



BikeReady

Bikes  
in Schools

# Bike games

for schools

 WAKA KOTAHI  
NZ TRANSPORT  
AGENCY

Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa  
New Zealand Government

# Introduction

**These games and activities are a fun way for students to practise and develop key bike control skills such as balance, braking, riding with one hand and more.**

Each card explains the equipment, setup and instructions for the activity as well as discussion ideas and variations to ensure inclusiveness for all students.

All activities are flexible and can be adapted to suit the age, abilities and needs of your class. Most games are suitable for balance bikes or trikes.

Most importantly, have fun, and feel free to join in with your class!

## **This pack includes:**



information cards in green



game/activity cards in blue

## **Useful links**

BikeReady curriculum resources for the classroom:

[www.bikeready.govt.nz/schools](http://www.bikeready.govt.nz/schools)

Disability and inclusion resources:

[www.bikeready.govt.nz/biking-inclusion](http://www.bikeready.govt.nz/biking-inclusion)

Electronic copy of this resource:

[www.bikeready.govt.nz](http://www.bikeready.govt.nz)

# Fitting a bike helmet

Teach your students to:

1. place their helmet flat and square on their head, with a two-finger width gap (1 – 2cm) between their eyebrows and the helmet rim
2. use the rear adjuster so the helmet fits snugly, but comfortably
3. check their helmet cannot be tilted forward, back or sideways
4. adjust the side straps, checking that there is no fraying or twists and moving the slider on each side to sit right beneath the ear (side strap in the shape of a Y)
5. buckle the straps under the chin so that the strap is firm, but not too tight, and they are able to fit one finger between the chin and the strap.

## How to check your helmet fits



2 fingers between your eyebrows and helmet



4 fingers making a 'V' shape under your ears



1 finger between the bottom strap and your chin

## Ideal fit



## Common fitting mistakes



Straps not done up



Helmet not straight



Helmet too far forward



Helmet too far back

# Conducting a simple bike check

**Teach your students to get into the habit of doing a quick bike check before every ride.**

The ABCD Quick check is a simple way to remember what needs to be checked.

## **The ABCD Quick check**

### Air

Check that they have air in their tyres.

### Breaks

Check each brake by wheeling the bike forward and squeezing the brakes one at a time.

### Controls

Check the chain, pedals and handlebars. The chain should be black or silver, not rusty. The pedals should spin freely. The headset should be tight so that the handlebars do not move independently of the wheel.

### Drop

Drop the bike gently from a height of about 10cm and listen for any unusual rattles or creaks.

### Quick release

Check these are all done up correctly and tight (and bolts if they don't have a quick release).

# Getting on and off a bike

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**If possible, students should be taught to always stand on the left-hand side of their bike, and to get on and off on the left-hand side. This is because it is away from the chain and on the footpath side (once they progress to riding on the road).**

When getting on and off their bike, students should apply the brakes to hold the bike steady and lean the bike towards them.

When laying bikes on the ground, teach students to always lay them with the chain facing up towards the sky. This is less likely to cause problems with the chain or gears.

# Starting off and pedalling

**The best way to set off quickly and with control from a stationary position is to set the pedal into what is called the 'pedal ready' position.**

The pedal ready position is where students start with their left foot on the ground and their right foot on the pedal in the 2 o'clock position as shown in the diagram below. This allows them to push down on the pedal to gain momentum when setting off.

Encourage your students to get into the habit of getting into pedal ready whenever they are stopping and starting again.

## Pedal ready position



# Braking safely

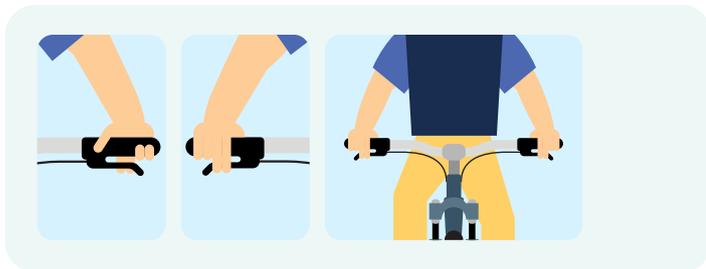
Most bikes have brakes on the front wheel and the back wheel. The front brake is controlled by the right hand and the back brake is controlled with the left hand.

Students should be taught to use both brakes at the same time. This is the most effective way of stopping.

Braking with only the front brake could cause them to go over the handlebars.

Braking with only the back brake may result in a rear wheel skid, which won't stop them, and they may lose control.

Encourage your students to always ride along with two fingers covering their brake levers (so they are always ready to stop). Please be aware that some students with small hands may not be able to manage with only two fingers covering their brakes so may need to use more fingers.



Encourage students to slow down gently with control by counting down '3-2-1 stop' in your exercises rather than just calling out 'stop', which can lead to students jamming on their brakes. They should practise slowing down gently and coming to a complete stop before putting their foot down.

## Activity to introduce braking

- With the students standing next to their bikes, tell them to push their bike forward and gently squeeze their right brake lever to see what happens. They should see their back wheel lift off the ground.
- Repeat, but this time tell them to push their bike forward and gently squeeze their left brake lever to see what happens. They should feel the back wheel skid.
- Repeat, but this time tell them to push their bike forward and gently squeeze both brake levers together to see what happens. They should feel that this is the most effective way to stop.

# Signalling

**There are three official hand signals for people riding bikes – turning left, turning right, and stopping.**

**Signals should be strong and clear and held for three seconds.**

It is important that students learn to return both hands to the handlebars before they make a turn, so they can maintain good control of their bike (ie they signal before a turn, not as they make a turn).

Students who struggle to ride with one hand can first practise releasing the grip on the handlebars and tapping their fingers, then progress to lifting one hand off the handlebars just a few centimetres until they can gradually raise their hand higher and for longer.

It helps if they keep their stomach muscles tight and sit upright to take the weight off their hands. They should also try to look where they are going and not at their hands.



# 3-2-1 Stop

## Overview

Students ride around the track practising stopping and starting with control.

Remind students to keep a safe distance from the rider in front, to apply gentle, even braking, and to keep their fingers over their brake levers.

## Equipment



BIKES



HELMETS



WHISTLE  
(OPTIONAL)

## Setup

- Space students around the track ready to ride.

## How to play

- Start students riding around the track in the same direction.
- Once students are riding comfortably, call out '3-2-1 stop' or if on a large track, blow the whistle 3 times.
- Students come to a gentle stop using both brakes at the same time and put their foot down.
- Repeat the exercise until students are confident with their stopping and starting.

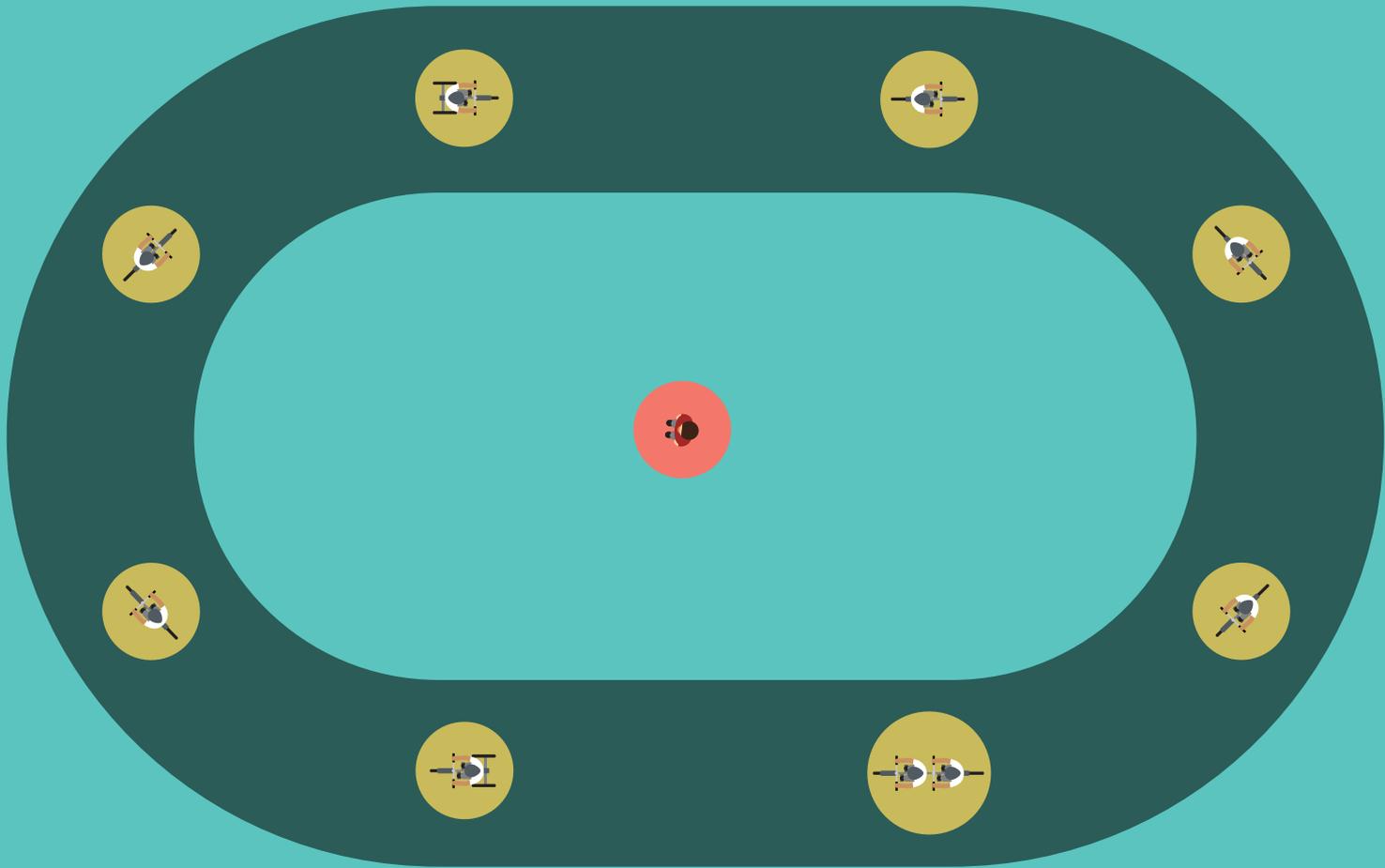
**Note 1:** If students have small hands, they may not be able to ride with two fingers over the brakes.

**Note 2:** If the bikes have back-pedal brakes, get them to apply the hand brake and the foot brake at the same time.

## Variations

**For younger or less skilled/able students:** Have students walk beside their bikes to practise braking instead of riding.

**For older or more skilled students:** Speed the game up so students have to start riding again immediately after stopping. See if the students can slow down, almost to a stop and then start again without putting their foot down.



# Reach the teacher

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## Overview

Students try to be the first to 'reach the teacher' in this adaptation of the classic game of freeze.

Remind students to keep their fingers over their brake levers so they are ready to stop.

## Equipment



BIKES



HELMETS



CONES

## Setup

- This game is best played on the grass in the middle of your track (or on a court).
- Mark out a start line with two cones.
- Line all the students up on their bikes along the start line.
- Stand facing the students about 20 – 30m away.

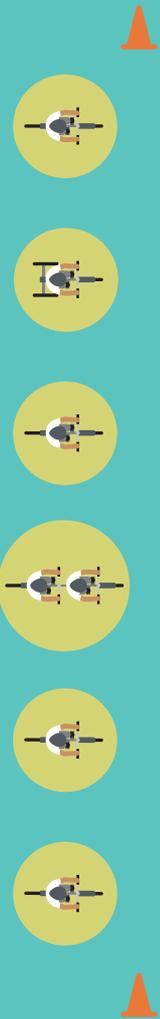
## How to play

- Turn your back and start walking away. When you have your back turned, students can start riding in a straight line towards you.
- Spin around to face the students. They must brake and stop immediately in a safe and controlled manner. If a student is still moving, or doesn't brake safely (eg skids), send them back to start again.
- Repeat the process as the students try to advance.
- If the students get too close too quickly, walk backwards still facing the students (so they can't start riding).
- The winner is the first person to get level with the teacher.

## Variations

**For younger or less skilled/able students:** Allow students more time to stop by turning around more slowly. Split the class in half based on ability and play two rounds. The students not riding can act as judges.

**For older or more skilled students:** Have two or three people who spin around. This makes it harder for the students on bikes who must react to three people all turning at different times.



# Last one standing

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## Overview

Students ride around the track standing up, and gliding without pedalling.

When standing up, the pedals should be horizontal (not one up and one down).

## Equipment



BIKES



HELMETS



CONES



WHISTLE

## Setup

- Cone off any skill features so students stay on the main track.
- Space students around the track ready to ride.

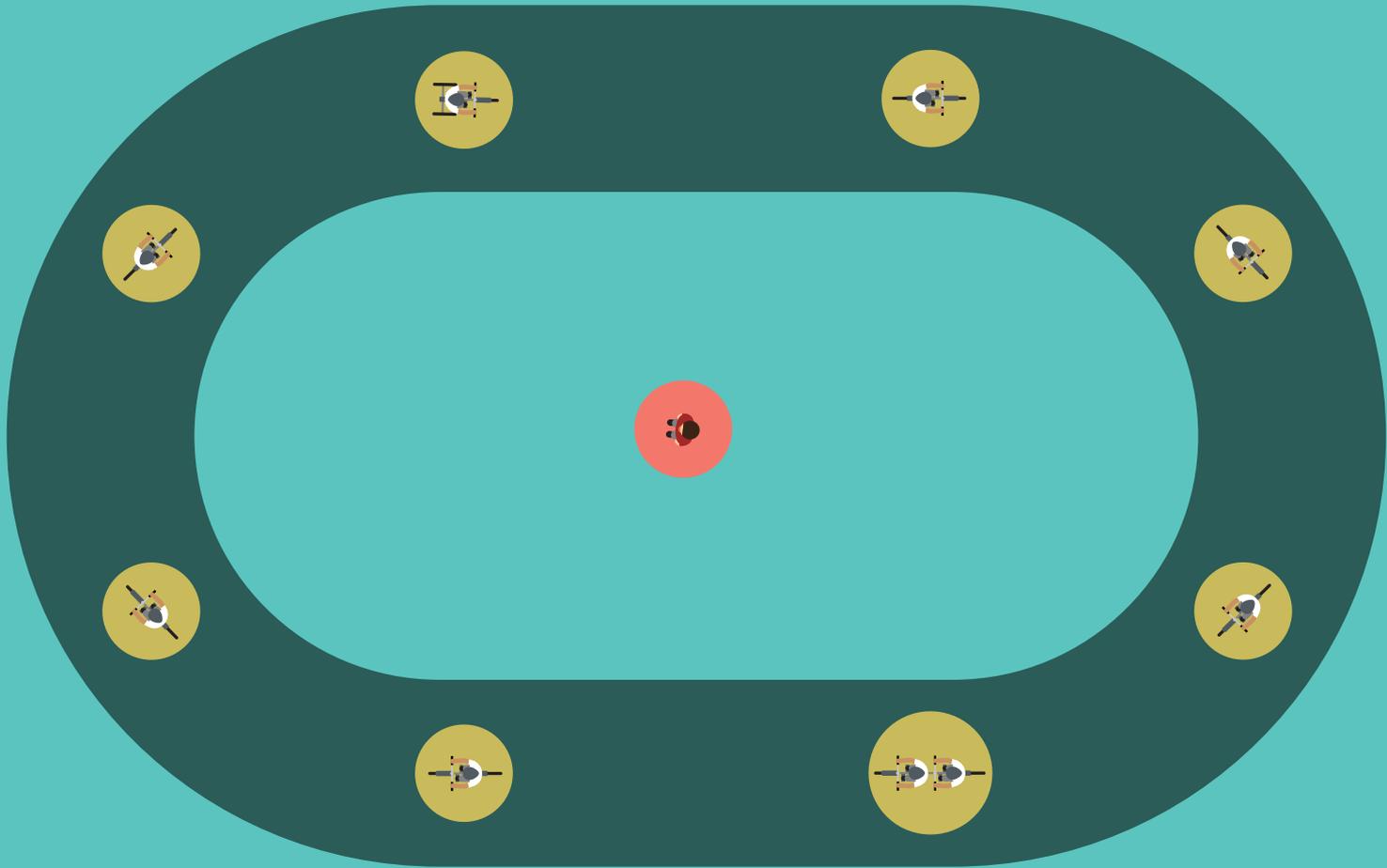
## How to play

- Start students riding around the track in the same direction.
- Blow the whistle once and students should stand up and keep pedalling. Blow the whistle again and students should stop pedalling but remain standing.
- See how far they can travel before their bike stops rolling.

## Variations

**For younger or less skilled/able students:** Allow students to remain seated when they stop pedalling. See how far they can travel before they put their foot down. For students who can't yet balance, have them lift their feet off the ground and try to let the bike glide.

**For older or more skilled students:** See how slow students can ride when standing, and how long they can glide for after riding slowly.



# Scatter

## Overview

Students ride from the middle of the track, complete a lap, and arrange themselves back in the order they started.

## Equipment



BIKES



HELMETS



WHISTLE

## Setup

- Split class into two groups and assemble on the grass in the middle of the track.
- Position each group in a line, back-to-back, on their bikes facing away from each other.
- Number students off in the line (eg 1 – 15 in each line). Have them say their numbers out loud.

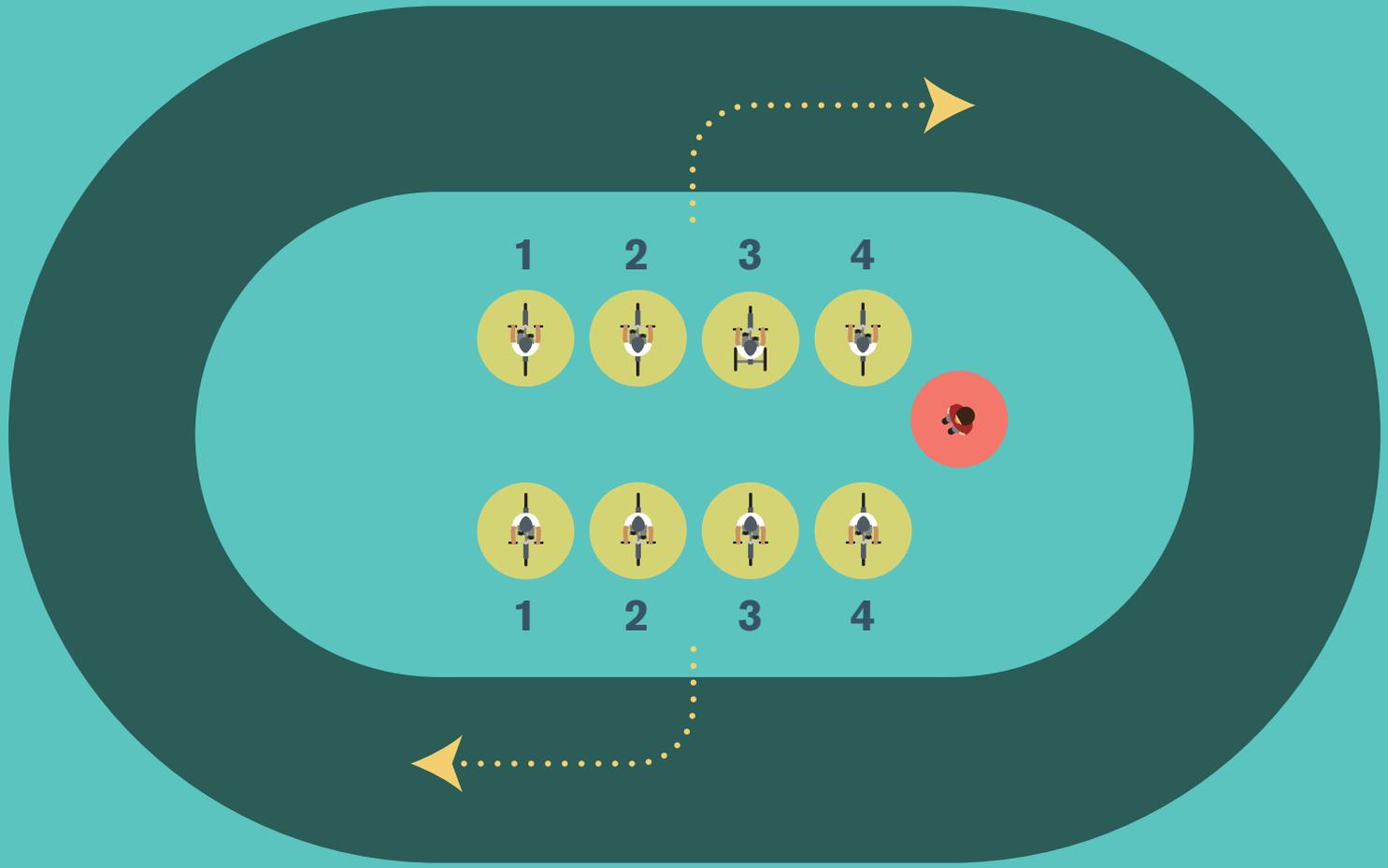
## How to play

- Call out 'scatter' and students ride towards the track and ride around in a clockwise direction. Allow them to ride around the track a few times.
- Call 'scatter back' or use a whistle, and students ride back to the middle and line up in their lines, in the correct numerical order.
- Check the order by having students call out their number again.
- Repeat, but this time the students ride anti-clockwise.

## Variations

**For younger or less skilled/able students:** Put the students into small groups and give them a name, eg tigers, lions and leopards. When they return to the middle of the track, they need to find their group again.

**For older or more skilled students:** Change the numbers to percentages, prime numbers or fractions. Use the alphabet, forwards then backwards. Instead of sending all students at the same time, call out 'scatter odd numbers' or 'scatter prime numbers' for example, so students enter the track at different times and have to give way to each other.



1

2

3

4

1

2

3

4

# Opposites ride

## Overview

Students ride around the track learning the importance of riding on the left-hand side of the school track and other shared pathways.

Talk to students about why we keep left on paths.

## Equipment



BIKES



HELMETS

## Setup

- Cone off any skill features so students stay on the main track.
- Split class into two groups.
- Position one group in a line on the left-hand side of the track ready to ride in a clockwise direction. Position the other group facing in the opposite direction.

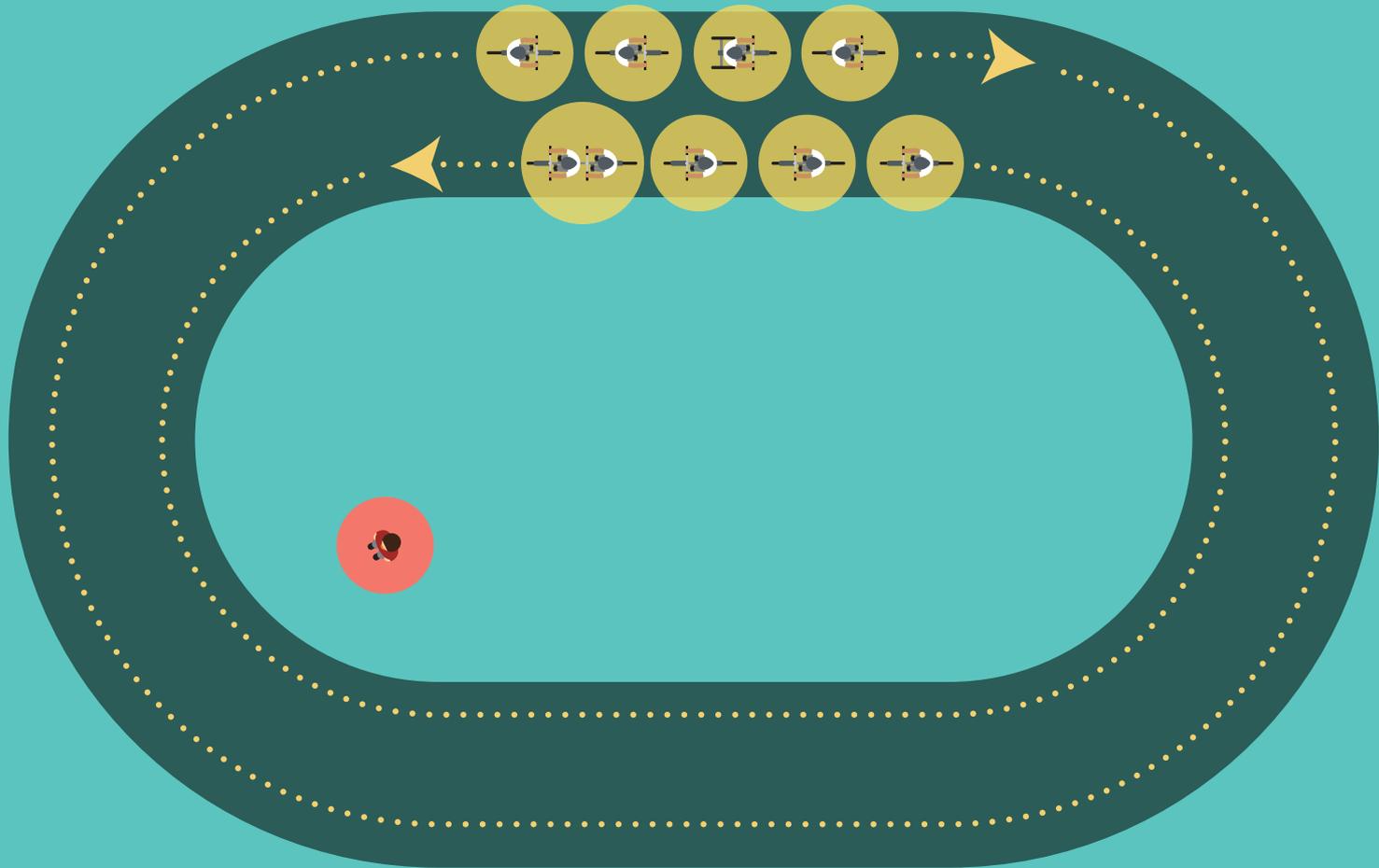
## How to play

- Start students riding around the track. No one can pass the person in front of them and there should be at least half a bike length between each rider.
- Once they have done a few laps of the track, tell the groups to swap directions, but they must still stay on the left.

## Variations

**For younger or less skilled/able students:** Have all students ride in one direction, still sticking to the left-hand side.

**For older or more skilled students:** Have students give a high-five to each student as they pass. Assign a lead rider who must try to ride at a speed that keeps the group together in a line.



# Hands off

## Overview

Students ride around the track practising their signalling, while riding in a straight line.

There are three official hand signals for people riding bikes – turning left, turning right, and stopping (see information cards).

## Equipment



BIKES



HELMETS



WHISTLE

## Setup

- Space students around the track ready to ride.

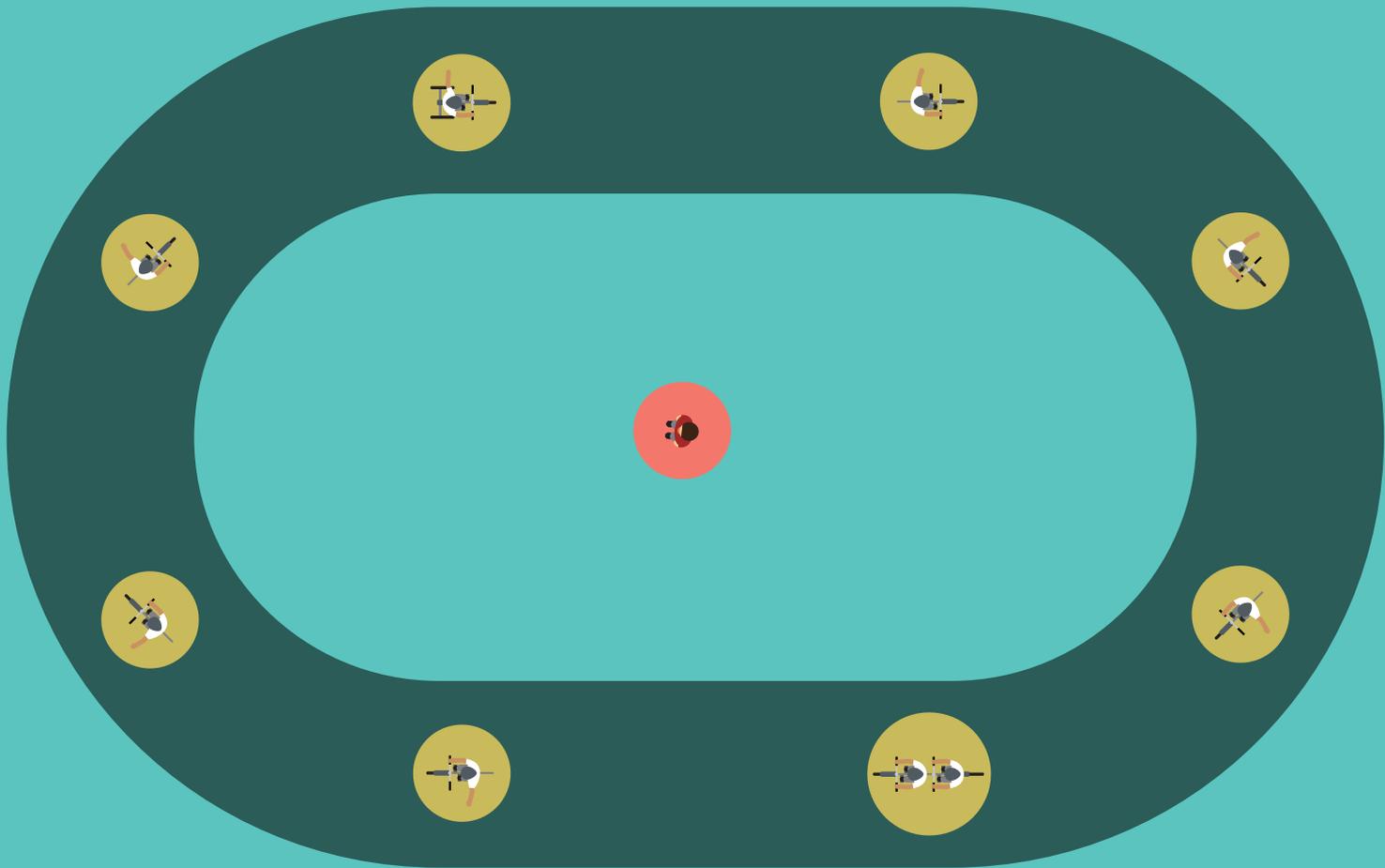
## How to play

- Start students riding around the track in the same direction.
- Blow the whistle either once or twice. One blast means students signal with their right hand for three seconds, two blasts means students signal with their left hand for three seconds.
- Add in the stopping signal by giving one long blast on the whistle. Once they have done the stopping signal, students put both hands back on the handlebars, slow down gently using both brakes, and come to a complete stop with their left foot on the ground.

## Variations

**For younger or less skilled/able students:** Get the students to try lifting their fingertips up from the handlebars so they keep their palm and thumb on the grip. Students then try lifting their hand slightly until they can do this higher for longer.

**For older or more skilled students:** Have students ride on the grass. Each time they signal, they turn in the direction they signalled or come to a controlled stop.



# Le Mans start

## Overview

Students compete as a team in a race incorporating running and getting on and off a bike.

Talk to students about why it's best to place bikes down with the chain facing upwards, and why they should get on and off a bike on the left-hand side (see information cards).

## Equipment



BIKES



HELMETS



WHISTLE



CONES

## Setup

- Cone off any skill features so students stay on the main track.
- Mark out a start/finish line on the track with two cones or chalk.
- Have all the students lay their bikes down off the track near the start/finish line.
- Split class into teams of 3 – 5 students of mixed abilities.
- Assemble on the opposite side of the track, as far away from the bikes as possible.

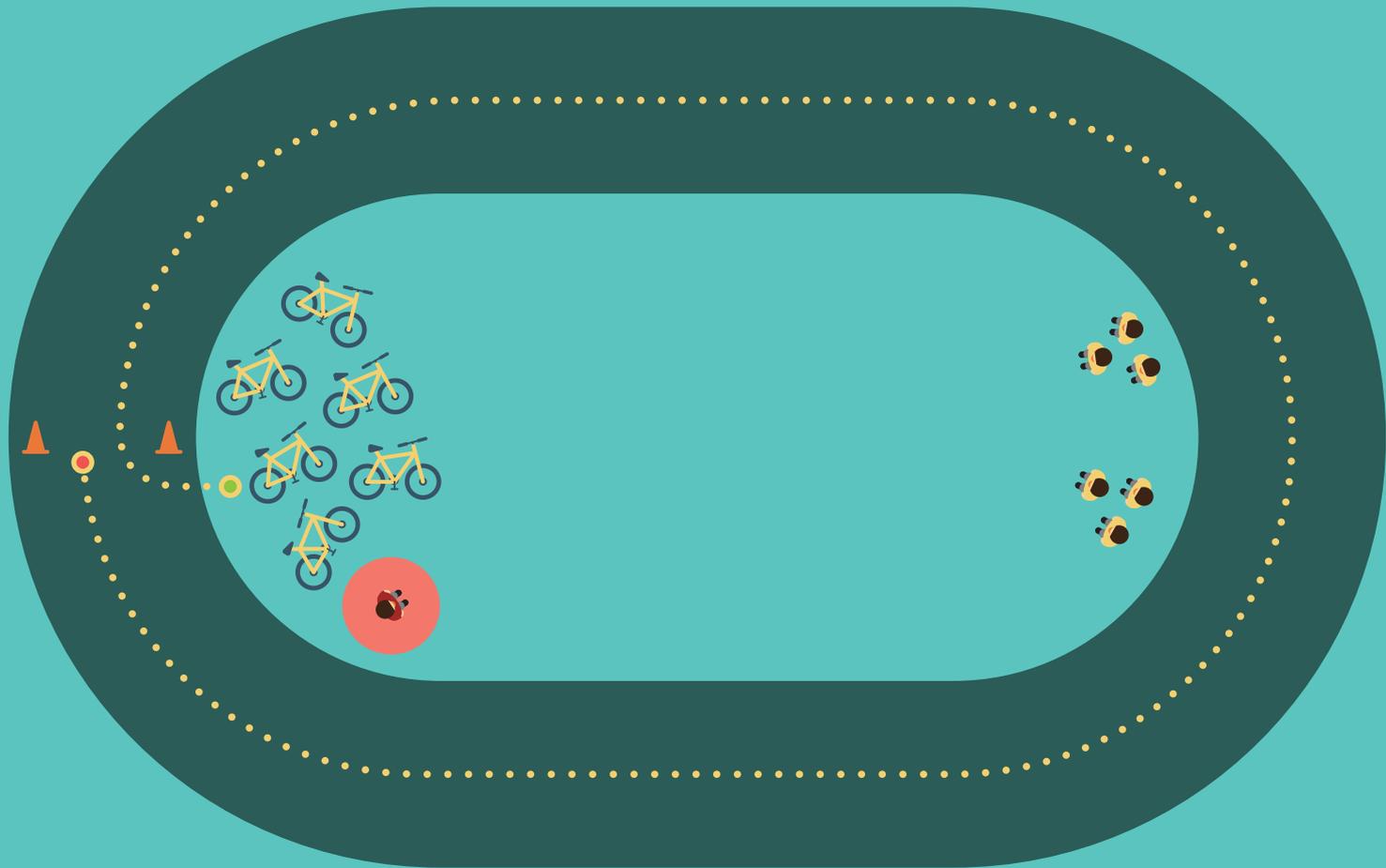
## How to play

- Blow the whistle to start. Students run to their bikes, wheel them to the start line and begin riding (they must not get on their bike until they reach the start line).
- Students race one complete circuit to the finish line.
- As they cross the finish line, call out their placing.
- Each team adds up their finishing places to get the team score. The team with the lowest score is the winner.

## Variations

**For younger or less skilled/able students:** Create smaller groups and only race one team at a time so there are less students riding together. They won't get a team score.

**For older or more skilled students:** Include any skill features on the track in the race. Give penalty points for not getting on or off the bike on the left-hand side, throwing the bike onto the ground etc.



# Marathon challenge

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## Overview

Students ride in a pair and complete as many laps as they can in a set amount of time.

This activity can be used to build fitness or as a personal challenge over the term.

## Equipment



BIKES



HELMETS



STOPWATCH



PEN & PAPER

## Setup

- Decide how long the challenge will go for (eg 10 – 15 minutes).
- Arrange students into pairs.
- Space pairs around the track so each student in the pair is side-by-side. They will need to remember the point where they are starting.

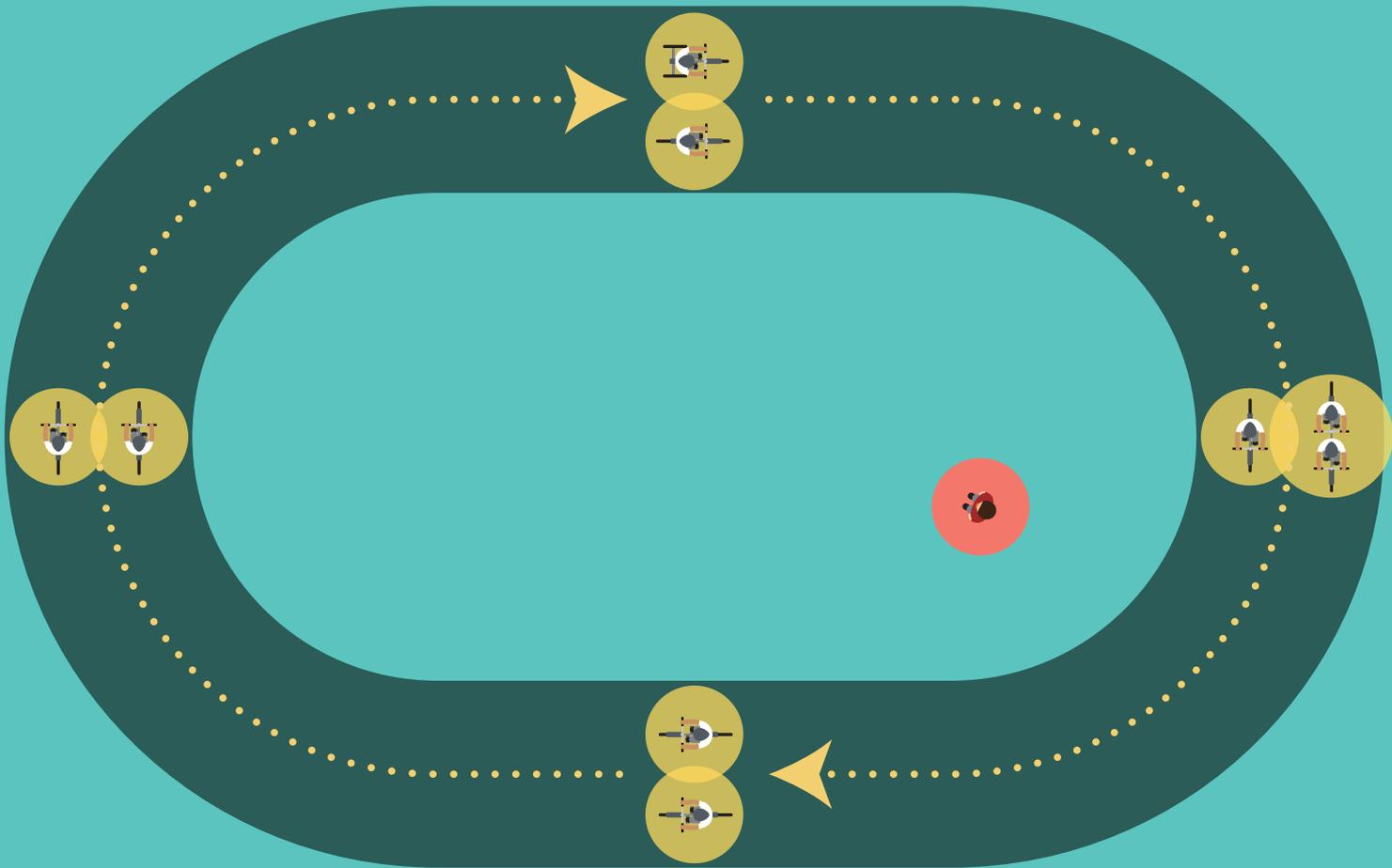
## How to play

- Start all pairs riding around the track in the same direction and start the stopwatch.
- Pairs must ride together the whole time (single file or side-by-side).
- Pairs must ride in single file if passing another pair, and call out 'passing on your right' as they move past.
- Each time the pair goes past their start point, they count their lap.
- Once the pre-determined time is up, each pair records how many laps they did.
- Repeat this activity on a regular basis as an ongoing challenge.

## Variations

**For younger or less skilled/able students:** Decrease the amount of time used in the challenge. Have them ride individually so they don't ride with a partner.

**For older or more skilled students:** Increase the amount of time for the challenge.



# Musical bikes

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## Overview

Students try to be the last one left in this adaptation of the classic game of musical chairs.

Low flexible cones need to be used as students will be stopping their bike with the front wheel on a cone.

## Equipment



BIKES



HELMETS



LOW CONES



SPEAKERS  
(OPTIONAL)



WHISTLE  
(OPTIONAL)

## Setup

- This game is best played on the grass in the middle of your track (or on a court).
- Lay low, flat cones around the grass, well-spaced apart, one per student.
- Each student starts with their front wheel stopped on a cone.

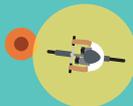
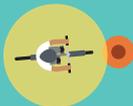
## How to play

- Start the music (or blow a whistle), and students begin to ride around the field.
- Lingering around one cone is not allowed.
- While the music is playing, remove one or two cones.
- If a student rides over a cone while the music is playing, they are eliminated.
- Stop the music (or blow the whistle). Each student must come to a complete stop with their front wheel on a cone. Only one student is allowed per cone – the students who do not reach a cone are eliminated.
- Repeat the process until there is one student left riding.

## Variations

**For younger or less skilled/able students:** Place the cones further apart to allow more space for riding. Play the music longer for more riding time. Allow students to ride over the cones.

**For older or more skilled students:** Take more than 1 cone away at a time.



# Obstacle course

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## Overview

Students complete an obstacle course on the track built with hoops, ropes and cones.

## Equipment



BIKES



HELMETS



CONES



HOOPS



JUMP ROPE

## Setup

- Mark out a start/finish line on the track with two cones or chalk.
- Place 2 – 4 hoops around the track.
- Place 2 skipping ropes in a straight line parallel to each other on the track, about 1m apart. Do this in 2 – 3 places.
- Place 4 – 6 cones in a line on the track. Do this in 2 – 3 places.
- Assemble students in a line near the start/finish line.

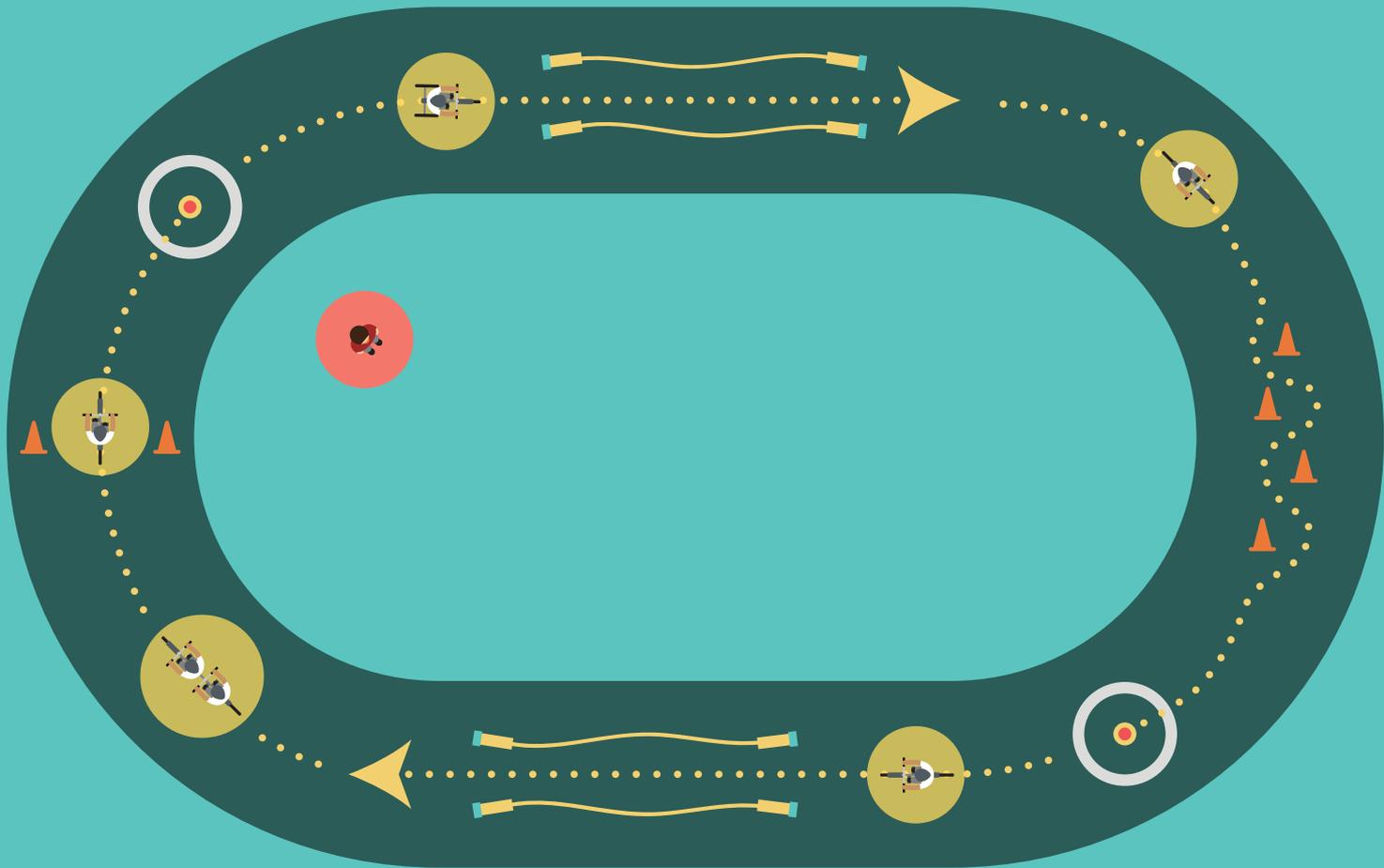
## How to play

- Start students riding one at a time with a small gap in between each rider.
- Students ride around the track using all track features and the hoops, ropes and cones.
- When they come to a hoop they must come to a complete stop with their front wheel in the hoop.
- They must ride in a straight line between the two ropes.
- They must slalom between the cones.

## Variations

**For younger or less skilled/able students:** Space the ropes and cones further apart. Cone off the track features.

**For older or more skilled students:** Place the ropes closer together to make it harder to keep a straight line. Place cones closer together to make a tighter slalom course. Use different coloured hoops – in one colour they come to a complete stop and put their foot down, in the other they pause in the hoop and try to balance for as long as they can.



**Thank you for using these resources. We really appreciate your commitment to using your school bike track and ensuring your students have plenty of fun opportunities to ride and develop their bike skills.**

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