

# CARNIVAL FUN



Little   
Acrobats™

PART OF THE  
*Children's Dance*  
Method™

## Carnival Fun

**TODDLER:** AGES 1.5 TO 3, WITH A CAREGIVER

**PRESCHOOL:** AGES 3 TO 5 YEARS OLD

### How to Begin Class

Begin your class by greeting your students. Ideally, they'll line up at your classroom door before class begins. When it's time for class, have them enter. You can give them a step to do to take their places for roll call, or simply have them walk to their places.

Next, take roll. Have a question of the day ready to ask your students. It can be something simple like, "What is your favorite color?" It can be theme-related like, "Have you ever been to a carnival or amusement park?" Or it can be something more personal like, "Tell me one fun thing you did this week." The purpose of the question is to help you connect with your students.

### Circle Stretch

For complete activity details, please refer to the [Little Acrobats Curriculum - Syllabus Guide](#).

#### Let's Blow Bubbles!

#### Wiggles and Wakeup

#### Peek-a-Boo Toes

#### Hide and Seek

Roller Coaster Ride! (Should I go?)

#### Hamstring Stretch (Preschool Only)

Roller Coaster Ride! (pretend to ride a roller coaster as you stretch down and up and lean side to side)

#### Rock and Roll (Preschool Only)

Continue the roller coaster ride.

#### Butterfly

Bumper Boat Ride

#### Straddle Stretch (Preschool Only)

Juggling Performers

#### Hands and Wrists

Fireworks

#### Tabletop Bridge

Make a Prize Table Shape (Optional: Ask students what prize they will pick from their table.)

#### Cat/Cow Pose (Preschool Only)

Ferris Wheel Ride

#### Superhero Pose (Preschool Only)

Slide on Your Tummy Down a Slide, into the Bouncy House!

#### Seal Pose (Preschool Only)

Pose like a Bouncy House Slide

### Technique

For complete activity details, please refer to the [Little Acrobats Curriculum - Syllabus Guide](#).

#### Plié and Twirls (Toddlers) / Rise and Turn (Preschool)

Spin the Top. (Push it down (plié) then watch it spin (twirl or rise and turn).)

#### Tendu (Preschool Only)

Point to a Ticket on the Floor

#### Passé

Ride the Carousel

#### Sways

Let's explore the carnival! What do you see as you sway?

### Sautés

High Striker (The teacher pretends to swing an imaginary hammer to make students sauté. Students jump as high as they can and clap their hand together overhead as they jump. Did any jump high enough to “ring the bell”?)

### Échappés

Popcorn Stand

### Directional Hops

Ring Toss

### Hops with Quarter Turns (Preschool only)

Hit the Target to Win a Prize (Optional: ask students what prize they won.)

### Fireworks Jumps

Carnival Fireworks

## Traveling

Please use the movement cards included at the end of this lesson plan.

## Stations

Please use the station cards included at the end of this lesson.

## Prop Time

For toddlers, “Prop Time” is simply a free dance with a prop of the teacher’s choice. You may also do a freeze dance to reinforce listening skills.

For preschoolers, [choose one to three “Prop Time” activities from the Little Acrobats Curriculum - Sullabus Guide](#) for additional skill work.

## Goodbye

You can (optionally) end your class with a brief free dance for students while you blow bubbles for them.

Finish your class by giving each student a sticker and telling them each something they did well in class that day. Focus on complimenting good effort, listening skills, and positive attitude more than skill accomplishments. Give each student a coloring page. These are a great way for students to bring a piece of dance class home with them for the week. Hand out certificates if it’s the last week for the theme.

## Music Playlist

You can find a music playlist with theme-inspired music for your acro dance class here:

[Carnival Fun Music Playlist in Spotify](#)



## CARNIVAL FUN - MOVEMENT CARDS

There are SO MANY ways you can use movement cards in your dance classes. For toddlers, we typically do use movement cards for traveling across the room and occasionally the merry go round option. For preschoolers, we like to incorporate all of the following ways with traveling across the room and the merry go round option as the most common. You may incorporate any of these ways during the "traveling" portion of class.

### Traveling Across the Room

This is what we typically design our movement cards for. (Although they certainly don't have to be limited to this!) Choose a movement card like you're picking a card from a deck of cards. Or, let one of your students pick the card. The anticipation of what the next card and movement will be will help to keep your students' attention during the traveling portion of class. Plus, they always like seeing what cute animal or picture is on the card chosen!

### Merry Go Round

Place your movement cards in a pile face-down in the center of the room. Have your students make a large circle. Call on one student to pick a card from the center. They pick a card from the pile. Play music as all students do the chosen movement in a large circle around the room. Pause the music and your students freeze (like in freeze dance!). Call on another student to pick a card next. Repeat until all students have had a turn or all movement cards have been used.

### Add-On

This is one of my favorite pre-choreography activities. Make a dance by playing "Add-On", but with movement cards! Hold the cards out face-down, like a deck of cards, for a student to pick one. Have all students do the movement in place a certain number of times. (For example, 3 hops in place.) Have another student pick a card. Add that movement to the choreography. (For example, if the second card chosen was twirls, you might have your students do 3 hops then a twirl.) Continue until all students have had a turn. By the end, you'll have a little dance your students helped to make up!

### Free-Dance

Let your students free dance, and choose movements from the movement cards!

## NOTES FOR CARTWHEEL PREPARATION:

**Most Likely for Toddlers.** Cartwheel Preparation 1: Tummy-Hand-Hand-Jump-Tummy. The student should begin with their tummy facing the front. They place one hand on the mat stack, then the other hand on the mat stack. Then they jump over the mat stack and stand so their tummy faces front again.

**Most Likely for Preschoolers.** Cartwheel Preparation 2: Tummy-Hand-Hand-Foot-Foot-Tummy. The student should begin with their tummy facing front. They place one hand on the mat stack, then the other hand on the mat stack. Then they hop over the mat stack to land on one foot then the other foot. They should finish standing so their tummy faces front again.

**More Advanced Option for Preschoolers.** Cartwheel Preparation 3: Cartwheel Coordination Over the Mat Stack. In this version, students have the coordination of hands and feet. They still begin and end standing with their tummies facing front, but they do a smoother, more coordinated cartwheel over the mat stack. They should work on their torso being more up and down, perpendicular to the floor. Their legs may not quite be perpendicular—they may still be at an angle as the student does the cartwheel, but the student is working on stretched legs during the cartwheel.

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## WALKS

TODDLER

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## POPCORN HOPS (OR STEPS)

TODDLER

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## CRAWL THROUGH A TUNNEL

TODDLER

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## TWIRLS

TODDLER

Little Acrobats™



**LITTLE WALKS**  
(OPTIONAL: CARRYING TICKETS)

TODDLER

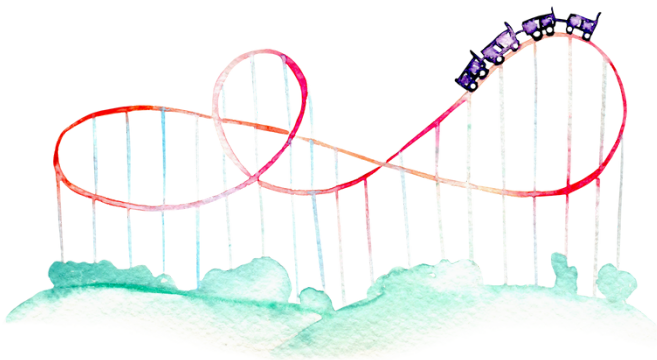
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**BIG WALKS**

TODDLER

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**CART WHEEL PREPARATION**

TODDLER

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**PASSÉ WALKS**

TODDLER

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## WALKS EN DEMI POINTE

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## POPCORN HOPS

PRESCHOOL

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## CRAWL THROUGH A TUNNEL

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## TWIRLS

PRESCHOOL

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## WALKS EN DEMI POINTE

(OPTIONAL: CARRYING TICKETS)

PRESCHOOL

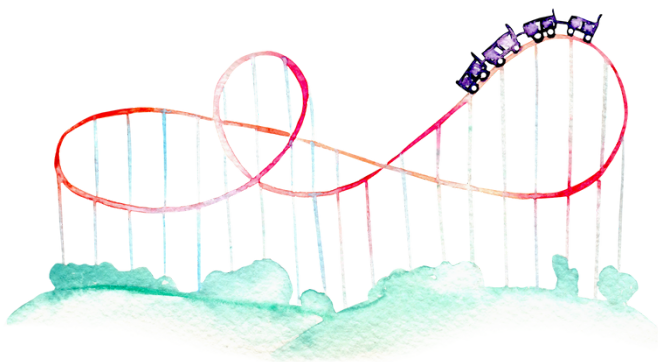
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## GALOPS

PRESCHOOL

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## CARTWHEEL PREPARATION

PRESCHOOL

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## PASSÉ WALKS EN DEMI POINTE

PRESCHOOL







## CARNIVAL FUN - STATION CARDS

### Card 1

**Toddlers and Preschoolers.** Stand so your arms and legs are stretched out in an X shape. Reach your right arm to your left foot. Come back to an X. Reach your left arm to your right foot.

### Card 2

**Toddlers and Preschoolers.** Fireworks jump like popcorn popping. Optional: Have a stepstool or similar for students to step up on, then fireworks jump off.

### Card 3

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### Card 4

**Toddlers and Preschoolers.** Runs through cones. (Optional for preschoolers: runs en demi pointe through cones.)

### Card 5

**Toddlers.** Step or hop across spot markers.

**Preschoolers.** Hop on two feet across spot markers.

### Card 6

**Toddlers and Preschoolers.** Bear walks in a circle around a hula hoop.

### Card 7

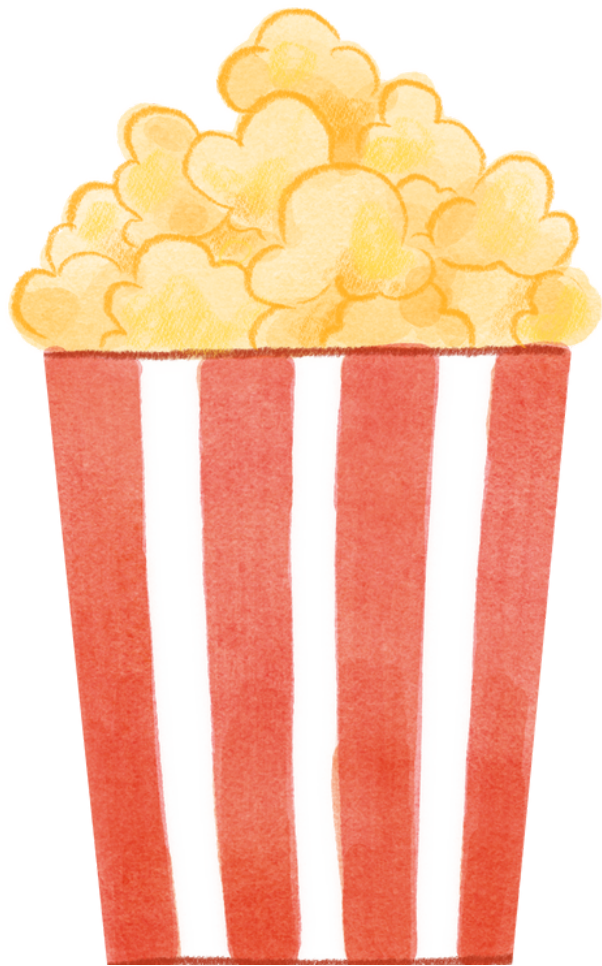
**Toddlers and Preschoolers.** Superhero pose! (Lay on tummies with arms and legs stretched long.) Optional: have a Pilates ball or arched mat for students to lay on.

### Card 8

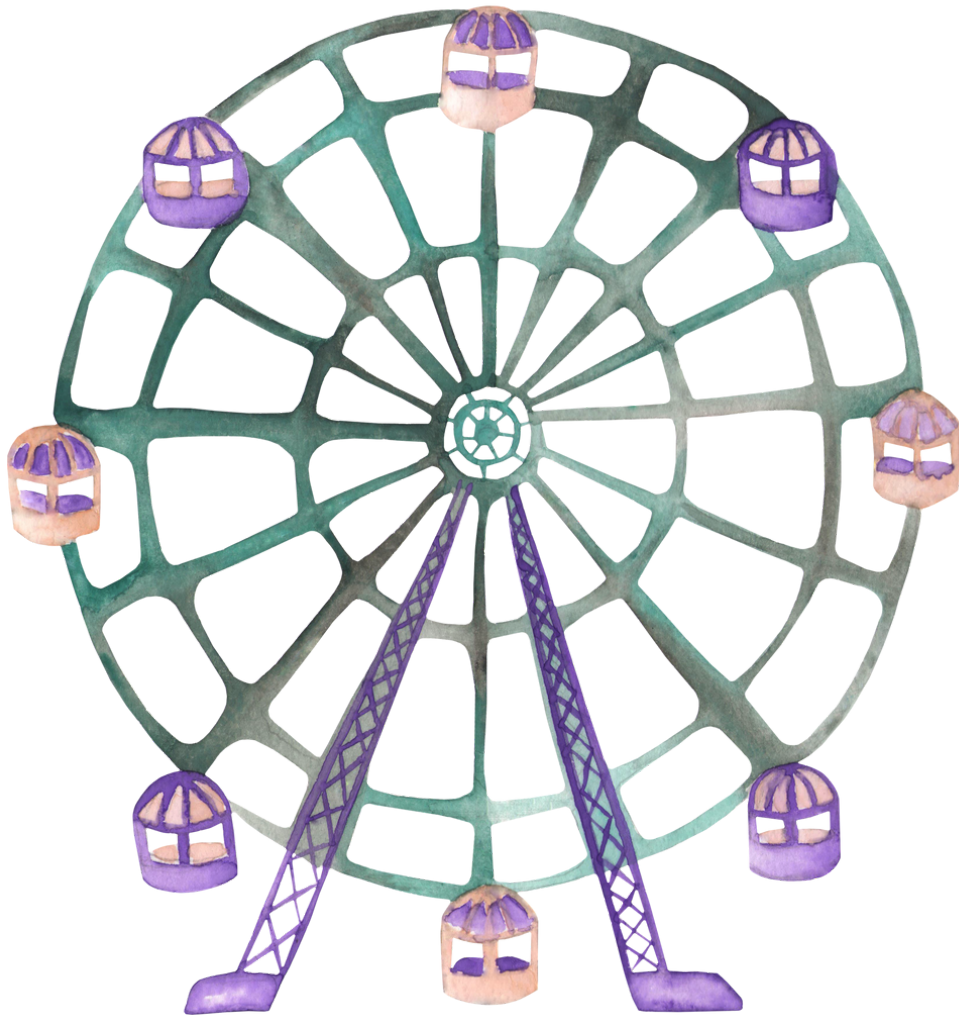
**Toddlers and Preschoolers.** Crawl through a tunnel.



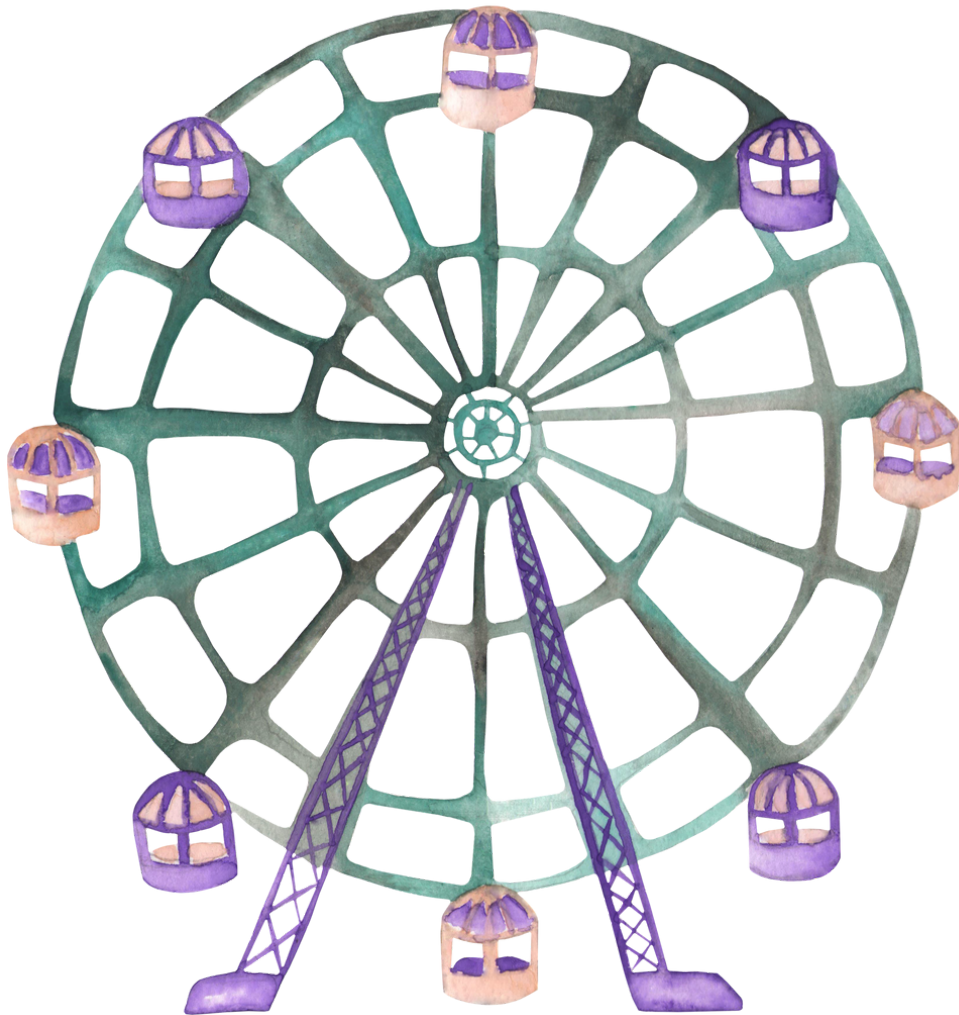
## X CRISS-CROSS STRETCH



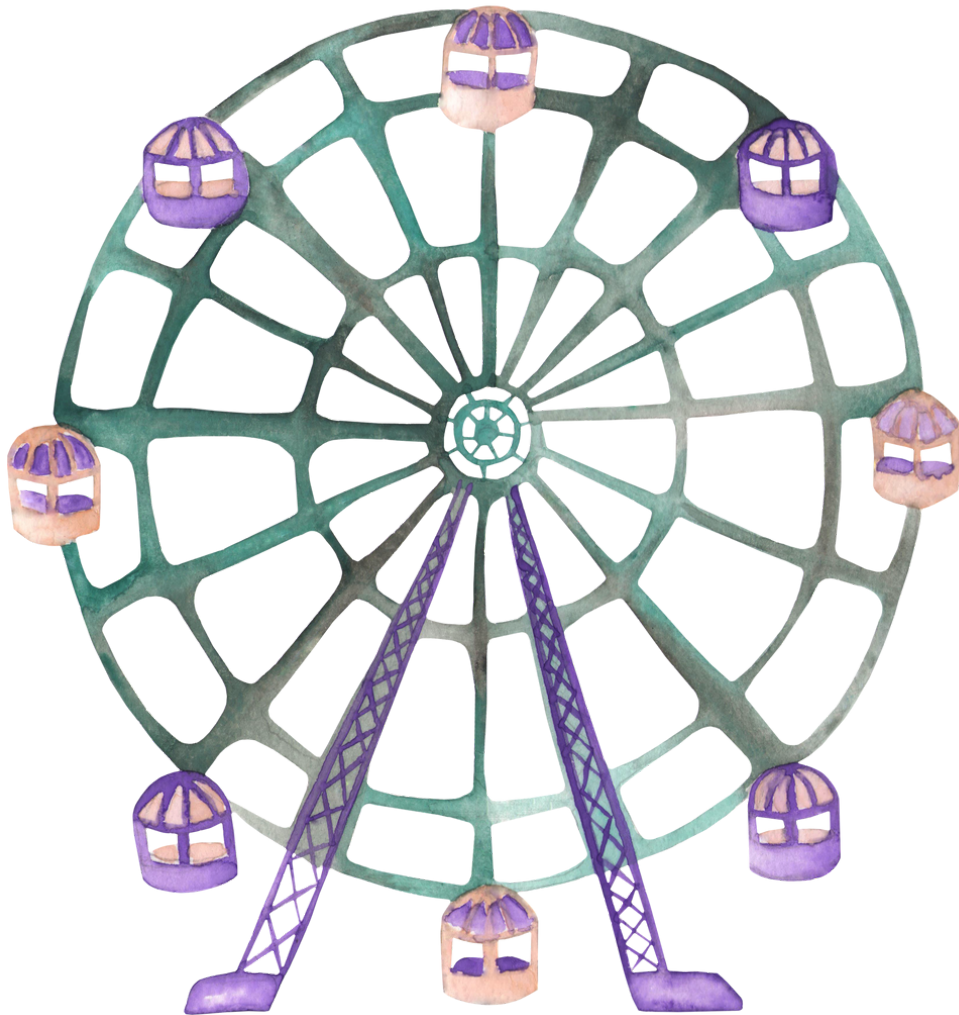
## **FIREWORKS JUMP**



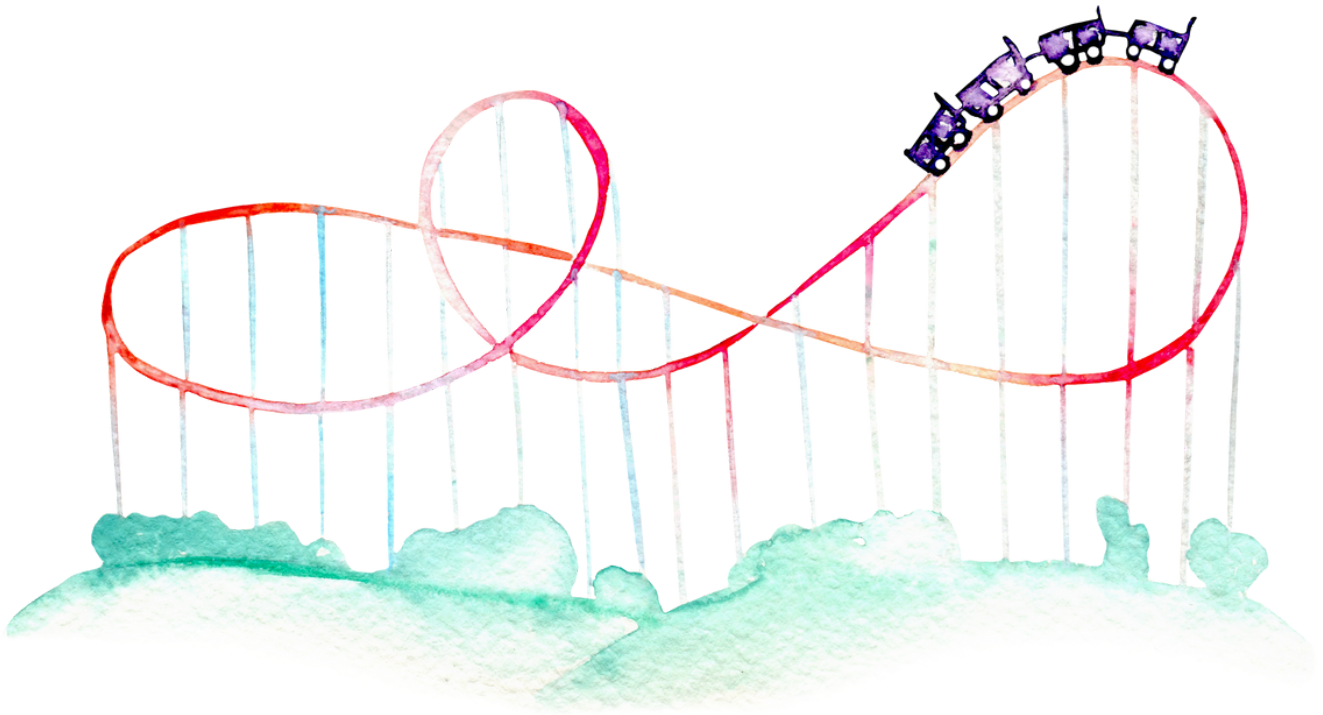
**CARTWHEEL PREP 1:  
TUMMY-HAND-HAND-JUMP-TUMMY**



**CARTWHEEL PREP 2:  
TUMMY-HAND-HAND-FOOT-FOOT-TUMMY**



**CARTWHEEL PREP 3:  
CARTWHEEL COORDINATION OVER THE MAT STACK**



## FAST RUNS THROUGH CONES





## STEP OR HOP ACROSS



## HOPS OR HOPSCOTCH



**BEAR WALKS IN A CIRCLE**

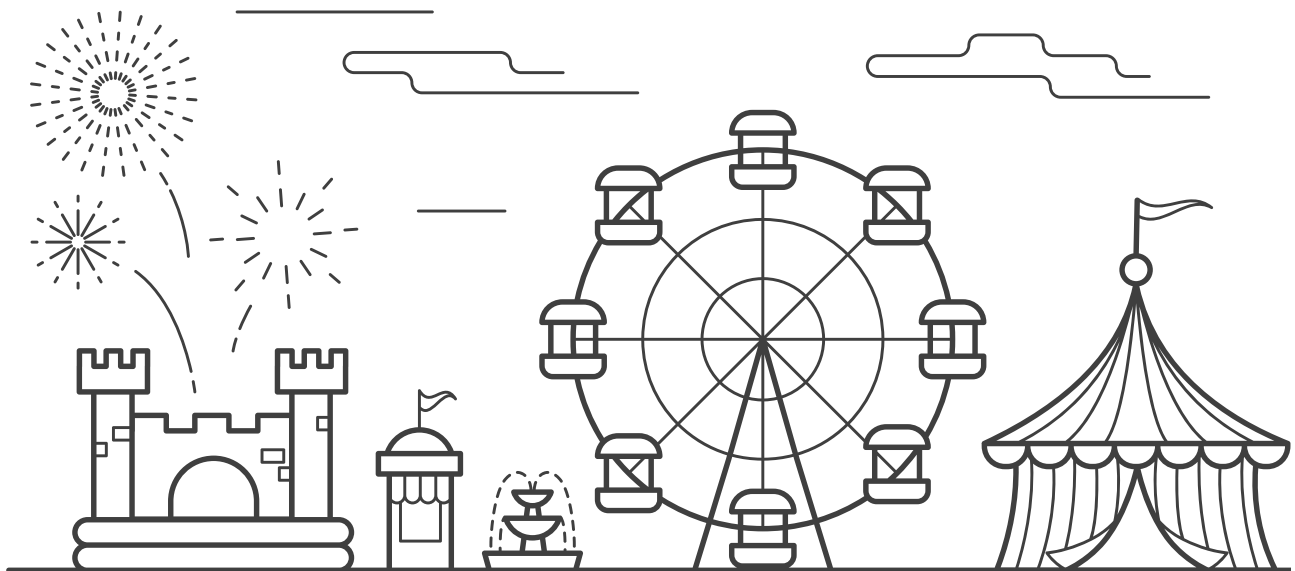


## SUPERHERO POSE



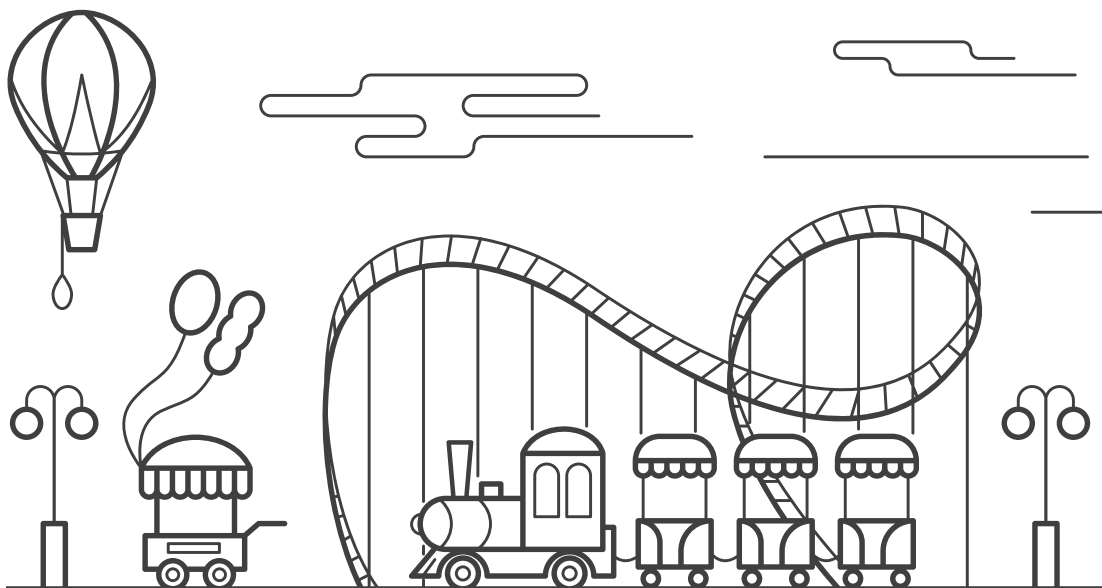
## CRAWL THROUGH A TUNNEL

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