

Create-A-Beam™ set

Item # 14647



- **Overview.** Features 21 feet of beam surface! Create dozens of balance challenges, boundaries, targets or skill stations with these easy-to-connect Dura-Tuff foam sections. Beam designs can be created quickly and easily. Lightweight foam construction makes this set safe, durable and easily transportable. Each 15”L x 5¼”W x 2½”H section joins with others by inserting 6” plastic rods into pre-set holes. When disassembled, all 18 pieces store compactly in a box. Set includes 3 sections of blue, red, yellow, green, purple and orange.
- **What Are the Educational Applications?**
 - Students enjoy the opportunity to create their learning environment and with the Create-A-Beam Set, they can do just that. From a straight beam, to a ladder, and even stepping stones, your students can be creative and enhance their own learning.
 - Balancing skills are important components at any level in Physical Education. When teaching these types of activities, weight transfer and center of gravity should be important points for discussion.
 - Students practice their balance skills when they create their own challenges. The six colors allow for visual stimulation, as well as promoting recognition skills. Special needs students can also work on their fine motor skills while putting the pieces together using the multiple connecting pegs and holes.
 - Create-A-Beam allows students to work on movement and agility skills. Agility focuses on the ability to change the body’s position efficiently, and requires the integration of isolated movement skills using a combination of balance, coordination, speed, reflexes, strength, endurance and stamina.
 - Despite the type of agility or balance movement being performed, center of gravity is an essential element. This basic concept is also applied in a variety of sports-related settings. Having a sense of one’s body and understanding how to manipulate it with various pieces of equipment at varied levels is essential to any program. Create-A- Beam is low to the ground and can be set up to create many different pathways. Using the beam as part of a dynamic PE program expands the possibilities of learning for students that will transfer into other sports-related movements.
 - Participants can use the Create -A- Beam to reinforce shape, color and some letter recognition. Have the students connect all the pieces of one color for color recognition. Give them a picture of a shape or letter and have them use the pieces to create the letter or picture. Then, have the students walk the beam using that pattern. Your students will have a blast participating in balance activities when using Create-A-Beam.
- **How Can I Use This Product With My Students?**
 - **Where:** Can be used indoors or outdoors. Can be used in a non-sport setting.
 - **Age:** Can be used with various ages and skill levels, but recommended for beginners and/or younger individuals.
 - **Group Size:** 1-6 or more
 - **Basic Skills Needed:**
 - Prior to using, teachers should go over the correct form for various locomotor movements, for example leaping, skipping, etc.
 - Teachers should teach proper spotting technique prior to use.

The Games/Activities

A NEW SPIN ON FAMILIAR ACTIVITIES

- **Activity #1: Hopscotch**

Use the pieces to create a raised hopscotch board.

- **Activity #2: Bowling**

Use foam blocks so that the short side of the rectangle is touching the ground and set up 10 in a bowling pin formation for bowling. To give a larger surface area, connect two foam pieces together side by side the long way and make a smaller triangle. You can also use an extra piece to create the foul line so students know where to stand.

- **Activity #3: Dominoes**

This activity works on fine motor skills by allowing students to work on setting pieces up so they stay up while creating a domino setup. Once all of the pieces are in place, students can see if their pattern has the domino effect!

- **Activity #4: Aerobics**

Use the foam pieces to make steps to be used for step aerobics. Depending on dimensions of the step and student sneaker size, students can perform a variety of step-related movements. Check the stability of steps prior to engaging in this activity!

- **Activity #5: Hurdle Jump**

Place foam pieces on their long side connecting two together. Then spread long pieces about one foot or so apart and have student use them to hurdle over. To increase the height challenge, take three pieces and stack them so that the top piece is inserted into the end holes of the two underneath pieces. For a higher hurdle, use the single end hole side for the bottom pieces.

GET IN BALANCE

- **Activity #6: Balance Walks**

a. Objective: Use the foam pieces to create a standard balance beam experience, keeping student ability level in mind.

b. Set Up:

- The beams can be set up either individually, such as once piece wide; or connect some or all of the beams to make shapes.
- Discuss the importance of safety and spotting each other with your students when using the beam. Proper walking form is to hold your arms straight out to the side, making a “T” shape with your body to assist in balancing. The spotter then walks behind the walker, either to one side of the beam or with beam between legs while feet are on the floor, placing hands slightly under the walker’s arms, but not touching. If the walker becomes unbalanced the spotter simply catches the fall at the walker’s ribs to rebalance him/her. Make sure students do not step on the beam without a spotter and that all students have a chance to do both jobs.
- When walking on the beam students should hold their “T” position and look at a spot directly in front of them that will help keep their chin up and their body centered.

c. How to Play: Students can choose their movement, or the teacher can assign a specific movement for each beam so that each time there is a new beam, the move changes. They can do several types of walks, such as:

- Step with one foot in front of the other, touching heel to toe.
- Between steps, take foot that is being brought forward and bend the stable foot’s knee so that the stepping foot dips down slightly below the beam’s height, then is placed down in front of the stable foot; repeat with alternate foot.
- Between steps, take foot that is being brought forward and slowly with a straight leg kick it up as close to waist height as possible holding the position and then placing in front of stable foot; repeat with alternate foot.

- Add on: after kicking the leg up, bend that leg so that the foot touches the knee of the stable foot then place in front of stable foot; repeat with alternate foot.
- Add on more by turning the knee out to the side, hold, bring back to the front and place it in front of stable foot. Repeat with alternate foot.
- Gallop down beam with same foot forward.
- Gallop down beam alternating foot, every two to three moves.
- Slide facing sideways.
- Jump moving forward.
- Hop moving forward.
- Skip moving forward.
- Grapevine step facing sideways.
- Combine any of above listed movements.

e. Extensions:

- Place polyspots or tape marks on certain places and have students stop and perform a balance, hop or jump on the spots then continue moving. The beams in a shape work better as a station than a whole group activity because it creates too much wait time.
- Place a few wands on the Create-A-Beam or have another student hold a plastic wand over the beam that the student must step over.

• **Activity #7: Beanbag Head Balance**

- a. Objective: Students perform movements while balancing a beanbag on their head.
- b. Set Up: Use the foam pieces to create a standard foam beam. Depending on the student's ability level, the beam can be one foam piece wide or more.
- c. How to Play: Using the movements and safety described in Balance Walks, ask the students to perform movements while balancing a beanbag on their head. This activity focuses on body control, balance and precision rather than speed, so students are inclined to take their time and move more gracefully rather than rushing through the skill.

• **Activity #8: Obstacle Course**

- a. Objective: Use other activity movements as part of an obstacle course, in between other activities, where students must move a specific way using the Create-A-Beam in order to move to another task.
- b. How to Play: Depending on the student's age and skill level, the spotter element may be eliminated here, but that is at the discretion of the instructor. The Create –A- Beam can be used as one station or as one part of an obstacle course.
- c. Extension: To add difficulty, insert hula hoops into the segmented hoop channel for students to change levels by ducking or crawling underneath the hoops.

• **Activity #9: Agility Ladder**

- a. Objective: Introduction to the agility ladder.
- b. Setup: Prior to using, teachers should teach the correct way to use an agility ladder. Create either two short ladders or one long one by connecting pieces together so that every three pieces create an "H", then connect them together.
- c. How to Play: Students may run, jump or do another type of movement pattern through the ladder with each turn, trying to increase speed with accuracy. Students can move in a straight-forward pattern, zig-zag in and out of the ladder, or perform inside-outside movements down the ladder. When doing agility ladder moves, student should start slow and build up speed once timing and spacing is established.

READY...AIM...

• **Activity #10: Knock it Down**

- a. Objective: Students aim to knock pieces down.
- b. Set Up: Have students create a target shape such as a "T" or rectangle and connect pieces using plastic rods. If you do not connect the rods they can be used for modified cricket lead-up skills.
- c. How to Play: Stand the pieces up, and then have students throw an object to try and knock the pieces down.

• **Activity #11: Toss It Up**

- a. Objective: Students aim for targets.
- b. Setup: Use three blocks to create the throwing start line. Then use the remainder blocks to create tossing targets that lay flat on the ground. You can vary the size of the target box for difficulty as desired.
- c. How to Play: Student aim to hit the targets.

• **Activity #12: Balance and Catch**

- a. Objective: To create a catching balance pad.
- b. Setup: Arrange the Create-A-Beam so that three blocks are put together the long way to form a solid square; then make a second solid square. Use the remainder to create 3-piece by 3-piece “L” shapes. Attach all pieces so the “L” shapes and squares create one large square with the solid squares at opposite corners.
- c. How to Play: Have one student stand on each square and see how many times then can successfully throw and catch without stepping off the squares.
- d. Extensions:
 - After someone catches the ball they must trade places with another player.
 - After catching the ball, create a balanced shape on the pad, then pass it on.

GET CREATIVE

• **Activity #13: Create-A-Number**

- a. Objective: An interdisciplinary activity.
- b. Set Up: Remove plastic rods from foam pieces. Create cards with different single digit numbers on them and place the cards face down.
- c. How to Play: Have students select a number, then use the foam pieces to create that number. Instructor can connect pieces with the foam rods or have the students do it themselves.
- d. Extensions:
 - Next, have students walk on the given number.
 - The teacher can also create the numbers ahead of time and have students pick a number and move down that number’s beam.
 - Create-A-Letter Variation: Instead of numbers, create cards with letters that you think your students will be able to easily create using the foam pieces and proceed as above.

• **Activity #14: Students Create-A-Beam**

Allow students to create their own balance beam shapes and do movements on their own beam. This activity should only be done with the students who you trust to use plastic rods correctly and responsibly.

• **Activity #15: Create-A-Court**

Using the plastic rods connect the foam pieces to make a giant “H” shape with four pieces down the middle and four on each side. Use the center area as the net and the outside lines as the boundary lines.

• **Activity #16: Re-Create the Titanic**

- a. Objective:
 - Titanic is a cooperative game based on the true story of the sinking ship. During the introduction, students will be asked what they know about the real Titanic, and that scenario will be used as a prelude to the activity. Explain that the students are going to re-enact the events of the night the Titanic was sinking, but try to change history so that everyone on the ship survives.
 - This game is the ultimate test of cooperation skills. Total chaos occurred the night of the Titanic sinking. Many more lives could have been saved if people had cooperated with one another. We will see if we can change history that night. Question and answer techniques can be used periodically during the activity to stress cooperation and safety. Students who make it across to the life raft will be given a survey to complete about their individual-versus-group success.
- b. Set Up:
 - Tell students to demonstrate the listening position when they are ready to board the ship.
 - Have students find a space inside a large area of mats placed on the floor (you can use Create-A-Beam for this). These mats will represent the deck on the ship. Every student must have a place on the deck.
 - Students will be instructed that the Titanic is sinking in freezing water and they are on the deck. Students (AKA passengers) must find a way to get across to the life raft on the other side of the gym using the pieces of equipment available.

c. How to Play:

- Between the Titanic and the life raft are several large pieces of ice (you can use Create-A-Beam for these) that the students may temporarily stand on to help the reach the life raft.
- All other parts of the gym floor are designated as water. Since the water is freezing cold, if a student touches the water at any time while crossing they must go back to the Titanic and start over.
- The objective is for the entire class to get across to the life raft without leaving anyone behind. If one person is left, the group is not successful.
- You can provide students with minimal items to help them move between the ice such as scooters, rope, poly-spots, or Create-A-Beam.

d. Extension: The higher the grade, the less equipment or mats are scattered in the space.



• **Safety Issues & Concerns**

- The set is very stable once you make sure the pieces are firmly planted and connected in the proper places, with parts fitting snugly together.
- Remind students to be aware of other students and where beams are placed throughout the gymnasium to minimize bruises and falls.
- Do not allow students to stand near each other on the Create-A-Beam when others are using it simultaneously.
- Do not allow students to pull on Create-A-Beam, as this can result in the item coming apart.
- Place a panel mat underneath Create-A-Beam as necessary.



Meets These NASPE Standards

1. Demonstrates competency in motor skills and movement patterns needed to perform a variety of physical activities.
2. Demonstrates understanding of movement concepts, principles, strategies, and tactics as they apply to the learning and performance of physical activities.
3. Participates regularly in physical activity.
4. Achieves and maintains a health-enhancing level of physical fitness.
5. Exhibits responsible personal and social behavior that respects self and others in physical activity settings.
6. Values physical activity for health, enjoyment, challenge, self-expression, and/or social interaction.

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