

- START OUT
- 10 MINUTES

SKILL FOCUS

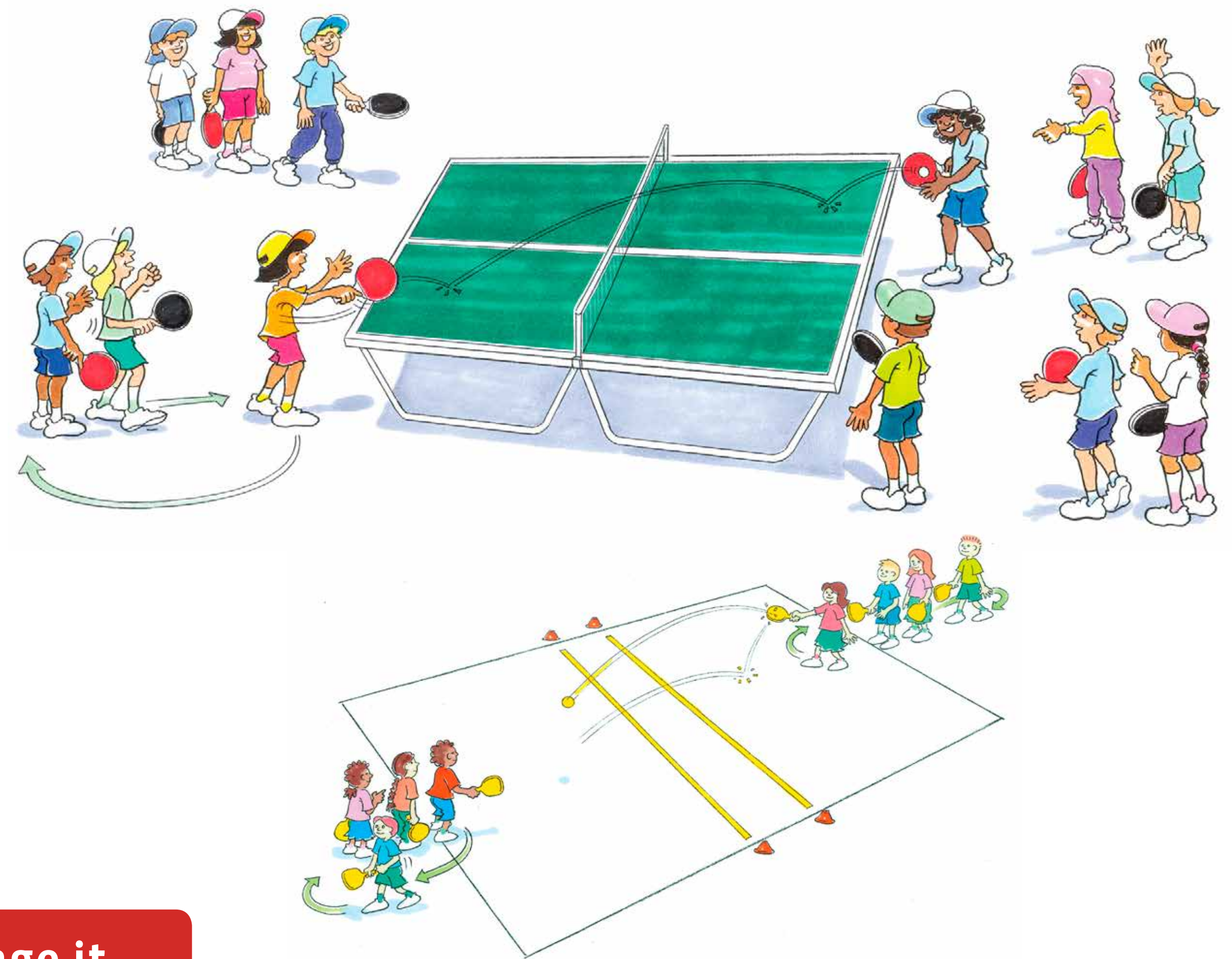
- Service rule: the ball must contact both sides of the table

EQUIPMENT

- One Table Tennis racket per player; two Table Tennis balls per game (plus spare ball on the side to keep game flowing); two tennis balls (or similar) per game (when playing with young children); Table Tennis tables (optional)

What to do:

- Players divide into teams of three or four
- Teams take turns to serve diagonally to the opposite team
- Players catch ball and return with a serve
- Players run to back of your line after serving
- Allow players to practise throwing and catching without a racket first



Tips

- Serve must first bounce on server's side of the table, then the other side

Change it

- Scoring — Ask players to count how many serves and catches they can do in a row
- Add paper targets to the table for teams to knock off and win

Hit and catch

One partner serves a ball so the other one can catch it without moving from a spot.

LESSON 3

- START OUT
- 10 MINUTES

SKILL FOCUS

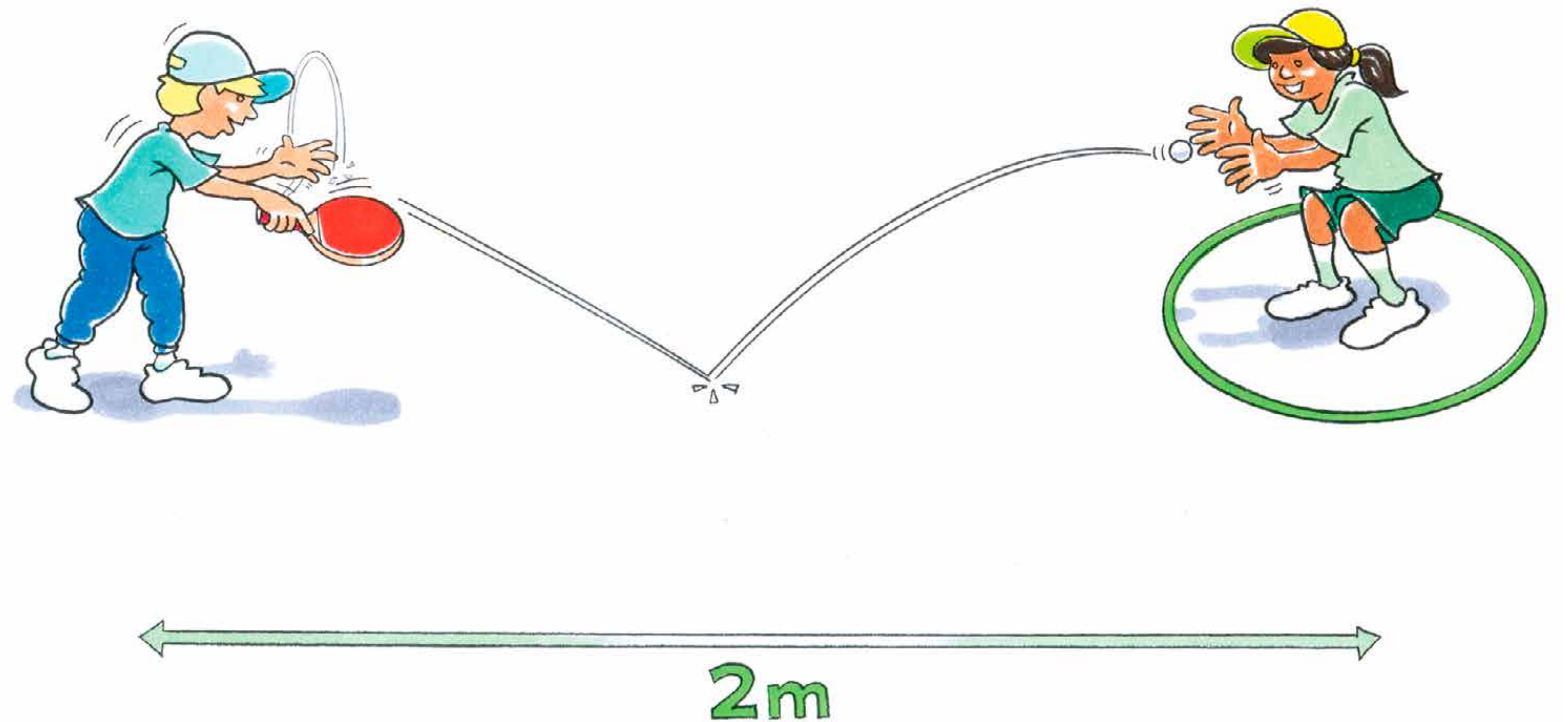
- Introduces the technique for a service throw

EQUIPMENT

- One Table Tennis ball or similar per pair; one hoop; one Table Tennis racket or similar per pair

What to do:

- The player with the racket serves a ball to their partner
- The partner attempts to catch the ball while standing in a hoop
- Players start by standing two meters apart and swap roles after five hits



Tips

- Players serve from a flat palm and throw the ball up and hit it on the way down
- Remind players to keep the racket below shoulder height

Change it

- The person without a racket can throw the ball to partner to hit and return
- Score one point if ball is caught (keep one foot in the hoop when catching)

Bucket and hoop

One player serves a ball onto targets on the table or the floor to score points. Play in groups of two to four players — a feeder, a hitter and one or two collectors.

LESSON 3

- GET INTO IT
- 20 MINUTES

SKILL FOCUS

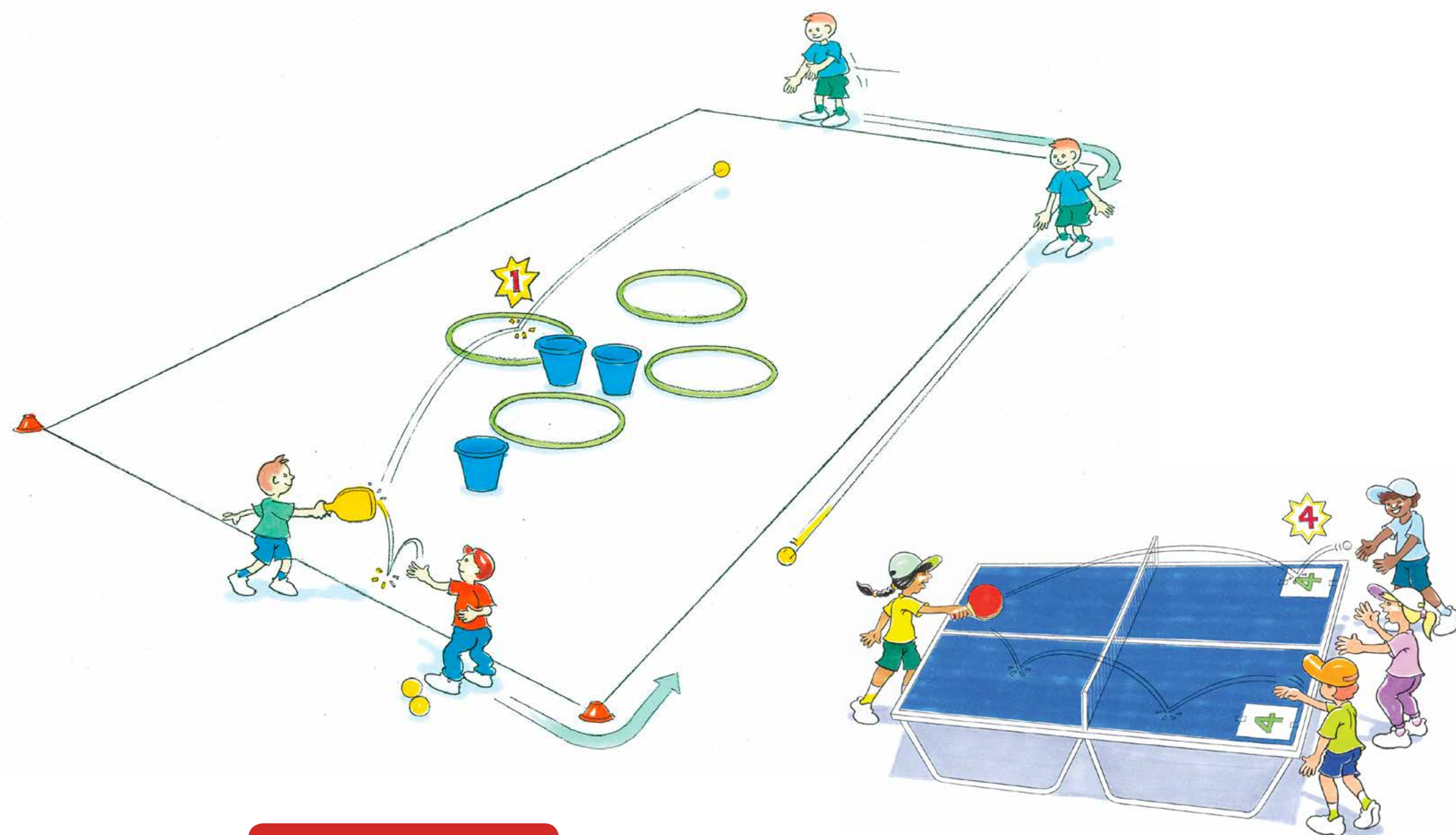
- Introduces the technique for a service throw

EQUIPMENT

- One table per group (optional); targets: paper, field markers (turned up-side down) or small cups; four Table Tennis balls per group; one Table Tennis racket per group; hoops; buckets as targets if no tables are available

What to do:

- Organise players into groups of two to four
- Players set up targets on one side of the table or on the floor
- Server aims to hit targets to score points
- Collectors field the ball and feed to the server when needed
- Rotate servers after one minute



Tips

- When playing on the floor, keep the area a similar size to a Table Tennis table to prevent hitting the ball too hard or too far

Change it

- Make targets bigger or add multiple targets to the table
- Remove the feeder and have the hitter serve for points
- Whole teams play for a minute and total their score

Let's see it

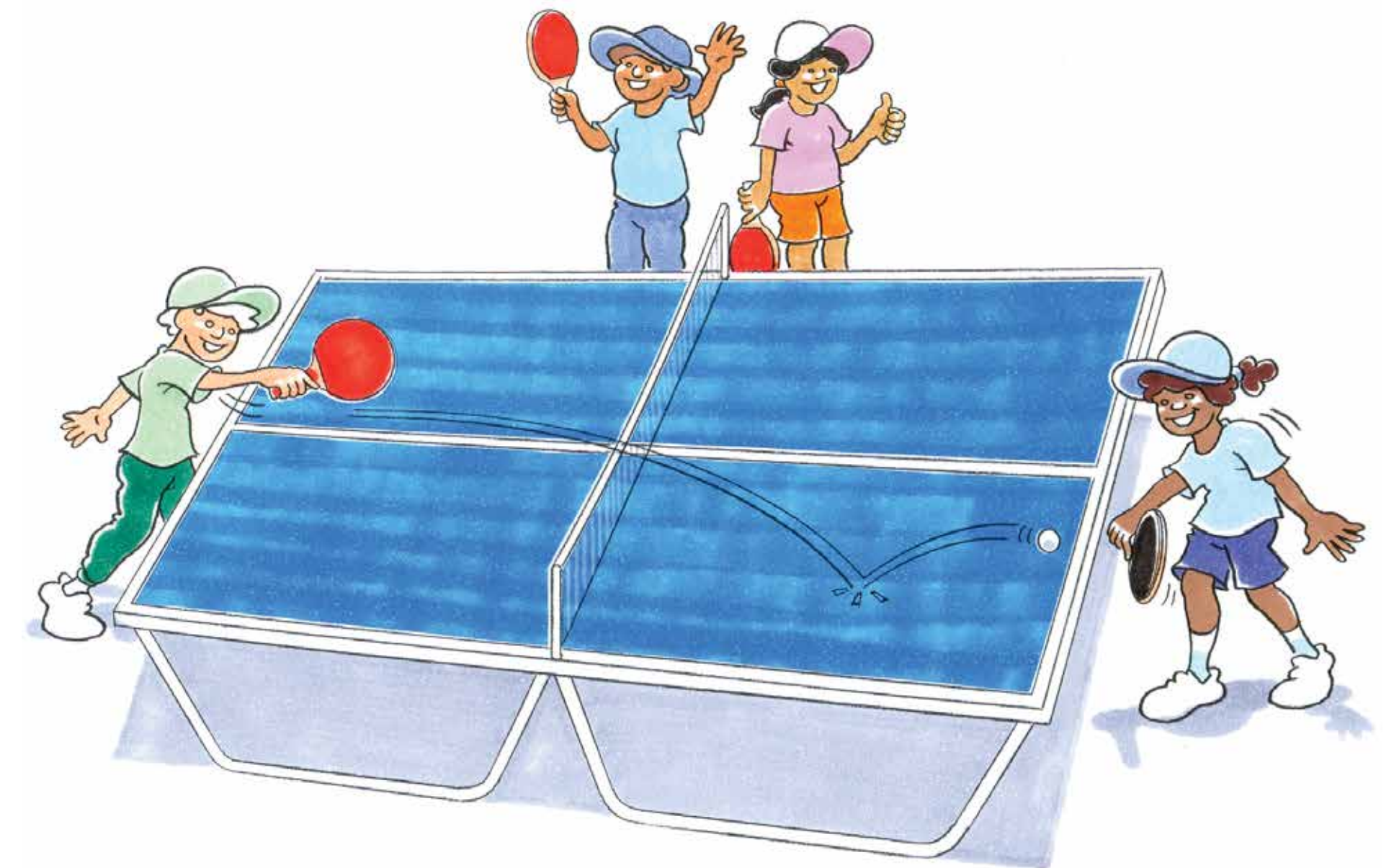
Coach selects role models to demonstrate correct service technique.

LESSON 3

- FINISH UP
- 10 MINUTES

Coach asks:

- 'Where must the ball bounce during a serve?'
- 'Where should you stand when serving?'
- 'In a Table Tennis serve, what is a 'let'?''



Playing for Life — Table Tennis

4

SKILL FOCUS

Singles games

TIME

60 minutes

SAFETY

Refer to 'Golden rules of safety' section of this manual

AREA

This lesson can be delivered without tables in a suitable area (preferably indoors)

EQUIPMENT

- Marker cones
- Table Tennis racket for each player
- Table Tennis balls

OPTIONAL EQUIPMENT

- Balloons
- Hoops
- Benches
- Ropes
- Tables

ACTIVITIES

- Throw, throw, throw 10 minutes
- Pirate's gold 10 minutes
- Rally around 30 minutes
- Four corners 10 minutes

[RETURN TO LESSON OVERVIEW](#)



Throw, throw, throw!

Two groups of equal size face each other. Each player has a Table Tennis ball or scrunched-up paper ball. On a signal, players throw their paper ball over a line in the direction of the opposite team. After a set period, balls are counted to see who has the fewest balls.

LESSON 4

- START OUT
- 10 MINUTES

SKILL FOCUS

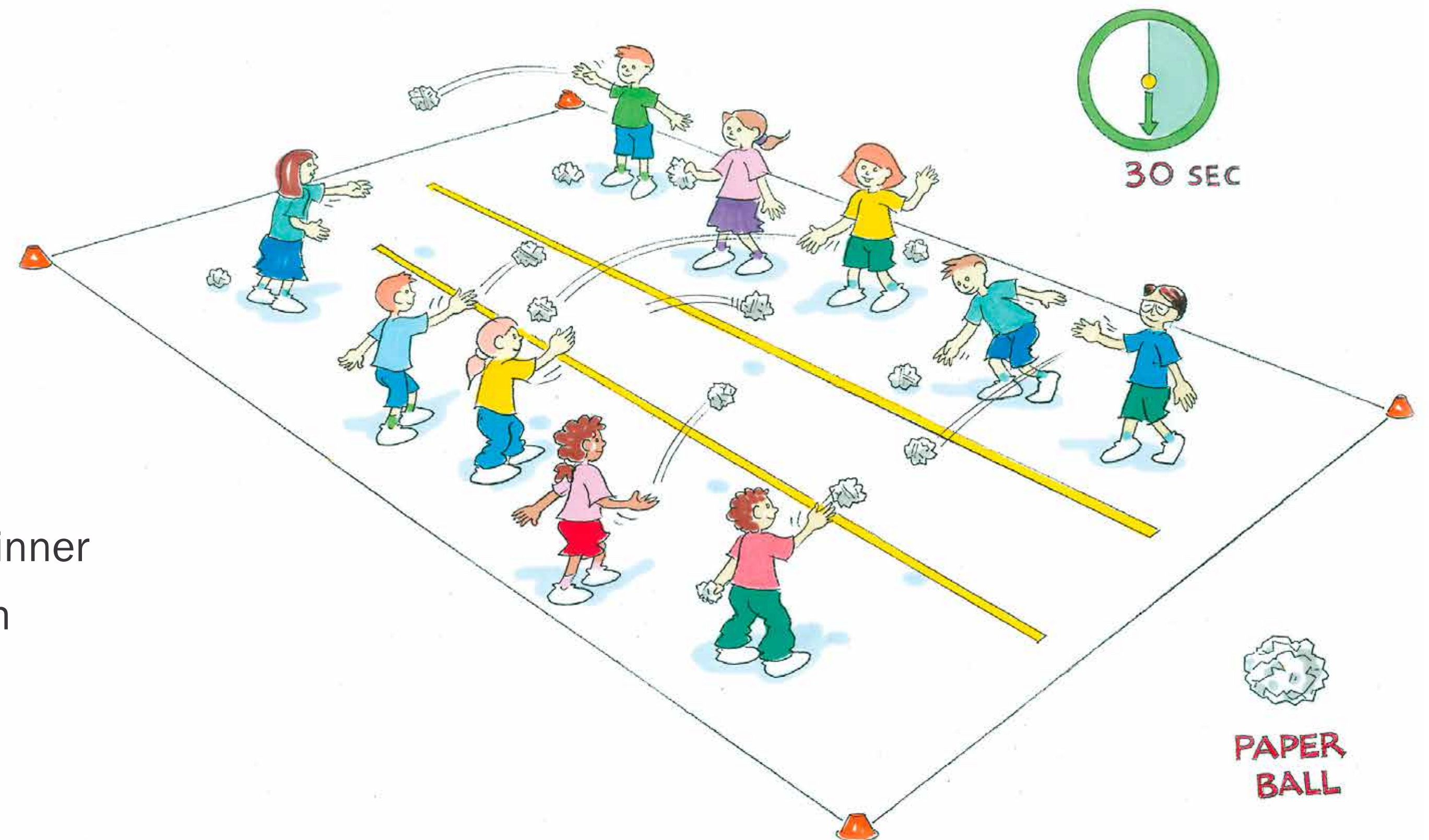
- Warm-up and fast retrieval of Table Tennis balls

EQUIPMENT

- Table Tennis ball for each player; field markers to define playing area

What to do:

- Divide into two teams facing each other with a 'no-go' zone between them
- Players continue to throw balls to the other side until coach calls, 'Stop'
- Ensure players do not go in the 'no-go' zone
- The team with the least amount of balls on its side is the winner
- Teams can play three games to determine the winning team



Tips

- Teams huddle before the game to discuss strategies

Change it

- Use Table Tennis balls instead of paper
- Vary the distance of the 'no-go' zone

Pirate's gold

The pirate's crew tries to steal the gold from the pirate and make it home without being tagged.

LESSON 4

- START OUT
- 10 MINUTES

SKILL FOCUS

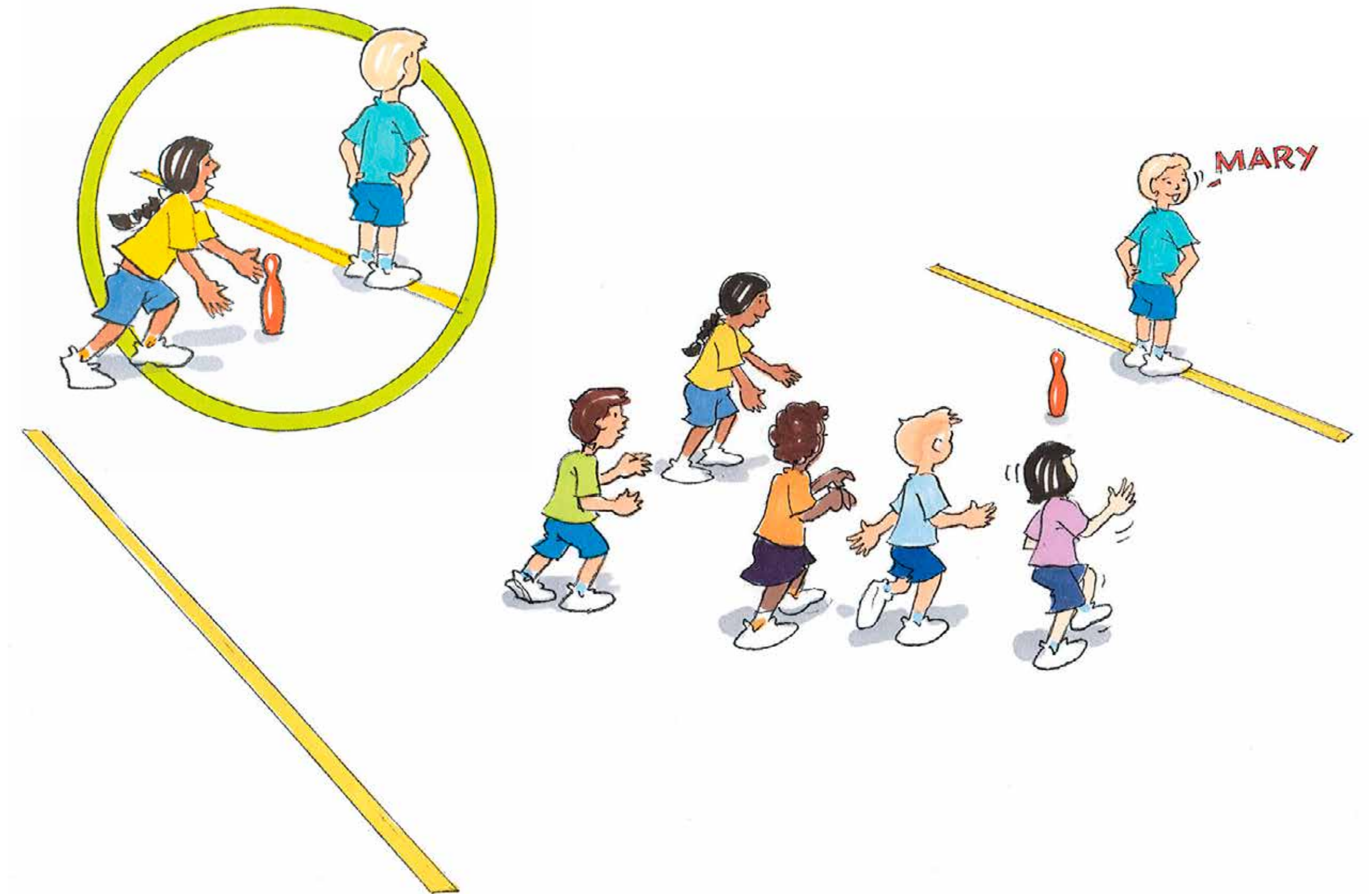
- Warm-up and fast retrieval of Table Tennis balls

EQUIPMENT

- An item that can be used as the gold (for example, a bean bag, ball or skittle); a racket and ball for each of the pirate crew

What to do:

- Play several games at once (groups of six to eight)
- The pirate's crew lines up across the starting line with a racket and ball
- When the pirate's back is turned, the pirate's crew approaches the gold while balancing a ball on a racket
- When the pirate turns around, the pirate's crew must freeze. If the pirate sees any of the crew moving, they call out their names. These crew members return to the starting line, and begin again
- The first crew member to reach the gold picks it up and tries to run back to the starting line before being tagged by the pirate
- Swap pirates after each game



Tips

- Resting the ball against the thumb makes it easier to balance
- Ensure there is a minimum ten metre safe zone for pirate's crew behind starting line

Change it

- Pirate's crew balances a ball on a flat palm (as in the service throw), no racket
 - Ask players to freeze in the ready position
- Players return to starting line if they drop the ball during the approach

Rally around

Playing in pairs, players complete a hit-and-rally circuit. Pairs move from station to station on a signal.

LESSON 4

- GET INTO IT
- 30 MINUTES

SKILL FOCUS

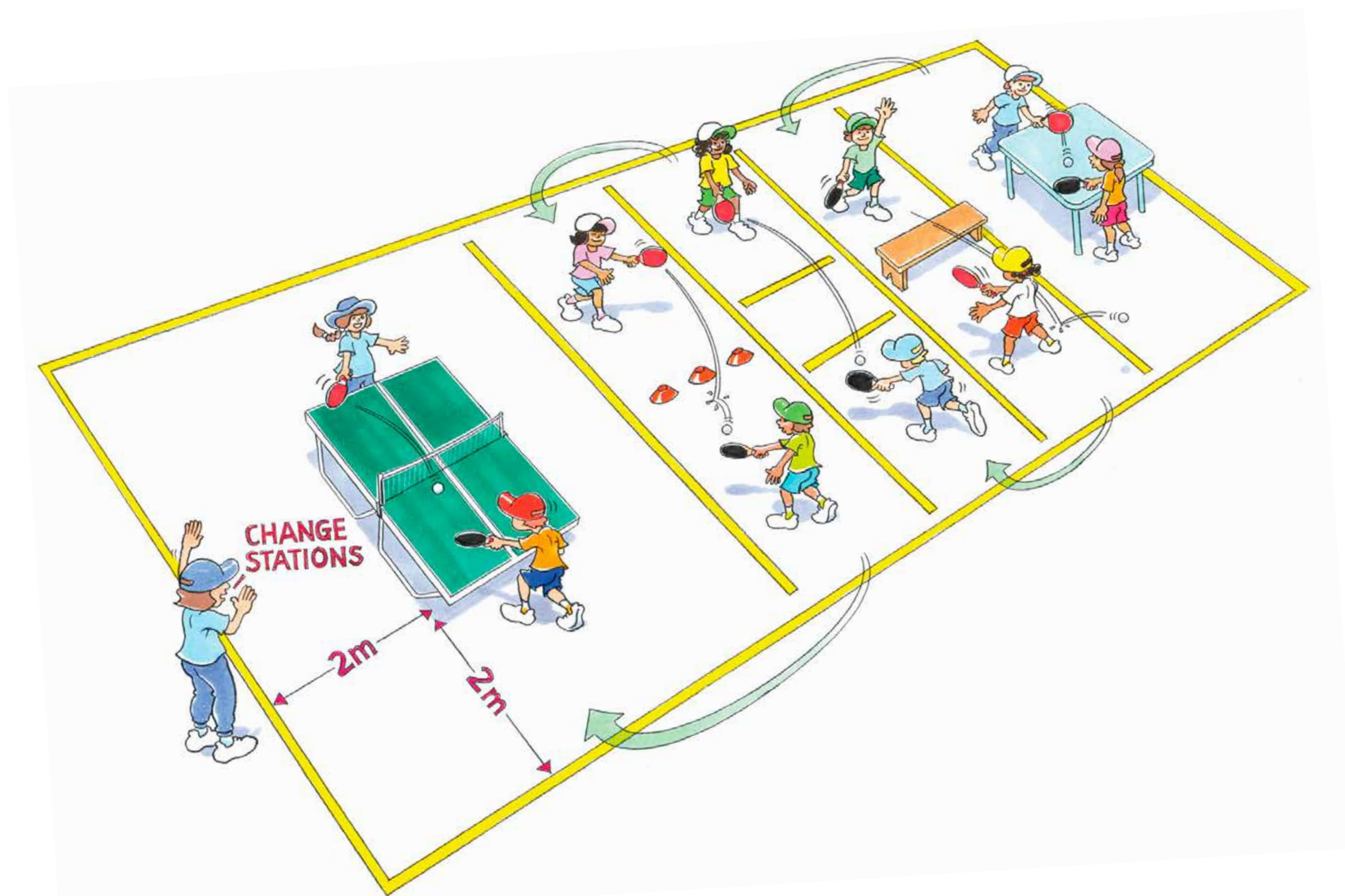
- Basic singles rally
- Scoring options

EQUIPMENT

- Table Tennis balls and rackets, tables (any type that are sturdy) can be added into the circuit; walls can be included for a circuit activity; markers, benches, variety of balls, hoops

What to do:

- Form pairs of similar ability
- Set up a circuit of five stations (duplicate circuit to maximise participation)
- Players rally for five minutes with their partner
- When coach calls, 'Change stations', players leave their equipment at the station and move to the next one



Tips

- Ask players to help set up the equipment (show them the diagram)

Change it

- Change partners when changing stations
- Scoring: first player to five or 11 wins, play until coach calls, 'Change stations'
- Players alternate service after every two points

Four corners

Players choose a corner to stand in. Based on the call, those players must put away a piece of equipment then rejoin the game.

LESSON 4

- FINISH UP
- 10 MINUTES

SKILL FOCUS

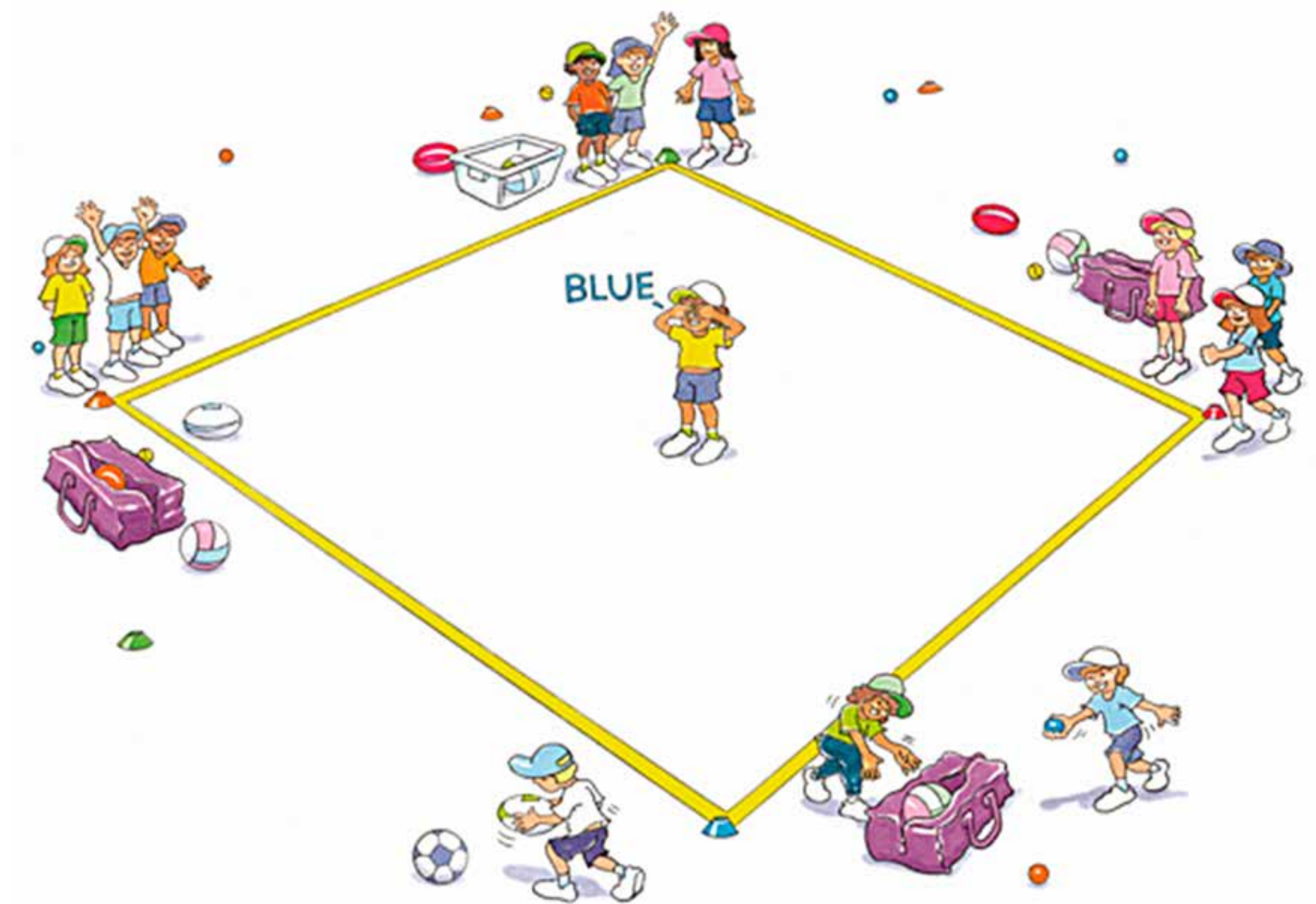
- A game to pack up all equipment

EQUIPMENT

- Table Tennis ball for each player; field markers to define playing area

What to do:

- Place a different coloured marker in each corner of a square
- One player stands in the middle of the square, eyes shut, and counts down from ten out loud
- While the player is counting, all other players walk to a corner
- On zero, the counter calls out one colour for a corner, (for example, 'Blue')
- All players in the blue corner must then run and place a piece of equipment away and then return to the game



Playing for Life — Table Tennis

5

SKILL FOCUS

Double games

TIME

60 minutes

SAFETY

Refer to 'Golden rules of safety' section of this manual

AREA

This lesson can be delivered without tables in a suitable area (preferably indoors)

EQUIPMENT

- Marker cones
- Table Tennis racket for each player
- Table Tennis balls
- 20 paper cups
- Tables

ACTIVITIES

- Shark attack 10 minutes
- Ten pin knockdown 20 minutes
- King and Queen of the court 20 minutes
- Let's see it 10 minutes

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Shark attack

One player is the shark and another player is the whale. All other players are fish and move around the area while balancing a ball on their racket. When touched on the shoulder by a shark, they must freeze on the spot and bounce their ball with the racket until the whale releases them by a touch on the shoulder.

LESSON 5

- START OUT
- 10 MINUTES

SKILL FOCUS

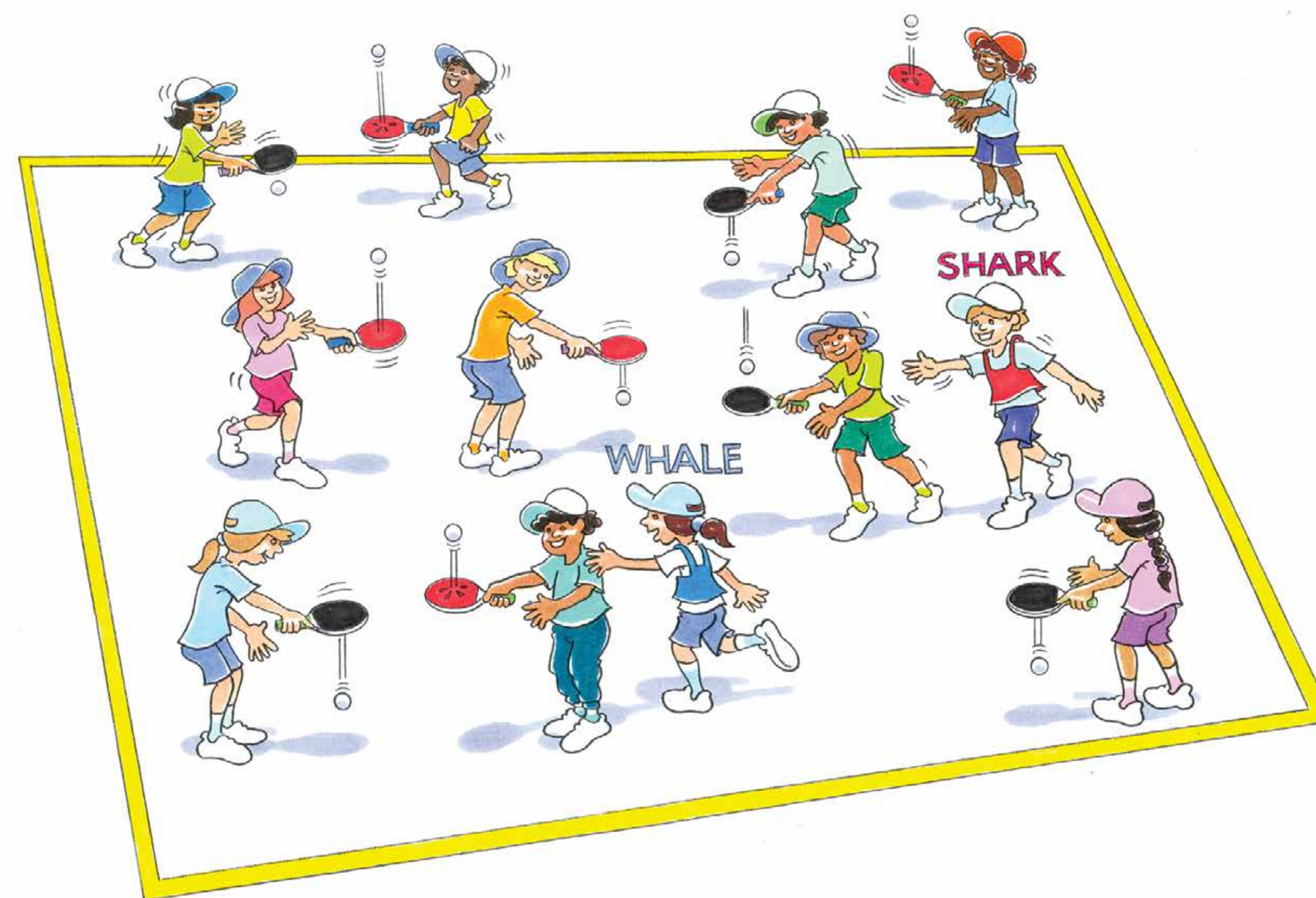
- Warm-up
- Racket and ball awareness

EQUIPMENT

- Table Tennis ball and racket for each player; field markers to define playing area; team bib or sash to identify shark and whale

What to do:

- Choose a shark and a whale and identify them with a bib or sash
- Ensure all fish have a racket and ball and walk around the nominated area
- The shark freezes and whale unfreezes players by touching them on the shoulder
- When frozen by a shark, the fish bounce their ball on the spot until they are unfrozen by the whale



Tips

- All players including the shark and whale must walk, not run

Change it

- Players can choose to bounce their ball upward or downward on the spot
- Fish can become frozen if they move out of playing area

Ten pin knock down

Players serve the ball from right corner to right corner and attempt to knock their opponent's targets off the table. The first pair to knock all their opponent's targets off the table wins.

LESSON 5

- GET INTO IT
- 20 MINUTES

SKILL FOCUS

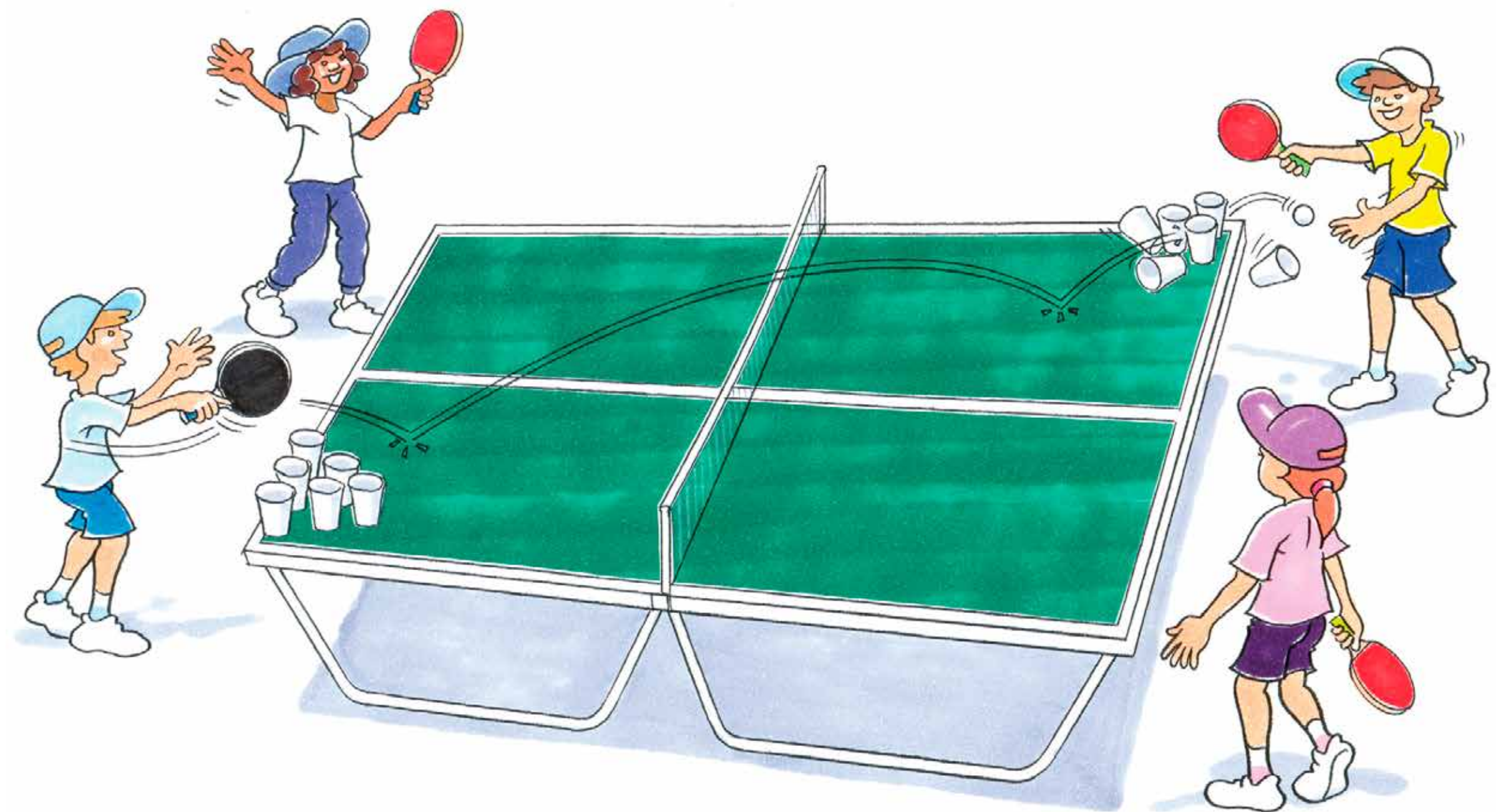
- Doubles rules for service: serving from right corner to right corner and alternating service

EQUIPMENT

- For each group of four you will need two rackets; two Table Tennis balls; one table; ten to 20 paper cups

What to do:

- Form two pairs per table
- Ask pairs to set up their paper cups in the right-hand corner of their end
- The player on the right completes two serves attempting to knock off opponent's cups
- After completing two serves, the server swaps sides with their partner
- The receiving player at the other end of the table now serves twice
- Continue until one pair's cups are all knocked down or coach calls 'Stop'



Tips

- When serving, racket and ball are above the level of the table

Change it

- No racket is an option (throw/bounce)
- Play for points when hitting targets if too hard to knock off the table

King and Queen of the court

The pair that wins the rally stays on the table and becomes the King or the Queen. The losing pair is replaced by the next challengers. When a pair beats the King or the Queen, they move to the other side of the table to replace the King or the Queen (six players per table).

LESSON 5

- GET INTO IT
- 20 MINUTES

SKILL FOCUS

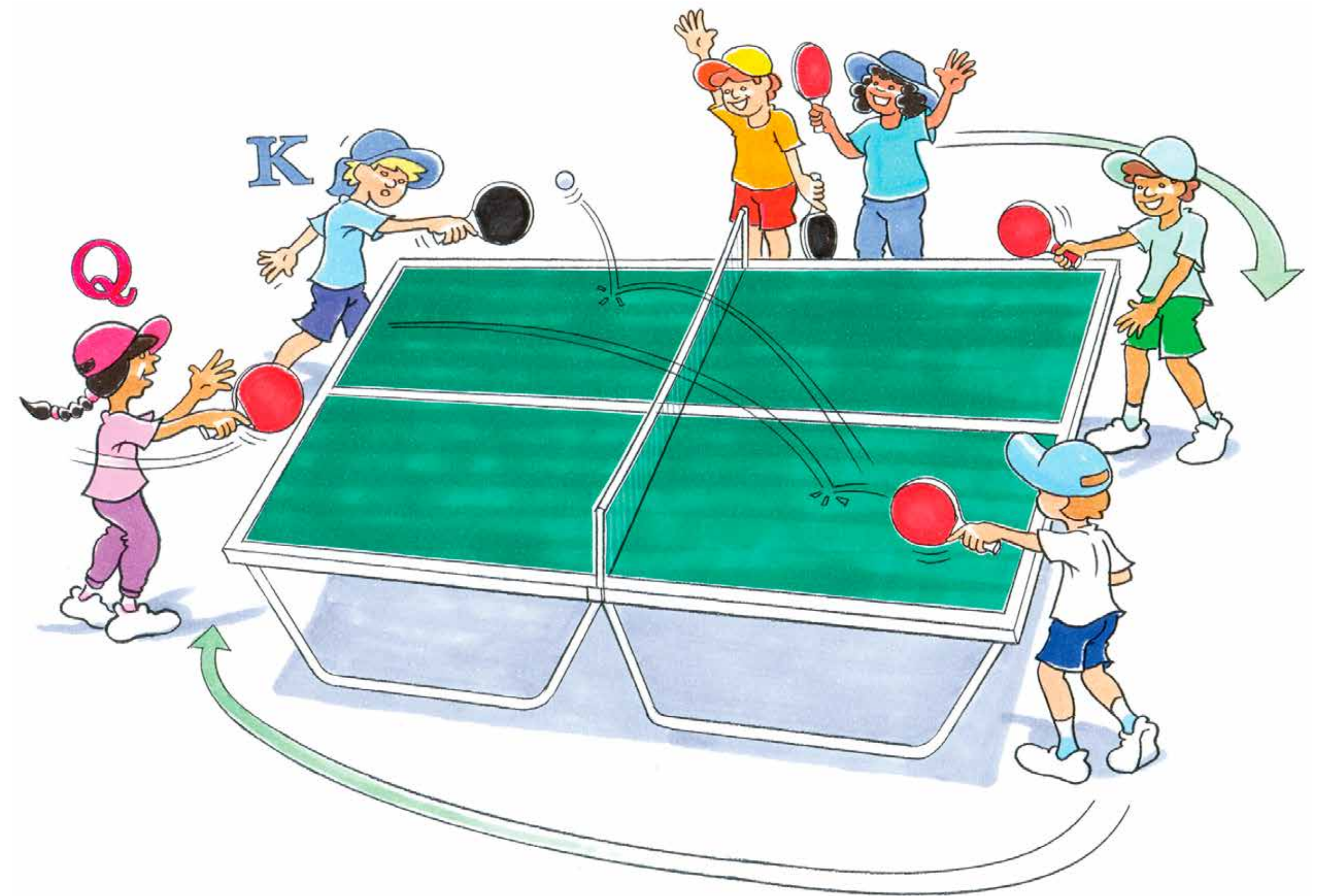
- Doubles rally
- Players in the pair hit alternately

EQUIPMENT

- Table Tennis balls and rackets; tables

What to do:

- Two players at either end of the table and two players waiting at the side
- One end of the table is designated the King and Queen end
- A player on the King and Queen team serves the ball from the right side of the table to the opposite right-hand side of the table to start the rally
- The winner of the rally (point) stays at the table (if they are not King and Queen, they move to the King and Queen end), and the losing team is replaced by the next team
- Play for a set period of time



Tips

- Match players according to similar age and ability level to make game more fun and challenging

Change it

- Players play until one team scores three points before rotating
- Relax the rule regarding the pair requiring alternate hits of the ball

Let's see it

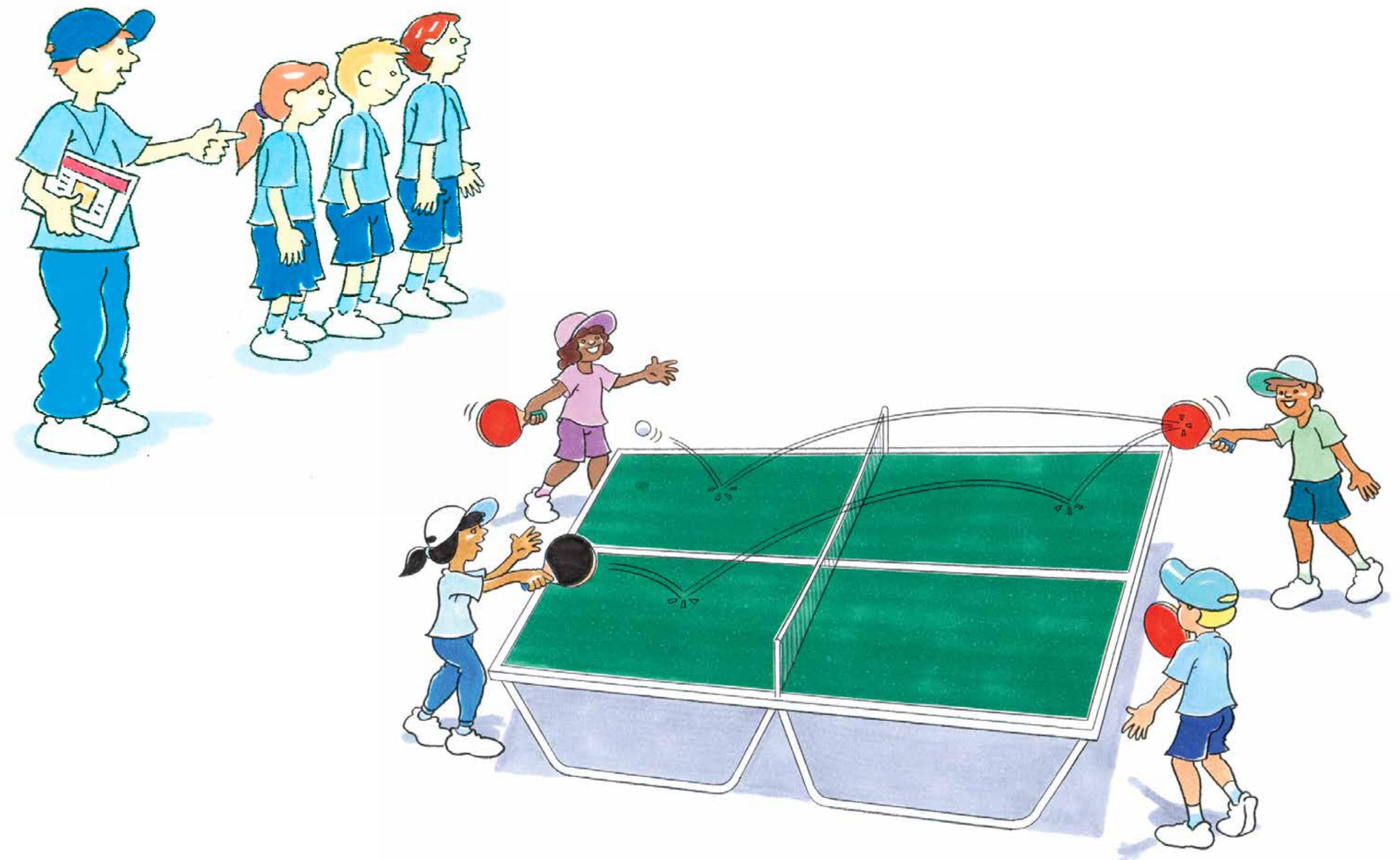
Coach selects role models to demonstrate.

LESSON 5

- FINISH UP
- 10 MINUTES

What to do:

- Pairs alternating hits
- Good footwork to move out of each other's way after hitting the ball
- Correct doubles service (to the right-hand corners)
- Coach can ask the observers to score the rally out loud for practice



Playing for Life — Table Tennis

6

SKILL FOCUS

Singles and doubles games

TIME

60 minutes

SAFETY

Refer to 'Golden rules of safety' section of this manual

AREA

This lesson can be delivered without tables in a suitable area (preferably indoors)

EQUIPMENT

- Marker cones
- Table Tennis racket for each player
- Table Tennis balls
- 20 paper cups
- Tables

ACTIVITIES

- Form a group 10 minutes
- Hit the square 10 minutes
- Round the table 10 minutes
- Top table 25 minutes
- Put it away! 5 minutes

[RETURN TO LESSON OVERVIEW](#)



Form a group

Players move around in random directions avoiding body contact with other players. The coach calls a number and players form groups of that size.

LESSON 6

- START OUT
- 10 MINUTES

SKILL FOCUS

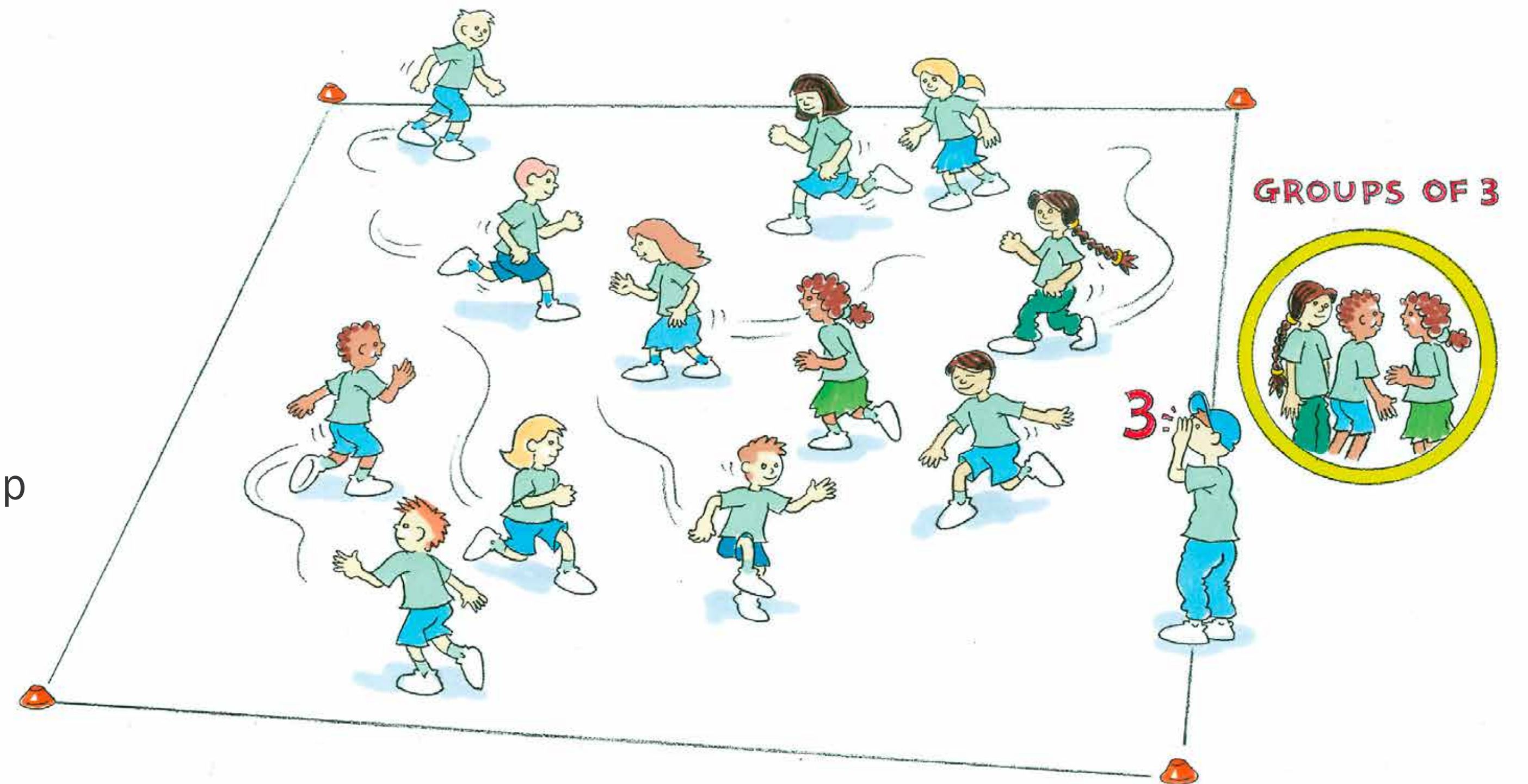
- Racket and ball coordination
- Group formation for next activity

EQUIPMENT

- Table Tennis ball and racket for each player; field markers to define playing area

What to do:

- Players tap or bounce their ball with their racket and move around randomly
- Coach calls out a number (for example, 'three'). Players keep tapping/bouncing as they move to form a group of three



Tips

- Finish the game by calling the number of players needed in a group for the next activity

Change it

- Ask players for different ways of moving around the area

Hit the square

Players serve and rally the ball to see how many times each pair can hit a square target.

LESSON 6

- START OUT
- 10 MINUTES

SKILL FOCUS

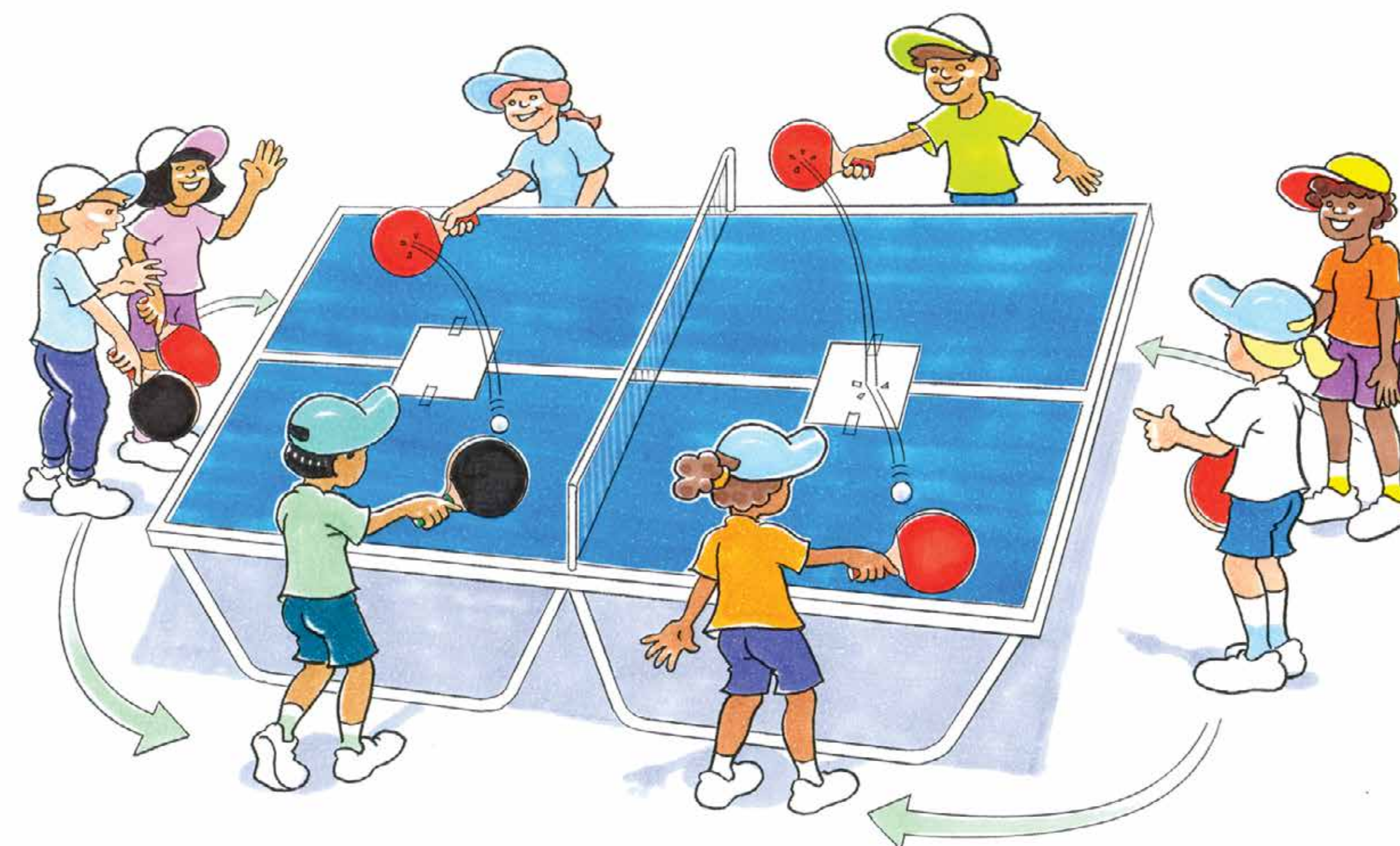
- Service
- Singles rally practice

EQUIPMENT

- Table Tennis racket per player; one Table Tennis ball between two; table; square paper target per pair

What to do:

- Form players into pairs of similar ability (two pairs per table)
- Pairs play on opposite sides of the table (not the ends)
- Coach asks 'How many times can you hit the square target in one minute?'
- Coach says 'Now repeat it and try to beat your score'



Tips

- Encourage players to try both forehand and backhand strikes

Change it

- Add another square target to increase scoring opportunities
- Play without a table using targets on the floor to score
- Compete against the pair on the same table
- Add the two pairs' scores together for a table score

Round the table

Players play a stroke and then move around to the other side of the table to join a line of players waiting for their turn.

LESSON 6

- GET INTO IT
- 10 MINUTES

SKILL FOCUS

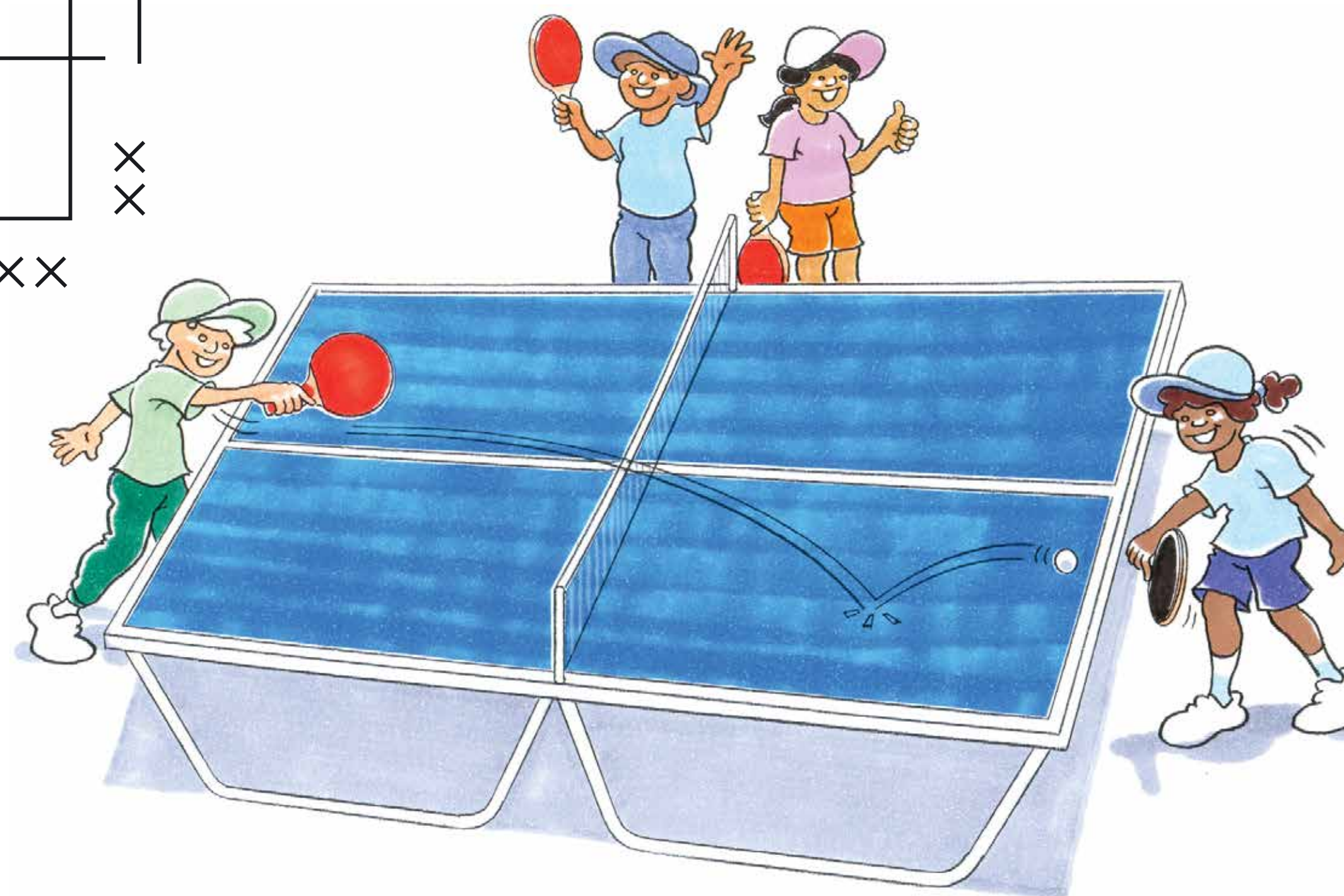
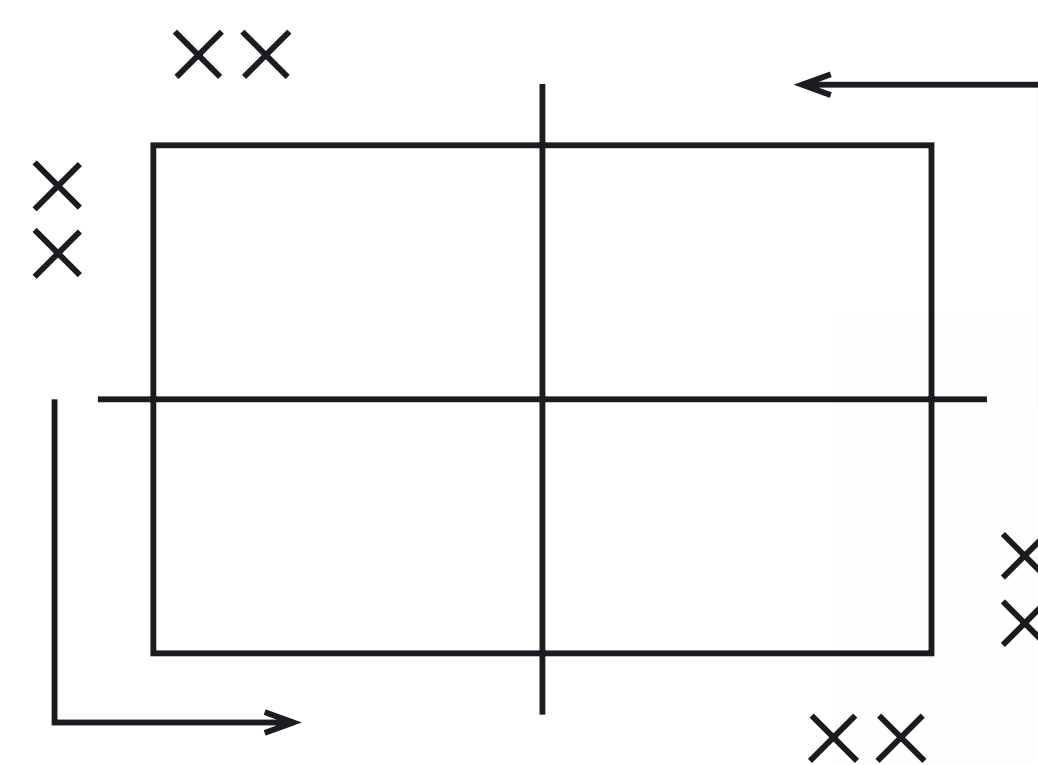
- Singles rally
- Cooperative play to encourage longer rally

EQUIPMENT

- One racket per player; one table tennis ball per table; one table per group of four to eight

What to do:

- Form groups of four to eight per table
- The first player serves the ball and then moves to the other side of the table to join a line of players
- Players take it in turns to hit one shot and then move to the other side
- Players count each strike of the ball as a point



Tips

- Play should be cooperative; encourage players to hit the ball where it can be easily returned

Change it

- No racket is an option (throw/bounce)
- Players have two turns each to strike the ball before moving to other line
- Allow more than one bounce to keep the rally going

Top table

Players play and score singles or double games. When the coach calls 'Stop!', the player or pair leading the match moves one table closer to the 'Top Table'. The losing player or pair moves one table further away.

LESSON 6

- GET INTO IT
- 25 MINUTES

SKILL FOCUS

- Singles and doubles rally
- Scoring options

EQUIPMENT

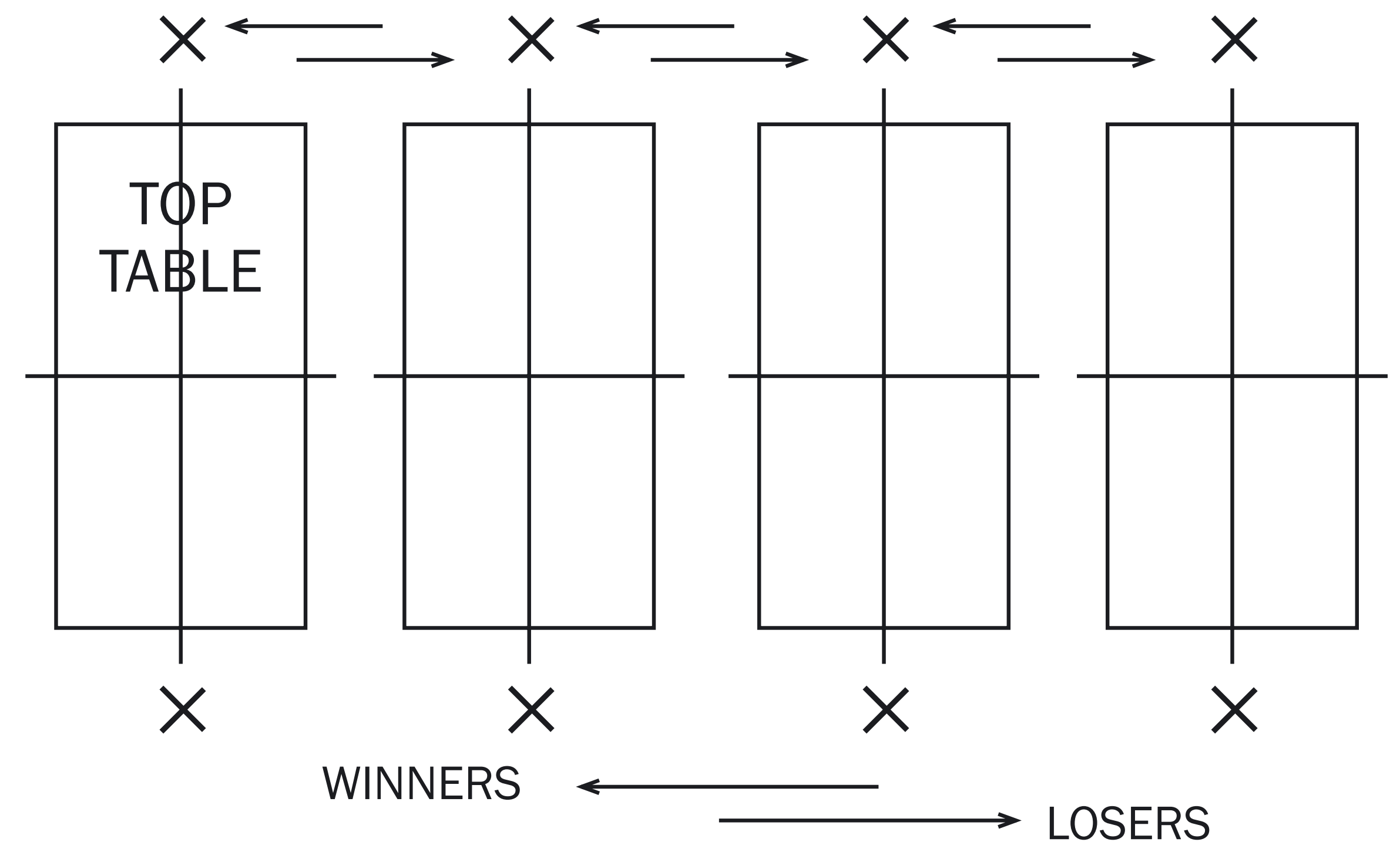
- Table Tennis balls and rackets; tables

OPTIONAL EQUIPMENT

- Set up floor matches in between tables if not enough tables, markers, benches

What to do:

- Two players at either end of the table
- Identify which table is the 'Top table'
- Coach times matches and calls 'Stop' every three and five minutes
- Winning players move towards 'Top table'
- Losing players move away from 'Top table'
- The winners at 'Top table' and the loser on the last table do not move



Tips

- Scoring — the server's score is always called first

Change it

- Play singles instead of doubles

Put it away!

Gather up the equipment and store it properly.

LESSON 6

- FINISH UP
- 5 MINUTES

SKILL FOCUS

- Introduces safety rules such as safe 'traffic-flow', acting sensibly and being aware of others

What to do:

On your signal, children can:

- put away rackets, balls, equipment
- attempt to throw ball into a bucket or storage bag
- practise balancing balls on their rackets while putting the equipment away



Playing for Life — Table Tennis

7

SKILL FOCUS

Singles and doubles games

TIME

60 minutes

SAFETY

Refer to 'Golden rules of safety' section of this manual

AREA

Preferably one Table Tennis table per group of six.
This lesson can be delivered without tables in a suitable area (preferably indoors)

EQUIPMENT

- Marker cones
- Table Tennis racket for each player
- Table Tennis balls
- 20 paper cups
- Tables

ACTIVITIES

- Flip it **5 minutes**
- Round the table **15 minutes**
- Doubles matches **30 minutes**
- Let's see it **5 minutes**
- What did you learn? **5 minutes**

[RETURN TO LESSON OVERVIEW](#)



Flip it

Players are separated into two teams. Half the players place their rackets with the red side up (red team) and the other half with the black side up (black team). On a signal, players run around trying to flip over the other team's rackets to match their own team's colour.

LESSON 7

- START OUT
- 5 MINUTES

SKILL FOCUS

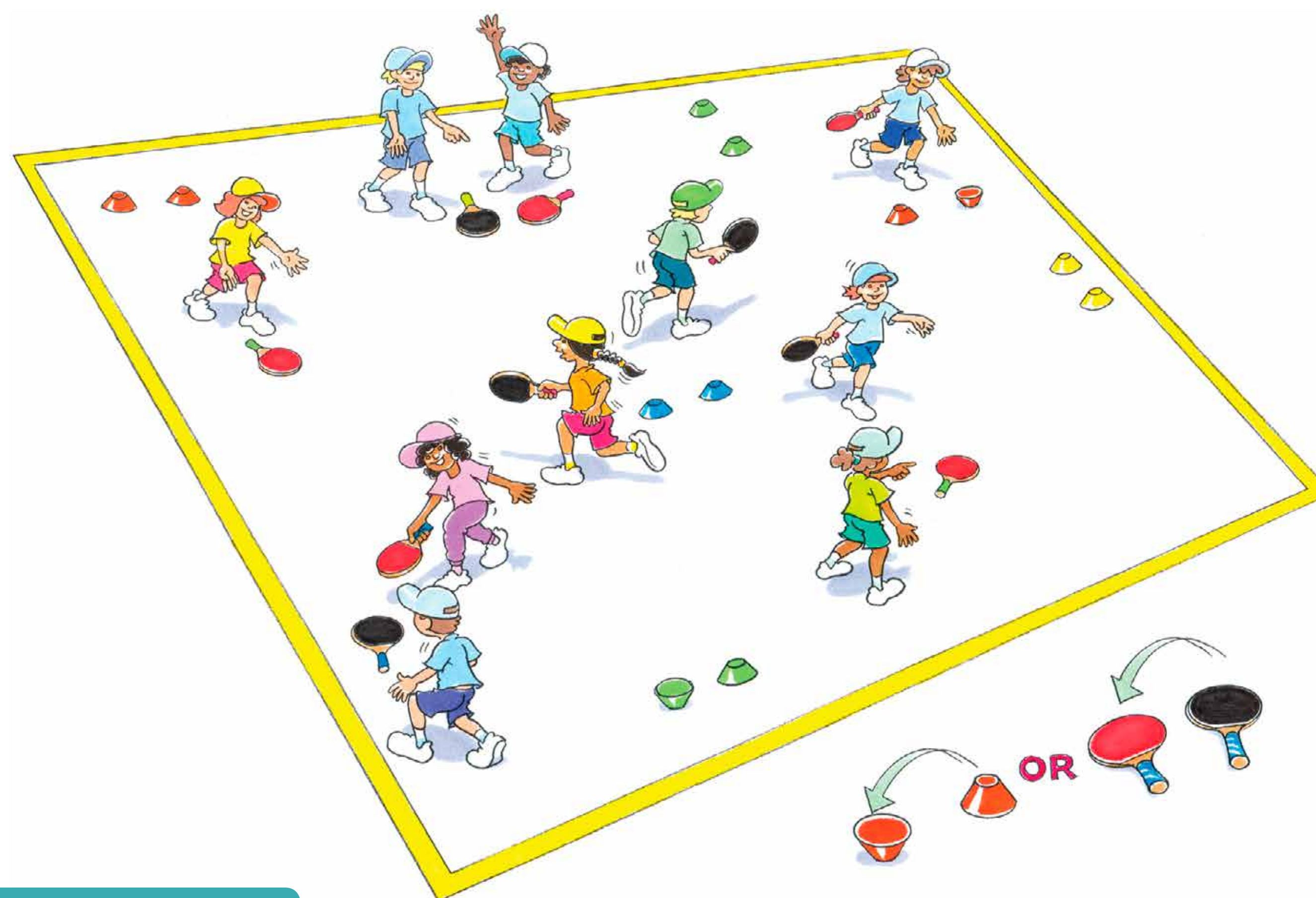
- Warm-up
- Spatial awareness

EQUIPMENT

- Table Tennis rackets that have a red and a black side OR one field marker per player

What to do:

- Divide players into two teams
- Play for a set time (for example 45 seconds)
- The team with the most rackets with their colour showing wins
- Play best of three games



Tips

- Players should adopt actions to avoid bumping heads

Change it

- Use field markers instead of rackets
- Ask players for rule changes as needed

Round the table

Players play a stroke and then move around to the other side of the table to join a line of players waiting for their turn.

LESSON 7

- START OUT
- 15 MINUTES

SKILL FOCUS

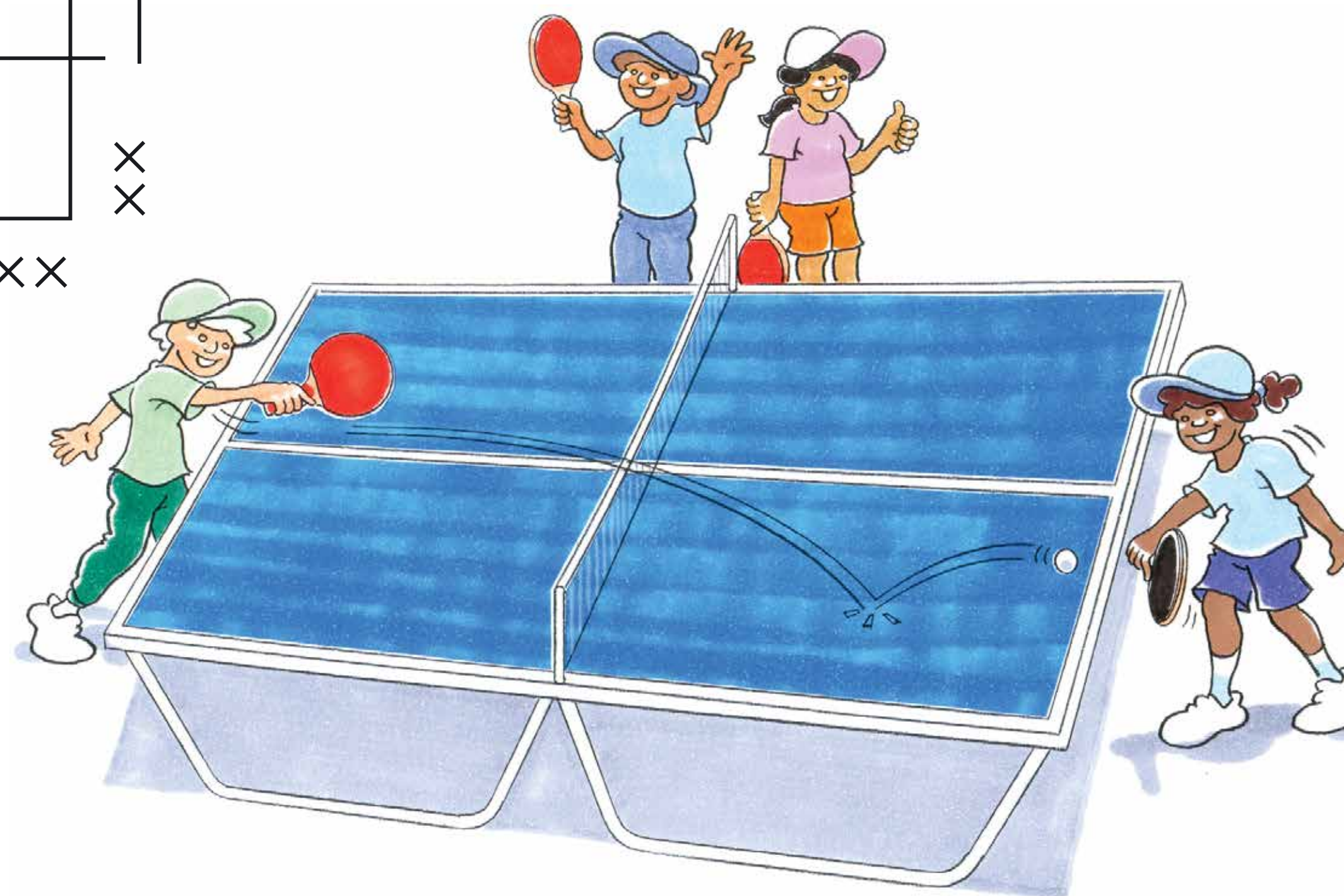
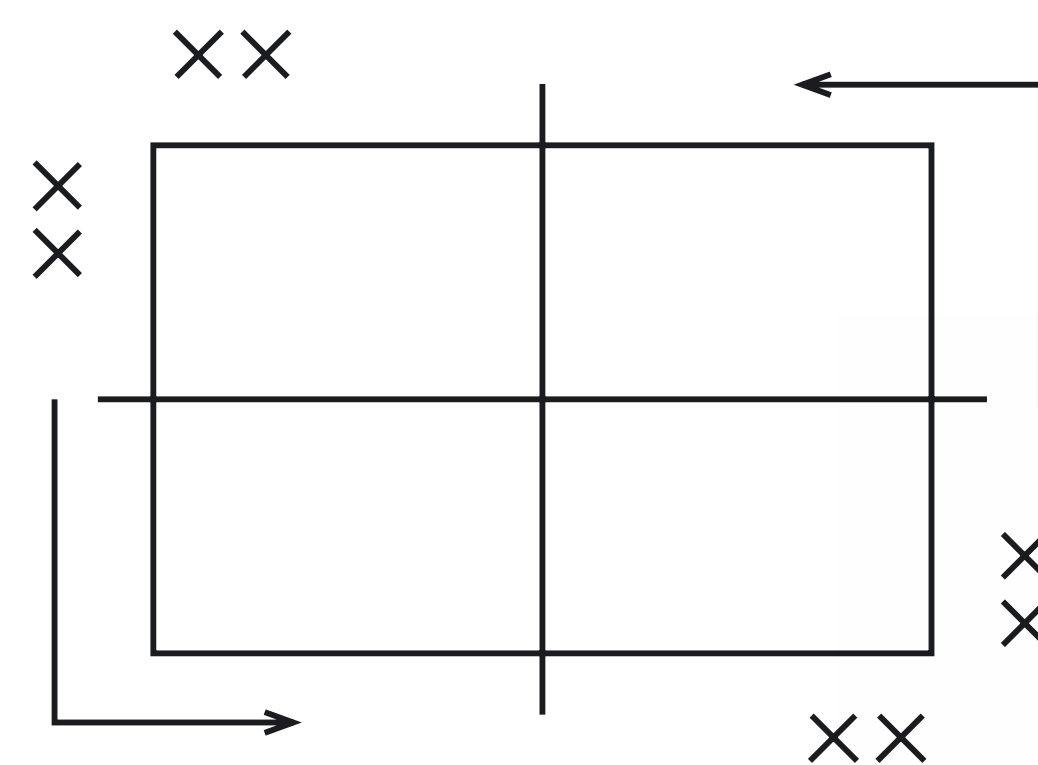
- Singles rally
- Cooperative play to encourage longer rally

EQUIPMENT

- One racket per player; one table tennis ball per table; one table per group of four to eight

What to do:

- Form groups of four to eight per table
- The first player serves the ball and then moves to the other side of the table to join a line of players
- Players take it in turns to hit one shot and then move to the other side
- Players count each strike of the ball as a point



Tips

- Play should be cooperative; encourage players to hit the ball where it can be easily returned

Change it

- No racket is an option (throw/bounce)
- Players have two turns each to strike the ball before moving to other line
- Allow more than one bounce to keep the rally going

Double matches

Players play and score double matches.

LESSON 7

- GET INTO IT
- 30 MINUTES

SKILL FOCUS

- Singles and doubles rally
- Scoring options

EQUIPMENT

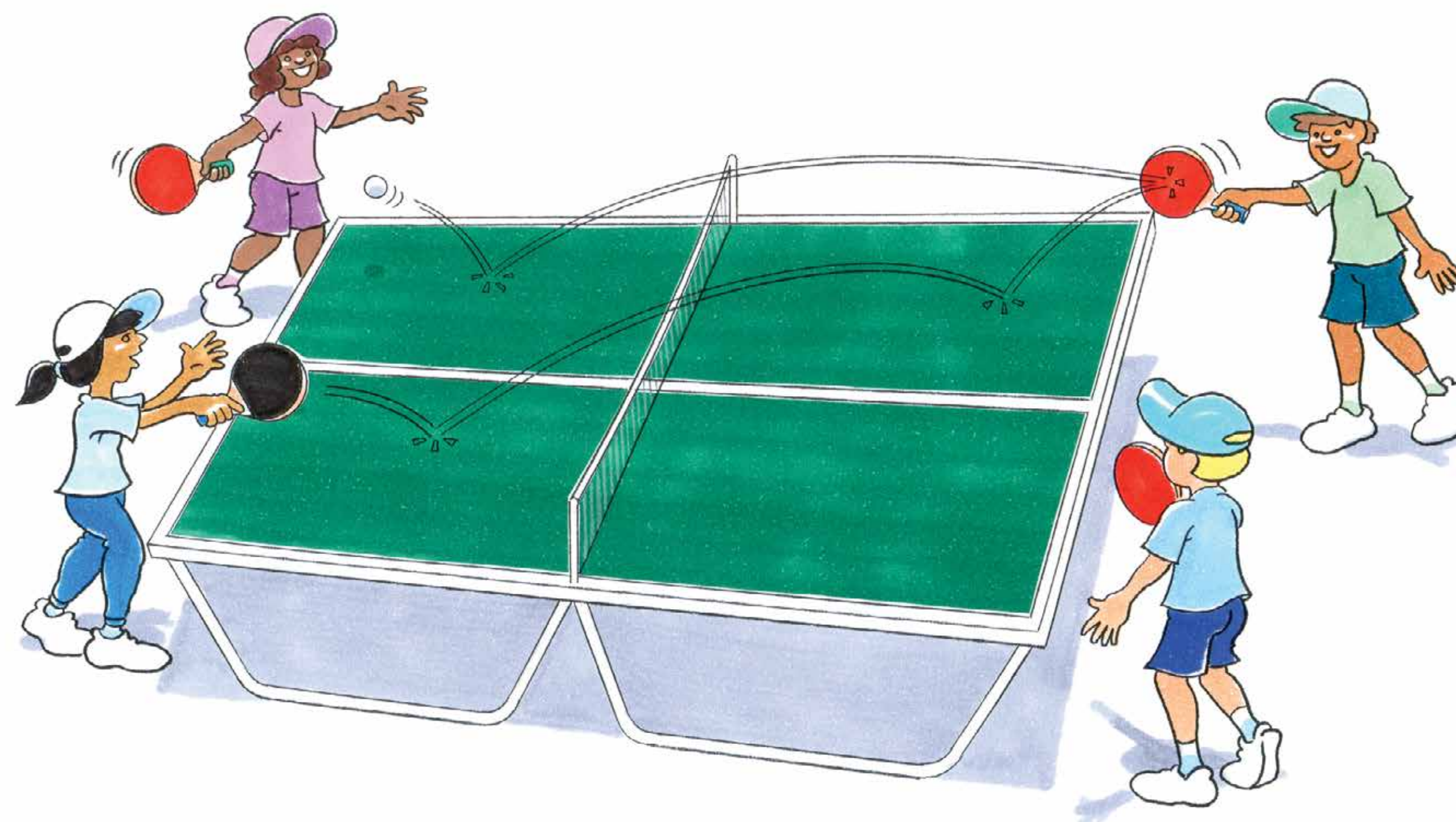
- Table Tennis balls and rackets, tables (one table per group of six)

OPTIONAL EQUIPMENT

- Set up floor matches in between tables if not enough tables, markers, benches

What to do:

- Form groups of three pairs per table
- Players not playing can assist with scoring and umpiring
- The server serves from the right hand side of the table to the right hand side
- Players hit alternately
- Serve twice to the same side and same person
- Play first pair to five points wins, then swap with the pair that was scoring



Tips

- To decide who will serve first, a player hides the ball in one hand below the table. The other pair must then select which hand is holding the ball

Change it

- Players may hit the ball in any sequence rather than alternately
- Play a competitive game up to 11 points
- Play singles games up to five or 11 points

Let's see it

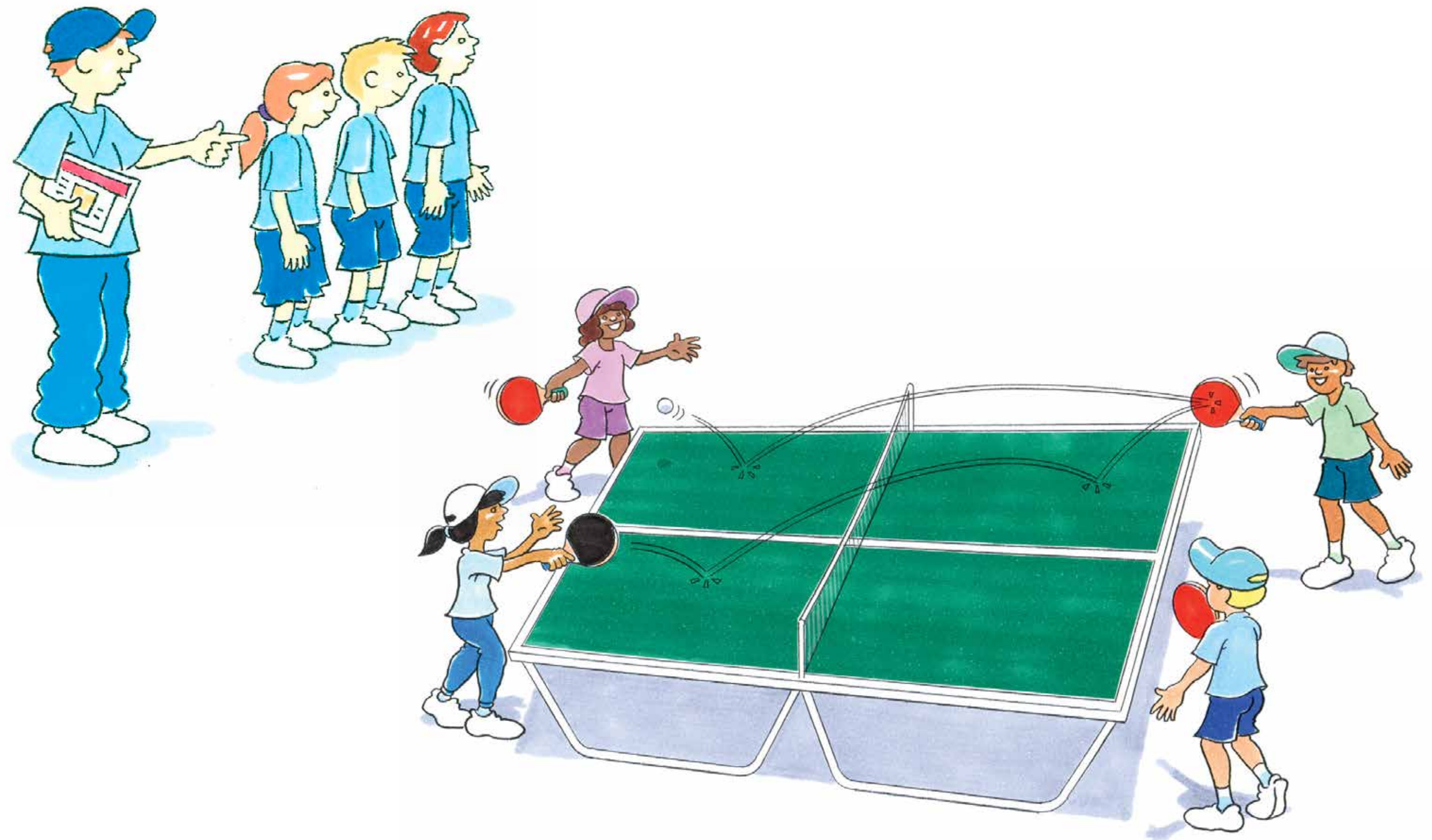
Coach selects role models to demonstrate.

LESSON 7

- FINISH UP
- 5 MINUTES

What to do:

- Pairs working together with good sportsmanship
- Correct service rules when playing doubles



What did you learn?

Ask questions to reinforce the key skills or tactical points.

LESSON 7

- FINISH UP
- 5 MINUTES

Coach asks:

- ‘Who knows where their local Table Tennis club is?’
- ‘What were your favourite Table Tennis activities played in the last few weeks?’



Where to from here?



There are a number of ways you can continue your positive experience with Table Tennis. Through state and territory associations, Table Tennis Australia delivers a range of programs for juniors, coaches and officials, athletes with disability and culturally and linguistically diverse groups. Below is a brief outline of some of the programs available. For more information, contact the appropriate state or territory association or refer to the Table Tennis Australia website.

Coaching and officiating

Through each state and territory association, Table Tennis Australia delivers coaching and officiating accreditation courses all year round. Coaches and officials who complete the requirements for these courses are accredited through the National Coaching Accreditation Scheme (NCAS) and the National Official Accreditation Scheme (NOAS).

For more information about getting involved in coaching and officiating programs, visit the Table Tennis Australia website or contact your state or territory association.

Inclusive Table Tennis for athletes with disability

There are opportunities for athletes with disability to be involved with all levels of Table Tennis. Table Tennis Australia has a strong pathway that takes athletes with a physical disability (both standing and wheelchair) and athletes with an intellectual disability from local associations through to national Paralympic squads. Polybat, one alternative version of the game, is outlined in the Sports Ability activity card (refer to pages 60 to 63).

Resources and more information

There is a range of resources available about Table Tennis. For more information about these resources and other Table Tennis programs, visit the Table Tennis Australia website at www.tabletennis.org.au or contact any of the state and territory associations listed on page 64.



Sports Ability

Activity Card

Polybat

An alternative table-top bat and ball activity.

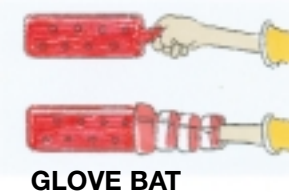
Playing the Game

What you need

- Polybat bats and balls, or alternatives (see 'Equipment' over).
- Table tennis table or any large table or flat surface (again, see options over).

What to do

- The aim of the game is to hit the ball over the opponent's end of the table, or cause them to play a fault by lifting the ball off the table surface. Can be played as singles or doubles.
- Each player has five serves. Serve then goes to other player (or rotates alternately for doubles). First to eleven points wins.
- Play begins with the server playing the ball off any side. Strokes can then be played directly or off the side.
- Players can touch the ball more than once with the bat before returning it to their opponent's end.
- The ball must stay on the table surface at all times.
- Polybat is suitable for players who have arm, balance, or coordination impairments for whom table tennis may not be appropriate or possible.
- Polybat can also be used as a means of introducing table tennis to younger children.



GLOVE BAT



END REBOUND SIDES CAN BE USED



Polybat

Use the TREE model to modify this game.

Try the modifications suggested below or devise your own.



Polybat

Teaching style

- Look at ways in which the players can improve their technique or anticipation of the ball movement. For example:
 - encourage the players to keep the bat steady and in front of the body;
 - enable them to rest the bat on the table surface if necessary to provide more stability;
 - encourage them to watch the speed and direction of the ball. This can be practised by rolling the ball from different angles.

Rules

- Play first to 11 or 21 points with or without a two-point advantage.
- Modify the multiple touch rule and specify the number of hits for players of different abilities.
- Allow some players to serve direct to their opponent.

Equipment

- The sides can be attached to a table tennis table which provides a standard size for play. However, any large table can be used, or a number of smaller tables can be pushed together. Tape can be used to smooth the joins.
- If polybats are not available, then any small flat-edged play bat can be used. Plastic or wooden rulers may also be used.
- Use slow moving wiffle or airflow balls. Larger wiffle or airflow balls can be used before progressing to the standard polybat ball.

Environment

- Reduce the width of the end line by adding shorter rebound sides to the end of the table. This way, for example, the game can be balanced between players of different abilities, or if two players play against one.

Safety

- Ensure that the lower limbs of wheelchair users do not rub against the table.
- The game can be very dynamic and absorbing. Check for signs of fatigue with beginners.
- Avoid striking the rebound sides with the bat. Ensure that they are properly clipped or taped onto the table.

Questions

- Can the players angle the bat downwards in order to keep the ball on the table surface?
- Is it better to hit or strike the ball, or can players get more control by using a pushing or sweeping action?

Other games to play

- Polybat can lead into:
 - table tennis;
 - other bat and racquet sports.

Integrity

Whatever modification is used, ensure that the integrity of the game is maintained. Games and activities should never be modified to the extent that they no longer resemble the original.





Polybat: Variations

These games develop skills that support polybat and other bat and racquet activities.

Polyskittles



Playing the Game

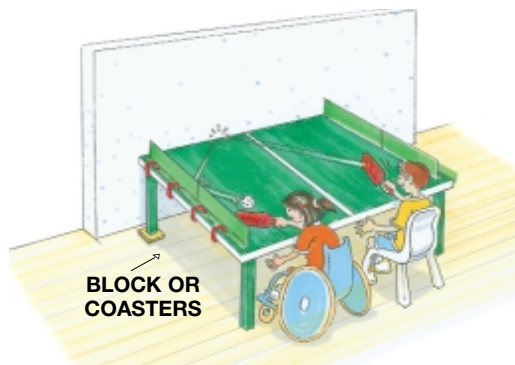
What you need

- Polybats and balls (or alternative bats and balls).
- Polybat rebound sides (or similar).
- Skittles, small plastic bottles, plastic cups.

What to do

- Try to knock down as many skittles as possible using 5 balls in succession.

Polysquash



Playing the Game

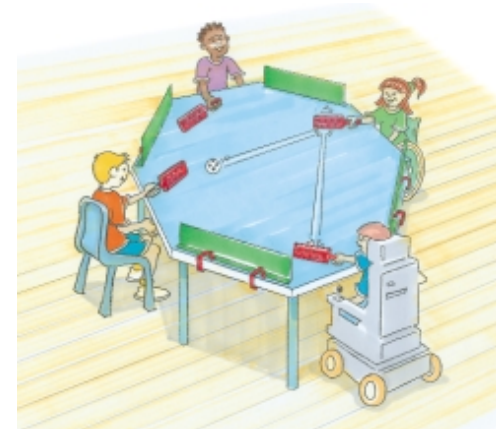
What you need

- Polybats and balls (or alternative bats and balls).
- Polybat rebound sides (or similar).

What to do

- Push the table against a wall. Players sit next to each other. Mark a dividing line up the centre of the table if necessary.
- Players play alternate hits off the wall or sides.
- Players score by hitting the ball over the end of the table on their opponent's side.

Octopoly



Playing the Game

What you need

- Polybats and balls (or alternative bats and balls).
- Polybat rebound sides (or similar).

What to do

- Use a multi-sided table to involve more players.
- Players play individually or in teams.
- Agree a winning score (for example, 5).

Polybat: Variations

Use the TREE model to modify these games. Try the modifications suggested below or devise your own.



Polybat

Teaching style

Polyskittles

- Encourage players to keep score or allocate a scorer.

Polysquash

- Use polysquash to explain about the game of squash.

Octopoly

- Discuss with the group ways in which they would like to play.

Rules

Polyskittles

- Remove / leave skittles that have been knocked over.

Polysquash

- Allow multiple hits for some players.

Octopoly

- Players take turns in starting the game by serving off any rebound board.
- Players can score through any other player's 'goal'.

Equipment

Polyskittles

- Try using different kinds of target, for example, plastic cups, light balls.

Polysquash

- Raise the end of the table nearest the wall slightly to help the ball roll back towards the players. (for example, use coasters).

Octopoly

- Try using balls that move at different speeds.

Environment

Polyskittles

- Space the skittles out to challenge players.

Polysquash

- Players can use narrower tables and play individually initially.

Octopoly

- Make 'goals' wider or narrower depending on the abilities of the players.

Safety

- Play sensibly and with control, without swinging the bat around. This is particularly important if playing near other players.

Questions

- Can some of these games be played cooperatively? For example, how many consecutive hits can players make at polysquash or octopoly?

Other games to play

Use these games to lead in to:

- competitive polybat
- other bat and racquet games, including table tennis and squash.

Integrity

Whatever modification is used, ensure that the integrity of the game is maintained. Games and activities should never be modified to the extent that they no longer resemble the original.



TREE

Teaching style • Rules • Equipment • Environment

Contacts



Table Tennis Australia

Office 2.13 Sports House, 150 Caxton St
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Web: www.tabletennis.org.au

(State Table Tennis website information
can be found on the national website).

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