

THE SPORTS DANCE

Music	Casper ter Beek
Dance	Maria Speth
Time	4/4
Prelude	4 bars
Formation	open order formation, pupils facing front
Target group	suggested 4 to 12 years

Explanation

- The starting point for this dance is based on movements from sports such as tennis, basketball, soccer, boxing, golf, bowling and hammer throw.
- If necessary, use a gradual building up of the different kinds of movements. For the younger pupils avoid teaching all the movements at once, offering half of the sports movements and repeating these often.
- This warming up might look more like a structured dance at first sight, but the description below is just an example meant to be a source of inspiration for the teacher. Think of other movements or sports than the ones mentioned here and make your own warming-up together with the pupils.
- Dance instruction is done using the 'direct method': play the music, pupils join in with the teacher who guides the activity and movement.

Dance Structure

Bars

	Tennis
1 - 4	intro
5 - 8	head movements: look right, center, left and center (2 times)
9 - 12	torso is turned to the right, bent over 90 degrees and then rotates with a flat-back position past the middle to the left side and upright before facing forward (as if you are looking for the ball) + shrug your shoulders, you cannot find the ball
13 - 16	repeat in reverse order (left to right)
17 - 24	As in measure 9 to 12, the torso dips deeper than the horizontal position and raise shoulders as in a shoulder shrug: hold shoulders up! Lower shoulders when starting the next sport ('Soccer'). Attention, this section consists of 8 measures and is therefore executed in a slower pace.

Soccer

- 25 - 28 4 pliés (bending of both knees while the feet are in parallel position)
29 - 32 4 relevés (rising on toes)
33 - 40 8 times alternating between plié and relevé

Boxing

- 41 4 jumps on both feet, with clenched fists close to the face
42 repeat four jumps but make a forward boxing movement on the 1st and 3rd jump with the right hand
43 - 44 repeat bars 41 - 42, but now make the punching motion with the left hand
45 - 48 repeat bars 41 - 44 with alternating right and left bash

Bars

Golf

- 49 - 50 twice weight-shift* right to left and back while the torso is slightly bent over and hands 'hold' the golf stick in position ready to swing
51 weight-shift to the right while 'swinging the golf club' up and over the right shoulder
52 repeat bar 51 to the left
53 - 56 repeat measures 49 - 52

Basketball

- 57 step side-close-side-close to the right while dribbling movements with right arm
58 2 jumps and dunk movements with r-arm in the air (dunk in the basket)
59 - 60 repeat bars 57 - 58 in other direction
61 - 64 repeat bars 57 - 60

Ping-pong

- 65 weight-shift: right-left-right-left, while clasping an imaginary paddle in front
66 hitting ball movements from 4 different angles
67 - 72 repeat bars 65 - 66 (3x in total)

Basketball

- 73 - 80 repeat bars 57 - 64

Ping-pong

- 81 - 88 repeat bars 65 - 72

Measure

Golf

- 89 - 96 repeat bars 49 - 56

* Weight shift: transferring weight, with a light bounce, from one leg to the other and back.

Bowling

- 97 - 98 slight bouncing movement by bending both knees; both hands clasped in front at chest level, like holding a bowling ball while you decide where you will bowl
- 99 - 100 swing with right arm on vertical axis from front to back to front 2x with a 'let go' movement at the end
- 101 - 104 repeat 97 - 100 with left arm
- 105 - 112 repeat bars 97 - 104

Hammer Throw

- 113 - 116 as in previous measures (97 - 99), but after third swing make two 360-degree spins before the releasing action
- 117 - 120 same movements (as in 113 - 116) for left arm
- 121 end with victory gesture: both arms in the air 'YES !!'

Tip

Although this warming-up described as above is intended for pupils from 6 to 12 years of age, it may be adjusted for younger pupils: repeat the movements longer and use less variations.

Further Exploration

This dance was initially intended as a warming-up, but over the years there turned out to be more and more opportunities for deepening this theme. These are mentioned below. In this way, the original Sports Dance could be the introduction to a whole dance theme.

- After warming up, have the pupils sit on the floor. Ask which sports they recognized. Every time the pupils name one of the sports that was danced, ask whether they also know the movement that has been danced and whether they can show it again. That is sometimes more complicated than it seems. Copying movements does not always guarantee that the pupils can reproduce the dance steps. They need to remember exactly what they have done or seen. By asking them if they have recognized sports and also having them performed again, you stimulate both their physical and cognitive memory and make them more aware of the movement itself. You can also ask whether the pupils can think of other movements from the same sport. In this way you show that multiple options match the same idea.
- You can deepen the warming-up even further by experimenting with the dance elements time, space and effort**. To make this approach accessible for the students you could let them view active sports on television or the internet. This will help them to recognize and analyse the presence of the dance elements in sport movements. Exciting moments are often repeated during match reports and often in slow motion. These are both time-bound actions. You can make good use of that in your dance. You can choose to repeat part of your dance somewhere or use the slow motion. The pupils are all allowed to choose their own tempo in that section and then continue with the original dance at an agreed time or signal.

** Dance Elements: any movement of the body is composed of three elements, namely: TIME, EFFORT and SPACE. Along with the BODY they are the physical building blocks you can use for exploration in dance. See also Terminology in theory part Dance Spetters.

- Consider the cameras that show images from different angles during a match. This is space-bound action. What happens if the group has to change direction during the dance on command due to a new camera angle? That requires use of their sense of orientation in the space.
- Another possibility is the introduction of the common symbols that you see on your computer when you are playing a movie. All of these symbols are related to the element of TIME:

Play: a triangle on its side ►

Stop: a square ■

Pause: two vertical lines ■■

Slow motion: two vertical lines with a triangle on its side behind it ■■►

Fast forward or backward: two triangles on their side, pointing either to the right or to the left ►►◄◄

Repeat: $\frac{3}{4}$ open circle with an arrow at one end ↻



By using these symbols, you can playfully add variation to the dance. You can accelerate or slow down the movements. You can agree to include a repetition in some parts of the dance or add slow motion, and so on.

- First discuss the symbols with the pupils; which are known, which are not?
- Enlarge the different symbols onto cards and let the pupils experience 'play, pause, stop, repeat' during the warming-up.

- Make a game exercise with clear agreements. If you hold up a card, you count down for 4 more counts before this symbol goes into effect in the dance. A pupil once commented that if the pause button on the home device was active for longer, the image began to vibrate!

And right there we had a beautiful image to dance with. When the pause button was 'on' for more than 4 seconds, some part of the body began to vibrate softly, which expanded until the whole body was in the vibration mode. Dancing a 'pause' in that way became a lot of fun!

- You can of course make a whole new dance all together. Determine with the group, for example, on the basis of sport photos or pictograms, which sport(s) they want to have in the dance. Once the choice has been made, you can ask the pupils if they can show movements related to this sport. Make active use of the movements they present. Select a limited number and preferably keep the movements simple. Implement the new ideas with the direct method: 'turn on the music and immediately join in with the teacher'. Make good use of repetition. In this way you can continue exploring new ideas that the pupils come up with and not forget what was developed beforehand.
- For the older pupils: divide the group into subgroups where each subgroup devises 4 new sports movements. It may be different sports but may also be 4 movements of the same sport. Give the pupils enough time to work out their ideas. While the different groups are working the teacher could circulate to support where needed. Each group ultimately presents its dance phrase and the other pupils can guess which sports have been chosen. Then all ideas can be connected to each other and by the end of the lesson a new dance has been made!
- Of course, you can also let the pupils get started on their own series of dance moves that they made with their subgroup. How does each subgroup process the different symbols in their dance? And when they finally present it to each other again, can the audience determine which symbols they have used and where exactly?

- In these many ways you can build on a theme for a longer period of time and provide different follow-up assignments every time. There are also many possibilities from the element of space. Moving in different directions, dancing low to the ground, making formations, in pairs facing each other, and so on. When you make an addition to the theme development every week it also ensures that the pupils remember the dance of the previous lessons. That way you can eventually work towards a presentation or a show.
- Filming the progress from time to time and watching the results together with the pupils is a good incentive for further perfection of their own work!
- Whole choreographies can be made from blending relevant movements; sometimes performed in unison, sometimes in discord.

