

School Triathlons



**EVO'S GUIDE TO
INTRODUCING
TRIATHLON
TO PUPILS**

Jumping in a lake, cycling through the woods and running around a castle, triathlons are a growing sport.

Evo Junior Tri is an exciting new programme helping primary schools to introduce triathlon to pupils.



Introducing Triathlons

What is triathlon?

A triathlon involves 3 activities: swim, bike and run. Mostly people enjoy taking part outside but the swimming element can be held in an indoor pool depending on the location.

The huge success of the British tri athletes, Alistair and Jonny Brownlee at the 2012 Olympics has helped raise awareness of this exciting and challenging sport.

You can take part on your own, to win, for fun, to raise money for charity, or as part of a team.

Triathlon has been an Olympic sport since the 2000 Sydney Games and from 2016 will also include an event for disabled athletes – Paratriathlon.

Why introduce triathlon to your school PE and sport programme?

Sport England discovered that the most popular activities for primary-aged children to take part in outside school were swimming, cycling and running (2002).



More recently, a study revealed high levels of inactivity in PE lessons, which teachers would argue has been created by the current curriculum requirements.

We also know from research that many young people don't enjoy school PE and that there is a decline in sports participation after primary school.

There are of course, many reasons for this but why not get your pupils involved in activities they say they enjoy whilst working towards current curriculum outcomes and supporting the targets of the new national curriculum for PE (NCPE) to be introduced in 2014?

Add to that the obvious health benefits of regular, enjoyable exercise in a safe environment, the opportunities for teamwork and the potential for the creation of lifelong sporting habits and you will agree it's worth exploring.



How to get involved

We can help you introduce the three triathlon activities and support your school to make a big impact on the health and Physical Education of all its pupils in a unique way.



We can help your school to:

- inspire you and your pupils with success stories through assemblies taken by elite triathletes
- support you and your staff with curriculum linked activities and teaching plans
- offer advice, support and guidance from our qualified, experienced coaches
- recommend local places to practice or train outside at our school tri club
- prepare teams for local inter-schools competitions if this is the next step
- Put on school mini triathlons



Contact Evo School Tri Club

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Evo Swim

Lesson Ideas: Pool to Open Water Focus

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Skills and Techniques

Sighting

Ability to raise head slightly to look forward without ruining stroke or rhythm. Lift eyes out of water by pushing down on water with leading arm without trying to breath. This is called crocodile eyes!

Turning

Ability to approach turn points (buoys) and change direction as needed without stopping, slowing down or losing rhythm. Learning to make a simple twist of the body using a couple of doggy paddle strokes, or a couple of strokes with inside arm. More advanced method is to roll onto back for one stroke and then back onto your front. As you roll aim to turn 90 degrees.

Close swimming

Ability to swim in close proximity to other swimmers without panicking, stopping or losing rhythm whilst contact might be made with arms or legs or swimmers swimming across or over you, or vice versa. Focus on your swimming and the chaos soon calms down after the start as the swimmers all spread out.

Drafting

Ability to go faster by sitting on the toes of a faster swimmer or a similar ability swimmer resulting in an easier swim and saving energy for the next discipline. Learn to swim as close behind another swimmer without touching their toes.

Activity

Sighting

Children at one end of the swimming pool and coach at the far end.

- A. Name the number:** Children are asked to take six strokes then look up and shout out the number of fingers the coach is holding up.
- B. Pied Piper:** Children are asked to take six strokes and then swim in the direction of the coach who moves along the top end or around the sides of the swimming pool. As the group gets closer to the far end the coach moves down towards the other end.
- C. Follow the leader:** Ask one swimmer with a certain coloured swim cap to swim around trying to lose the group.

Drafting - In small groups

- A. Follow the leader** with leader swapping every length.
- B. Leader with cap** on (2's) and partner following.
- C. Drill** - 4's so a leader, two on either side drafting and making arrow shape and 4th directly behind. Swap positions each length.

Swimming in close proximity

Whole group together or 2 to 3 smaller groups.

- A. Up and down:** Group all children in a single lane and ask them to swim up lane. Use all the lanes so they move up one lane and back down the next so not going back down the same lane unless meeting at each end.
- B. Race scenario:** Ask the children to start in the deep end and then count down before they all set off.
- C. Following the course:** Set up a figure of 8 course or different points to touch e.g. floats on side, steps, diving board. Ask the children to form a line following the figure.



Evo Bike

Lesson Ideas: Control of the Bike and Techniques

Skills and Techniques

Leading and following:

Awareness of what is going on behind and in front.

Moving through a group:

Drafting rules and again, awareness of actions.

Turning & Steering:

Approach, direction, speed & safety. Awareness of others.

Descending:

Confidence, position on bike, control of bike and where looking.

Moving In / Out of the Saddle:

Smooth & fluid cycling so pace unaffected.

Braking:

Timing, pressure and control.

Balancing on the bike:

Feeling balanced controls all actions on the bike.

Slowing / Stopping:

Again, awareness and correct preparation.

Activity

- Slaloms
- Circuits
- Relays
- T1 - to bike
- T2 - to run
- Individual skills
- Group riding
- Around a circuit acting upon instructions from coach eg remove hand, wave arm, drink from water bottle.

Slaloms:

Place cones out so athletes learn to ride whilst concentrating on moving in and out of cones - similar to dribbling drills in football or hockey. Up row of cones, around a turnaround point and back down same row or different one.

Circuits:

Set up a large square or circular circuit using cones or poles where the kids cycle around the outside of the circuit. Transition in the middle so could start and finish with transition skills or just using circuit as a timed challenge.

Relays:

Equal ability groups with set challenges based on a relay type challenge.

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T1 - to bike:

Individual or relay challenges. Set up simulated Pool Zone, Transition zone and Bike Mount line all marked out using cones or poles. Fun, competitive and specific focus with lots of running with and without bikes as well as teamwork. Could start them in swim zone doing exercises like squats, press ups or sit ups before they are instructed to leave and run towards transition.

T2 - to run:

Same as above but focus on starting on the bikes and heading towards Transition Zone so they bike, dismount, remove helmet etc. Relay options incorporating T1 & T2 relays.

Individual skills:

Around a circuit acting upon instructions from coach standing in the middle - remove hand, wave arm, drink from water bottle, slow down, stop, dismount, standing, swerving in and out of perimeter cones or one legged cycling.

Group riding:

As above with groups going in two's or three's next to each other, overtaking from the back, communication skills. Can set cones up as channels so wider or narrower as appropriate.



Evo Run

Lesson Ideas: Strength and Conditioning

Skills and Techniques

Flexibility:

Work at it even from a young age.

Posture:

Running technique is a result of the posture. Run with a straight spine.

Leg Motion:

Avoid overstriding. Feet need to land under you rather than in front.

Cadence:

Strides per min. More is best!

Mental Focus:

Use the brain to make the correct decisions and stay alert.

Upper /lower body coordination:

Equal amount of work & working in unison.

Breathing Habits:

Steady and controlled.

Proper knee and elbow bend:

Less is best!

Staying relaxed:

Observe how you are feeling and what is going on around you.

Activity

- Relays incorporating transition
- Circuits including S & C & general fitness stations
- Fun and games using a hill
- Follow my leader using running drills
- Follow my leader with back athlete picking up pace getting to the front (can be done on bikes too)
- Pick ups in a group using a field and lines on pitches or cones
- Fartlek fun
- AVOID just going for a long run with kids or JUST running. Use transition or bike /swimming disciplines wherever possible.

Relays incorporating transition: See Transition for set up ideas and focus on areas being far enough apart so some fast running included whilst also having to think about the instructions, rules and tasks involved.

Circuits including Strength and Conditioning / general fitness stations: Set up a typical fitness circuit area using cones and choose appropriate activities where possible.

Fun and games using a hill: Short hill relays whether just running or running with bikes or more focus on running technique.

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Follow my leader using running drills. Communication and leadership with each athlete setting the drill: High Knees, Leg flicks, Bounds, Strides.

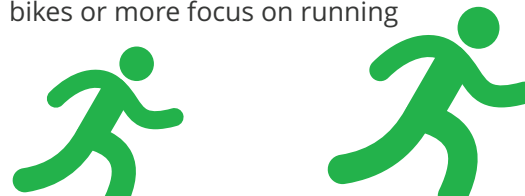
Follow my leader with the back athlete picking up pace getting to the front (can be done on bikes too): Group steady jog with short sprints from the back to the front.

Pickups in a group using a field and lines on pitches or cones: Jog to Sprint.

Fartlek fun:

Mixture of walking, jogging and sprinting or faster running using cones, trees, posts or other visible or verbal signals whilst running. Could be running as a group with coach giving a countdown which signals the group to pick up pace ahead or a sprint and on go the group sprint to the visible target or maybe a set number of left or right foot ground strikes (20 left foot ground strikes as an example and then slow to a jog and once all together the group could walk together before starting again or just slow to a jog before group back together again.

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Skills and Techniques

The clock is running and transition is part of the race – prepare, practice and perfect.

- Practice your plan and never try something new on race day.
- Clothing. Socks or no socks?, Tri-Suit?, Speed Laces?
- Less is best. Less tasks, less kit and less clutter will support a faster transition
- Running with bike quickly & safely in and out of transition. Run upright on left hand side of bike, holding seat with right hand. Left hand swinging by side or holding handlebars if necessary.
- Mount & dismount lines. Moving mount & dismount called a cyclocross mount or dismount.

Activity

- A. Challenges or aquathlon at end of session using wetsuit, removing wetsuit and heading out on quick run or use relay races so all in wetsuits with one at a time swimming, out of water, remove wetsuit and tag the next swimmer to go once wetsuit removed.
- B. As above but running outside or walking around pool removing wetsuit as moving.
- C. As above but create transition on pool side or outside doors for an aquathlon so a short run after a quick transition. All together or as a relay.
- D. Set up transition outside so bringing in some bike work whether using bikes, hockey sticks or other simulation equipment. Helmets needed.
- E. Outside transition area. Create using cones and either using bikes or not they can have helmets and shoes in transition. Start at a designated pool exit area and create a swim in / bike out or

run out and numerous relay ideas can be used. If bikes or running a course around the transition can be established so they run around until whistle blows. After completing next lap they head back into transition to finish or work on T2.

- F. As above but working on T2 skills & drills Make all fun and transition can be incorporated into every training session in one way or another.

