



Active Insight: Evidence in Action

Tip #291



Managing Transitions Effectively

Overview

Transitions occur whenever students move between **activities, learning spaces, equipment setups or lesson phases**. While often overlooked, transitions can influence **how much lesson time is available for practice and learning**. Unclear instructions, lengthy regrouping and inefficient equipment management can quickly interrupt lesson flow. Well-planned transitions help students move from one task to the next with **minimal disruption**, allowing lessons to maintain momentum and learning to continue.

Key Teaching Ideas

Treat transitions as a **skill that needs to be taught, practised and refined**. Consider **how students will move, where they will move and what they will need** before the transition begins. Provide **clear instructions** before students leave an activity and avoid giving important information while students are moving. Review transition points within lessons and identify where delays commonly occur. Small improvements to **routines, organisation and communication** can reduce interruptions and create more time for learning.

Practical Application

- **Use countdown transitions.** Eg: Give students a clear timeframe such as “10 seconds to your next activity area” before movement begins.
- **Pre-mark activity locations.** Eg: Use cones, numbers or coloured markers so students know exactly where to move next.
- **Assign equipment responsibilities.** Eg: Allocate students specific setup and pack-up roles before the lesson begins.
- **Teach regrouping routines.** Eg: Practise how students return to a teaching space, collect equipment or form groups.
- **Provide instructions before movement.** Eg: Explain the next task before students transition rather than after they arrive.
- **Use music to signal transitions.** Eg: Start a designated transition song to prompt students to move, set up equipment or regroup before the music finishes.

Next Steps

Establish consistent routines to improve transitions. [Ultimate PE approaches](#) support efficient lesson flow and maximise active learning time across lessons.

