

Year 1 - Intro to Racket Skills

Lesson Plan

PLAYING

EDSTART

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| Lesson Objective | To be able to make contact with a ball with their hand and a small piece of equipment. | Lesson 1/6 |
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| Equipment Needed | Cones, hoops, balloons, markers, beach ball, bean bag, tennis ball, pompom balls, spiky ball, tennis rackets, |
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| Success Criteria | Children can: <ul style="list-style-type: none">hold the variety equipment safely and can make contact a ball / object.feed a ball to them and be able to contact it.track the ball and show good hand / eye coordination. |
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EDSTART KNOW

- I can explain what hand-eye coordination means.
- I can describe how to track a ball in the air.
- I can understand how to use different body parts and small equipment to hit.

EDSTART GO

- I can hit a balloon or ball with my hand or bat.
- I can clap at the top of a ball's flight.
- I can take turns in team games.

EDSTART SHOW

- I can respect my teammates when sharing equipment.
- I can encourage others to keep practising.
- I can celebrate effort in games.

Key Question

How can you help your team succeed when catching or passing the ball? By calling clearly, staying focused, and using soft, accurate throws and catches.

Warm Up

THE DOCTOR'S DIET DASH: Split the class into four teams and scatter lots of different coloured cones across the area. Each colour represents a food — green and red for healthy options (apple, banana, strawberry), blue and yellow for unhealthy ones (ice cream, pick 'n' mix). On your signal, one player from each team runs out, grabs a cone, and brings it back before tagging the next teammate. When all cones are collected, count the team's points: healthy foods are worth 2 points, unhealthy ones are worth 1. The team with the highest score wins. **PROGRESSION:** Add a "Doctor's Call" — when you shout "sugar rush," all players must drop their cones and do five star jumps before continuing, testing focus and reaction.

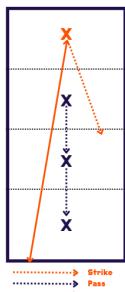
Main Activity

BALLOON TAP CHALLENGE: Give each child a balloon or light ball. The challenge is to keep it in the air for as long as possible by tapping it upwards with their hands. Encourage children to move under the balloon and use soft, controlled touches. Count how many taps they can achieve before it touches the ground. **PROGRESSION:** Try alternating hands, sitting while tapping, or adding a movement between each tap (e.g. one clap, one spin, one knee tap).

SPOT THE HEIGHT: Each child throws or bounces their ball into the air and claps when they think it's at the highest point of its flight. Encourage them to track the ball with their eyes and adjust their throw to change height and speed. The focus is on watching the ball's journey from start to finish. **PROGRESSION:** Challenge them to predict where the ball will land and move to catch it on one bounce.

ZONE RUNNERS: Split into teams of six and mark out three zones using cones. One player is the batter, who hits the ball off a cone into the playing area using their hand. The batter then sprints through each zone and back to the starting base while the fielders work together to retrieve and throw the ball through all three zones in order. If the batter gets back before the final throw reaches the base, they score a point for their team. Swap roles each turn so everyone bats and fields. **PROGRESSION:** Add a timed round — which team can score the most runs in 90 seconds?

GALACTIC CATCH CHALLENGE: All children form a large circle. One soft ball or beanbag starts in play, and pupils pass it clockwise, calling the next person's name before throwing. After a full rotation, add a second ball to test focus and coordination. Encourage clear calls, eye contact, and accurate throws. **PROGRESSION:** Add a third ball or reverse the direction midway to challenge reaction time and teamwork.



Adapted Learning (Differentiation) (Challenge)

SPACE
Adjust circle size — smaller for quicker reactions, larger for longer throws.

TASK
Add movement before catching or vary throw type (bounce, lob, underarm).

EQUIPMENT
Use different sized or textured balls to adapt difficulty.

PEOPLE
By calling clearly, staying focused, and using soft, accurate throws and catches.

Key Technical Point

Step forward as you throw, follow through smoothly, and aim for your partner's chest.

Cooldown

HEALTHY CHOICES STRETCH: Gather everyone in a circle. Call out healthy foods, and children perform a simple stretch for each one (e.g. "Apple" = reach up high, "Banana" = bend sideways, "Strawberry" = touch toes). Between stretches, take deep breaths — in through the nose, out through the mouth. End with a calm reflection: "What helped you focus and stay healthy today?" Finish with a team cheer for the "Healthy Heroes!"

Year 1 - Intro to Racket Skills

Lesson Plan

PLAYING

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| Lesson Objective | To be able to hold a tennis racket correctly, and be able to balance a ball on their racket. | | | Lesson 2/6 |
| Equipment Needed | Tennis rackets, tennis ball, cones, markers, bean bags, sponge tennis balls, hoops. | | | |
| Success Criteria | Children can: <ul style="list-style-type: none">know what hand they will mostly hold their racket in and be able to hold racket at the bottom of the grip.know where they need to hold their racket in relation to the body. | | | |
| EDSTART KNOW | EDSTART GO | | | EDSTART SHOW |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">I can explain how to grip a tennis racket.I can describe how to hold the racket at the bottom of the grip.I can understand how to keep the racket flat. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">I can balance a ball on my racket.I can run with control in tennis style games.I can tap the ball up on my racket. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">I can respect equipment and use it safely.I can encourage my partner when balancing.I can celebrate small successes. | | |
| Key Question | How can you control the ball and racket to keep the rally going longer? : By keeping your eyes on the ball, using gentle, controlled taps, and adjusting the racket angle each time. | | | |
| Warm Up | RAINBOW RALLY: Set out five coloured lines using cones, spots, or tape — red, blue, green, white, and yellow. Children begin in the middle facing the coach in a ready position (knees bent, racket hand relaxed). When the coach calls a colour, children side-step quickly to that line and freeze in the “ready to play” stance. Emphasise light feet, balance, and quick reactions. Add commands like “Serve!” (pretend serve action) or “Backhand!” (shadow swing). PROGRESSION: Call colour combinations (“Red then Blue!”) to improve coordination, or add a race element to see who reacts first while keeping good tennis form. | | | |
| Main Activity | SHAKE HANDS WITH YOUR RACKET: Demonstrate how to hold a racket correctly by asking children to “shake hands” with it — the “V” between thumb and finger pointing down the handle. Give them time to explore holding it comfortably, adjusting their grip if needed. Move around checking each child’s technique, giving praise and small corrections. PROGRESSION: Add fun challenges — who can balance the racket on one finger, spin it in their hand, or switch from forehand to backhand grip smoothly? RACKET RESCUE: Ask children to place their rackets on the floor in their own space. They then move safely around the hall using different locomotor movements such as walking, skipping, jogging, or sidestepping. When the coach calls “Find a racket!”, children must quickly find the nearest racket, pick it up, and show the correct grip. Emphasise awareness, control, and spatial awareness. PROGRESSION: Add extra challenges such as balancing the ball on the racket after picking it up or racing to find a racket of a certain colour. BALANCE RELAY: In small groups of 3–4, each child has a racket and a ball. They balance the ball on their racket and move carefully to a cone and back, handing over the racket and ball to the next teammate like a relay. Encourage smooth steps and control, not speed. Focus on keeping the ball steady by keeping the racket flat and eyes on the ball. PROGRESSION: Add simple obstacles (cones to weave through) or ask them to switch hands halfway through to improve coordination. TAP UP TENNIS: Each child has a racket and ball. The challenge: keep the ball in the air by gently tapping it upwards on the racket. Encourage small, soft hits with eyes on the ball. Ask, “How many can you do before it hits the floor?” Celebrate personal bests. Then pair up — both children have rackets, and they take turns tapping the same ball so it only bounces once before being hit again. This builds teamwork, rhythm, and control. PROGRESSION: Challenge pairs to rally for as long as possible or move a step back each time they reach five successful hits. | | | |
| Adapted Learning (Differentiation) (Challenge) | SPACE Reduce or expand movement areas to control challenge levels. | TASK Vary between static and moving balance tasks for different abilities. | EQUIPMENT Use larger or softer balls for beginners; smaller balls for confident players. | PEOPLE Pair children with similar control ability to maintain even rallies. |
| Key Technical Point | Hold the racket with a relaxed grip, move feet to stay under the ball, and use small, soft taps with a flat racket face. Keep your body balanced and eyes focused on the ball at all times. | | | |
| Cooldown | BALANCING CHAMPIONS: Children balance a ball on their racket while walking slowly around the hall, focusing on control and calm breathing. Gradually slow movements to a stop and perform light stretches — shoulder rolls, arm swings, and wrist circles. End the session in a circle, asking, “What helped you keep control today?” and “How did you improve your balance or grip?” Finish with a “Champion’s Clap” for everyone’s effort. | | | |

Year 1 - Intro to Racket Skills

Lesson Plan

PLAYING
EDSTART

Lesson Objective To be able to keep the tennis ball off the floor by bouncing on racket. **Lesson 3/6**

Equipment Needed Tennis rackets, tennis ball, cones, markers, bean bags, sponge tennis balls, hoops.

Success Criteria Children can:

- be encouraged to watch the ball and follow it with their racket.
- control the racket, keep it flat and move it smoothly.
- be able to bounce the ball at waist height and hit it into the air.

EDSTART KNOW

- I can explain how to keep the ball on the racket.
- I can describe why I need to watch the ball carefully.
- I can understand how to control the racket face.

EDSTART GO

- I can keep the ball bouncing on my racket.
- I can walk while balancing the ball on a racket.
- I can tap the ball up in pairs.

EDSTART SHOW

- I can respect my partner in ball control games.
- I can encourage others when bouncing.
- I can celebrate improvements in control.

Key Question

How can you keep the ball steady on your racket while moving? By keeping your racket flat, eyes on the ball, and using small, smooth movements to stay in control.

Warm Up

RACKET RUSH: Ask each child to place their racket on the floor in their own space. Children then move safely around the hall using different movements such as skipping, hopping, sidestepping, and jogging — careful not to touch or trip over any rackets. When the coach shouts, "Find a racket!", children quickly locate the nearest one, pick it up, and show the correct grip — like "shaking hands" with the racket. Emphasise awareness, safety, and quick reactions. **PROGRESSION:** Add challenges such as, "Find a racket and balance the ball for 5 seconds!" or "Find a racket, switch hands, and freeze in ready position."

Main Activity

BALANCE RELAY: Split the class into small groups of up to four. Give each child a racket and ball. Children take turns balancing the ball on the racket head as they move carefully to a cone and back, then hand the racket to the next teammate. Focus on slow, smooth movement and keeping eyes on the ball. Encourage teamwork and control, not speed. **PROGRESSION:** Add obstacles such as cones to weave through or ask children to switch hands halfway through their turn to improve coordination and balance.

MOUSE AND THE HOUSE: Each child has a racket and ball. The racket is the "house," and the ball is the "mouse."

Mouse on the house: Balance the mouse on top of the house and walk carefully around the area.

Bounce the mouse: Gently bounce the mouse on the floor, keeping it under control.

Mouse trap: "Squash" the mouse by tapping it on the floor with the racket when you hear the call.

Children should keep control and react quickly to each command. **PROGRESSION:** Add fun new actions such as "Mouse jumps!" (hit ball softly up and catch it) or "Mouse sleep!" (freeze balancing the ball).

TAP UP TENNIS: Each child has one ball and one racket. The aim is to tap the ball upwards continuously using gentle, even hits — keeping it in the air as long as possible. Encourage small bounces and control rather than power. Ask, "How many taps can you do before it hits the floor?" Once confident, pair up — each child has a racket, and they take turns hitting the same ball so it bounces once between them. Work together to keep it going for as long as possible. **PROGRESSION:** Challenge pairs to rally across a small marked-out "net" (a rope or cones) and count successful hits without the ball stopping.

Adapted Learning (Differentiation) (Challenge)

SPACE

Increase distance between cones or reduce the play area for more challenge.

TASK

Change between balancing, bouncing, or rallying for variety.

EQUIPMENT

Use larger, lighter balls for beginners; smaller balls for greater control.

PEOPLE

Pair pupils by ability or use mixed pairs for peer support and challenge.

Key Technical Point

Hold the racket gently, keep your wrist relaxed, and stay balanced with soft knees. Watch the ball closely and adjust the racket angle to control direction and height.

Cooldown

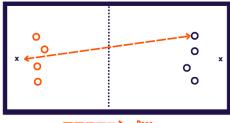
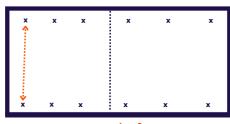
SLEEPY MOUSE: Children sit or lie down holding their rackets beside them and take slow deep breaths — in through the nose, out through the mouth. Encourage them to imagine their "mouse" (ball) is asleep on its "house" (racket). Slowly stretch arms, wrists, and shoulders like waking up after a nap. Finish by asking: "What helped you keep control of your ball today?" and give a final "Racket Round of Applause" for teamwork and focus.

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| Lesson Objective | To be able to hit a bouncing ball towards a partner. | | | Lesson 4/6 | | | |
| Equipment Needed | Tennis rackets, tennis ball, cones, markers, bean bags, sponge tennis balls, hoops. | | | | | | |
| Success Criteria | <p>Children can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">be in balanced position when hitting the ball.have their racket back before the ball has bounced.have the strings of their racket facing their partner. | | | | | | |
| EDSTART KNOW | EDSTART GO | EDSTART SHOW | | | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">I can explain how to move forward to play a shot.I can describe why I need to stand side-on.I can understand how to face my strings towards the target. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">I can hit a ball after it bounces.I can rally with a partner using forehand or backhand.I can play target tennis games. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">I can respect opponents when hitting.I can encourage my partner in rallies.I can celebrate fair play. | | | | | |
| Key Question | How can you and your partner keep a rally going for longer? By controlling power, staying balanced, watching the ball closely, and communicating clearly before each shot. | | | | | | |
| Warm Up | <p>THE MOUSE AND ITS HOUSE: Each child has a racket ("the house") and a ball ("the mouse"). Begin by holding the racket correctly using the handshake grip. Introduce the mouse through fun, imaginative commands:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Mouse on the house: Balance the ball on top of the racket while walking slowly around the area.Bounce the mouse: Let the ball bounce once, then gently tap it up so it bounces again.Mouse trap: Squash the ball softly on the ground with the racket when the coach calls it out. <p>Encourage children to move safely, keeping control and eyes on their ball. Progression: Add new actions like "Mouse jumps!" (toss and catch the ball) or "Mouse run!" (walk faster without dropping it).</p> | | | | | | |
| Main Activity | <p>PARTNER RALLIES: Children work in pairs — one starts as the feeder, the other as the hitter. The feeder gently throws the ball underarm to their partner's forehand or backhand side. The hitter lets the ball bounce once, then returns it with control using the correct grip. Focus on watching the ball and keeping the swing smooth. After a few minutes, swap roles. As confidence builds, challenge children to rally without letting the ball bounce. PROGRESSION: Increase distance between pairs or have feeders toss the ball at different heights to test reactions and timing.</p>  <p>CONES AND TARGETS: Set up two markers about 3 metres apart with several cones scattered between them. Children work in pairs facing each other across the space. Each player takes turns hitting the ball (forehand or backhand) to try and knock down or hit one of the cones. Every cone hit is "won" and collected. The child with the most cones at the end is the "Target Champion." Encourage accuracy and soft, controlled hits rather than power. PROGRESSION: Move the cones further away or add smaller targets (like hoops or spots) for higher points.</p>  <p>KEEP IT GOING: Pairs now move onto half-courts or small marked areas. The goal is simple — work together to see how many consecutive shots they can make without the ball bouncing twice or going out of bounds. Emphasise teamwork, control, and consistency. Count out loud to track their longest rally. Encourage children to move their feet, stay balanced, and recover after every shot. PROGRESSION: Challenge pairs to reach a specific number (like 10 or 15 shots), or play a mini-competition between groups to see who can achieve the longest rally.</p> | | | | | | |
| Adapted Learning (Differentiation) (Challenge) | SPACE Reduce the court size for control or expand for challenge. | TASK Alternate between forehand and backhand returns for variety. | EQUIPMENT Use softer balls (foam or sponge) for beginners; faster balls for confident players. | PEOPLE Pair pupils with similar skill levels or mix abilities for peer learning. | | | |
| Key Technical Point | Use a relaxed grip, step toward the ball, and swing smoothly through contact. Keep your eyes on the ball, recover your stance after each shot, and aim for steady, controlled hits over power. | | | | | | |
| Cooldown | <p>SLEEPY MOUSE STRETCH: Ask children to lie down or sit cross-legged with their racket beside them. Take deep breaths in through the nose and out through the mouth as their "mouse" (ball) rests on its "house" (racket). Slowly stretch arms overhead ("mouse waking up"), twist side to side, and gently shake wrists to relax. Finish by asking, "What helped you keep control today?" and give a "Champion's Clap" for teamwork and effort.</p> | | | | | | |

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| Lesson Objective | To be able to hit the ball over a net towards a target area. | | | | Lesson 5/6 |
| Equipment Needed | Tennis rackets, tennis ball, cones, markers, bean bags, sponge tennis balls, hoops. | | | | |
| Success Criteria | Children can: <ul style="list-style-type: none">hit the ball over a short distance towards a target area.know to swing their racket from low to high and leave racket facing towards the target area. | | | | |
| EDSTART KNOW | <ul style="list-style-type: none">I can explain how to swing from low to high.I can describe how to follow through facing the target.I can understand how to move towards the ball. | | | | |
| EDSTART GO | <ul style="list-style-type: none">I can hit a ball over a net to a target area.I can play target tennis with my partner.I can compete in small matches. | | | | |
| EDSTART SHOW | <ul style="list-style-type: none">I can respect rules when scoring.I can encourage teammates in rallies.I can celebrate fairness and teamwork. | | | | |
| Key Question | How can you work with your partner to keep a rally going and win points fairly? By controlling your shots, staying balanced, watching the ball closely, and communicating clearly throughout the rally. | | | | |
| Warm Up | PARTNER RALLIES: Children work in pairs — one player is the feeder, and the other is the hitter. The feeder gently throws the ball underarm to their partner, alternating between forehand and backhand sides. The hitter lets the ball bounce once, then uses a smooth swing to return it. After several successful hits, switch roles so both players practise feeding and striking. Encourage soft hands, bent knees, and eyes on the ball. Focus on timing and control rather than power. PROGRESSION: As confidence grows, challenge pairs to rally without letting the ball bounce, or move further apart to work on adjusting power and accuracy. | | | | |
| Main Activity | KEEP IT GOING: Pairs now move onto half-courts or marked areas, two players per rally space. Their challenge is to see how many consecutive shots they can hit to each other before the ball bounces twice or goes out of bounds. Encourage communication, steady rhythm, and recovery to the ready position after every shot. Count the number of successful passes and see if they can beat their record each round. PROGRESSION: Add a target number to reach (e.g., 10 consecutive hits), or introduce mini-competitions to find the "Rally Masters" of each group. CONES & POINTS: Set up two markers at the back of the area and scatter cones between them to act as scoring zones. Children work in pairs or small groups, facing each other across the playing space. Each player takes turns hitting their ball over the middle line, aiming to knock down or hit the cones. Every cone hit earns a point and is collected by that player. The aim is to hit as many as possible using controlled forehand and backhand shots. PROGRESSION: Add smaller targets for higher points or make players hit from different distances to challenge control and precision. | | | | |
| | EDSTART CHAMPIONSHIPS: Divide each court into two halves so eight children can play on one court at once. Children play 2 vs 2, rallying cooperatively at first to build rhythm, then competing for points. The serve alternates between sides, and whoever wins the point earns one score — no need to win serve. Games are short "first to 5" matches to keep energy high and participation constant. Encourage fair play, teamwork, and communication. PROGRESSION: Winners can move up a court in a rotation format ("Championship Court") while others move down or swap partners for varied play experience. | | | | |
| Adapted Learning (Differentiation) (Challenge) | SPACE Adjust court size — smaller for more control, larger for greater challenge. | TASK Alternate between cooperative and competitive rallies. | EQUIPMENT Use foam or low-bounce balls for beginners; standard balls for advanced players. | PEOPLE Rotate partners or team up mixed abilities to promote inclusion and skill-sharing. | |
| Key Technical Point | Hold the racket with a relaxed grip, move feet to get behind the ball, and swing smoothly with control. Recover quickly to the ready position after every shot and aim for consistency over power. | | | | |
| Cooldown | RALLY REFLECTION: Gather all children in a circle, holding their rackets upright. Ask them to balance their ball on the strings while taking deep breaths — in through the nose, out through the mouth. Perform gentle stretches for the shoulders, wrists, and arms, finishing with side bends and toe touches. Reflect as a group: "What helped you keep control today?" and "How did your team work together during rallies?" Finish with a collective cheer: "3, 2, 1 — EDSTART Champions!" | | | | |

Year 1 - Intro to Racket Skills

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PLAYING

EDSTART

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|---|---|---|--|---|
| Lesson Objective | To be able to play short rallies over a net with a partner. | | | Lesson 6/6 |
| Equipment Needed | Tennis rackets, tennis ball, cones, markers, bean bags, sponge tennis balls, hoops. | | | |
| Success Criteria | <p>Children can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">play short rallies with a partner over a net.move towards the ball and be able to play a shot to get the ball back towards their partner. | | | |
| EDSTART KNOW | <ul style="list-style-type: none">I can explain how to rally with a partner.I can describe how to move quickly back to ready position.I can understand how to keep the ball in play. | | | EDSTART GO |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">I can rally a ball over a net with a partner.I can move to the ball and return it.I can play half-court matches. | | | EDSTART SHOW |
| Key Question | How can you and your partner keep control of the ball for longer during a rally? By using soft touches, keeping your eyes on the ball, communicating clearly, and recovering to the ready position after each shot. | | | |
| Warm Up | COLOUR REACT: Children work in pairs with one ball per pair and three coloured cones spaced about two metres apart. One player stands in the middle cone in their ready tennis stance — knees bent, eyes forward, racket hand prepared. Their partner calls out a cone colour (red, blue, or yellow), and the player must sidestep quickly to touch that cone, then return to the middle. Encourage light feet and quick reactions. Swap roles after six turns. PROGRESSION: On the second round, the caller speeds up their instructions or adds double calls (e.g., "red, blue!"), testing agility and decision-making. | | | |
| Main Activity | BOUNCE CONTROL: Each child has a racket and a ball. They gently tap the ball up on the racket, trying to keep it controlled and steady in the air. Ask: "How many can you do without dropping it?" Emphasise soft touches, eyes on the ball, and adjusting the racket angle for control. PROGRESSION: Move into pairs — both with rackets — and take turns hitting the same ball, letting it bounce once before the next hit. Challenge pairs to keep a rally going for as long as possible without the ball touching the ground twice. | | | |
| | KEEP IT GOING! : Pairs now rally on half a court or small marked-out area. The aim is to work together and see how many consecutive hits they can make before the ball bounces twice or goes out. Focus on control, consistent contact, and teamwork rather than power. Encourage communication — one child counting aloud, the other calling "mine" or "yours." PROGRESSION: Add a target score (e.g., 10 or 15 hits) or award points for every successful rally completed within 60 seconds. | | | |
| | EDSTART DOUBLES CHAMPIONSHIPS: Divide each tennis court into two halves so eight children can play at once. They play 2 vs 2 doubles, focusing on teamwork and fun competition. Players alternate serves (underarm or drop serves), and whoever wins the rally earns a point. Games are short — first to 5 points — to keep energy high and allow multiple matches. Encourage sportsmanship: players shake hands or tap rackets after each game. PROGRESSION: Introduce mini-finals where winners from each court move up to play other winning teams for the "EDSTART Cup." | | | |
| Adapted Learning (Differentiation) (Challenge) | SPACE Shrink rally areas for beginners; use full half-courts for advanced players. | TASK Alternate between bounce rallies and direct volleys for variety. | EQUIPMENT Use larger, slower balls for beginners; standard tennis balls for challenge. | PEOPLE Rotate partners or mix ability levels to encourage support and teamwork. |
| Key Technical Point | Keep a relaxed grip, bend your knees slightly, and move your feet to get behind the ball. Swing smoothly with control, keep your racket flat, and stay balanced after every shot. | | | |
| Cooldown | BALANCE & BREATHE: Children balance a ball on their racket as they walk slowly around the space, taking deep breaths in through the nose and out through the mouth. Gradually bring everyone to a stop and perform gentle stretches: shoulder rolls, arm swings, wrist circles, and side bends. Finish seated in a circle holding rackets up like trophies. Ask: "What helped you control the ball today?" and "How did your team work together?" End with a final group chant — "3, 2, 1... EDSTART Champions!" | | | |