



Create a Nature Obstacle Course for Ages 2-5

Using natural materials to build an outdoor obstacle course strengthens gross motor skills in young children and can challenge their budding engineering skills if they're part of the planning.

ITEMS YOU WILL NEED:

An outdoor space in nature and sticks

OPTIONAL EXTRAS:

Rocks or small logs



To begin, collect sticks or smaller logs to build your course. Look at your outdoor space and plan the layout with your child. Hauling sticks into position is part of the fun! Then start creating your obstacle course using the ideas below:

- 1. Stick Balance Beam:** Challenge the child to balance on the stick momentarily with one or both feet. Level up the balance beam by choosing a wobble stick or log. For newer walkers, smash the stick into the mud for stability.
- 2. Stick Jump:** Challenge the child to jump over an object and land with feet together. Young children gradually develop this skill. Some children jump with two feet at a time and some jump with just one foot.

- 3. Zigzag Balance Beam:** Challenge the child to keep balance with one or both feet while switching directions on the beam.
- 4. Zigzag Dash:** Use the vertical sticks like you would orange safety cones. Challenge the child to dash around each vertical stick as they are set up in a ZigZag direction and encourage the child to go as fast as they can without bumping into each stick while they are running.

Incorporate natural obstacles like trees and flower pots into your course to challenge your child to run, walk, jump, crawl or climb. To extend this activity even further, time your child with a stopwatch to see if they can beat their own time.

TO FURTHER EXTEND THIS ACTIVITY:

For more ideas on obstacle courses, watch [this video](#).

Listen to [Rosie's Walk](#) to learn more about obstacle courses.

You can prompt the child with questions like these while listening:

- What obstacles were in the farmyard that Rosie had to cross?
- Did the fox have trouble trying to complete the obstacles after Rosie?