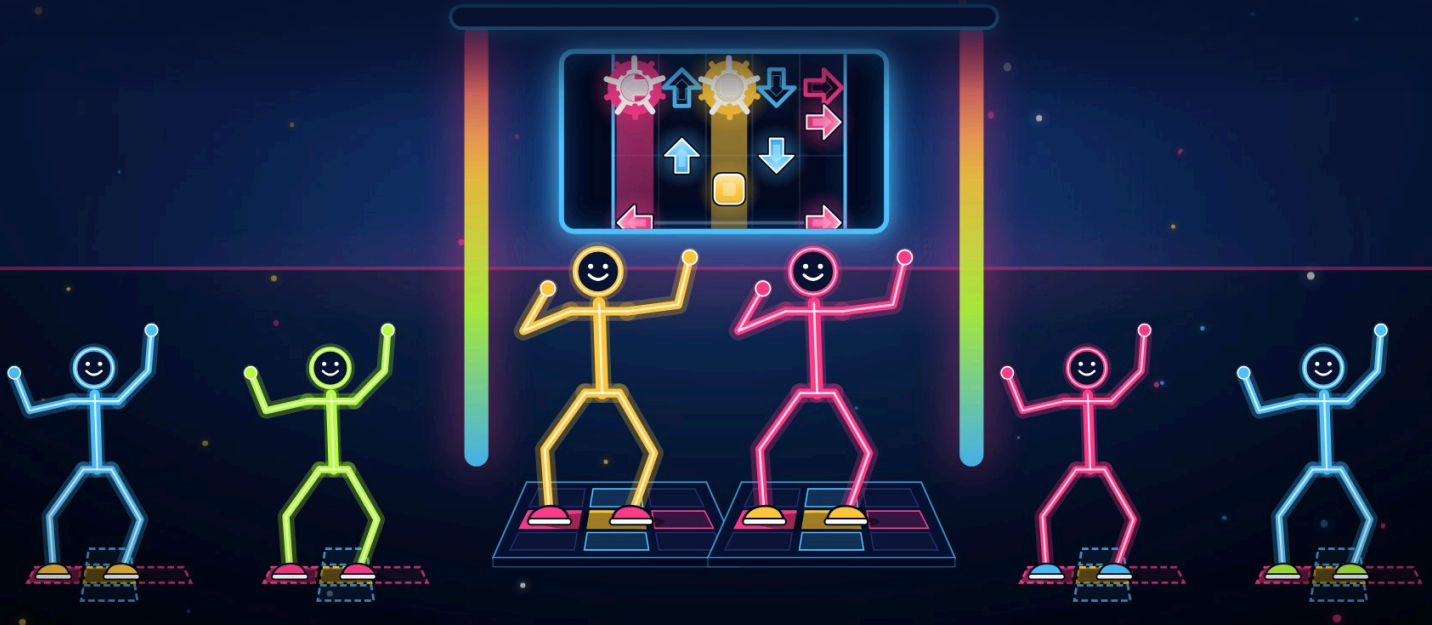


AN EIGHT-WEEK DANCE-GAME UNIT FOR PE

Dance games in PE

Dance games reach **the kids who usually avoid exercise:**
no sports experience needed, just a beat and a few arrows.

**24**

students in a class

4 groups

of 6 students each

8 minper round, then
groups rotate**3 songs**per round at the
dance station**32 min**of station time in a
45-minute class**8 weeks**with a new goal
every week

Get Up and Move proposes an eight-week dance-game unit for PE, built around one StepManiaX dance machine run as one of four rotating stations. Every student plays a song on the machine every class, and the rest of the class keeps moving instead of waiting in line.

FORMAT

Four rotating stations, with groups of 6 moving every 8 minutes. At the dance station, pairs take turns on the machine while the other four dance the same song on taped follow-along grids, so every student plays one song on the machine and dances two more. Whole-class play is for the kickoff and the final showcase.

SCHEDULE

Two or three PE classes a week for eight weeks, with 32 minutes of station time in a 45-minute class.

WHAT THE SCHOOL PROVIDES

A PE teacher, a corner of the gym near a power outlet, and two or three classes for a pilot.

TRACKING

Logging in at the machine is planned: students would tap a card or scan an on-screen QR code with a phone, and every song would save to their own StepUp account, with feedback, personal bests and badges. Until then, a paper log card does the job. Teachers grade effort and growth, not raw scores.

WHO IT'S FOR

Elementary through high school, adjusted for each grade band, plus an optional after-school club on the same machine.

WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE

Students active for at least half of class time, the national target for PE, and asking to keep playing after the unit ends.

Why dance games

Dance games reach kids that sports don't. West Virginia brought Dance Dance Revolution into its schools after a West Virginia University professor saw kids lining up to play it at an arcade.

Kids who would normally avoid regular exercise gravitate to DDR's light and sound.

THE Journal, 2007, reporting on West Virginia's program

50

overweight children who played at home in the state's first study grew more confident in PE (**THE Journal**).

753

public schools: the state aimed to reach all of them, to appeal to students who often dislike other sports (**NBC News**).

5.4 METs

WALKING 3 MPH: 4.9

It's real exercise. In a lab study of children averaging 11½ years old, Dance Dance Revolution averaged 5.4 METs, more than walking at 3 mph (4.9 METs). The researchers called that intensity consistent with activity recommendations for children (**Bailey and McInnis, 2011**).

0.68 vs 0.21

MATH-GRADE GAIN

Fitness and grades improved in a Utah school study. At Rose Park Elementary, 85 fourth-graders did 30 minutes of dance games, aerobic dance and jump rope three times a week for 9 months. Compared with 123 third- and fifth-graders who didn't, they were more likely to hold or improve their 1-mile run result, and their math grades rose more: 0.68 points against 0.21 (**Gao, Salud America brief**).

50%

CDC TARGET

It serves the national PE targets. CDC guidance calls for 150 minutes of PE a week in elementary school, 225 minutes in middle and high school, and students physically active for at least 50% of class time (**CDC**).

The catch. Novelty fades, and a game alone doesn't guarantee movement. In an elementary PE study, children were more interested during a 4-week exergaming unit than a 4-week fitness unit but less active in class, and their interest fell at the same rate in both (**Sun, 2012**). **So this unit keeps the game as one station among active ones and adds a new challenge every week.**

THE FORMAT

Whole class or rotating stations

Use rotating stations for everyday classes and save whole-class play for the kickoff and the final showcase. With one machine, each student gets one song on the machine per class either way; stations keep everyone else moving.

	Whole class	Rotating stations (recommended)	Hybrid
How it runs	Two students dance; the rest follow along on taped floor grids or cheer; swap every song	The dance game is 1 of 4 stations; groups of 6 rotate every 8 minutes	Stations in most classes; whole class on day 1 and the last day
Stage time per student	One song, after up to 28 minutes of waiting	One song on the machine, plus two more on the follow-along grids	Same as stations
What everyone else does	Mostly waits; only students who can see the screen can follow along	Works at fitness stations that use the same steps and rhythm	Same as stations
Teacher workload	Easiest: one activity to run	Station cards, a timer, and students who can work on their own	Moderate
Best for	Kickoff, showcase, clubs, small groups	Everyday PE	A full eight-week unit

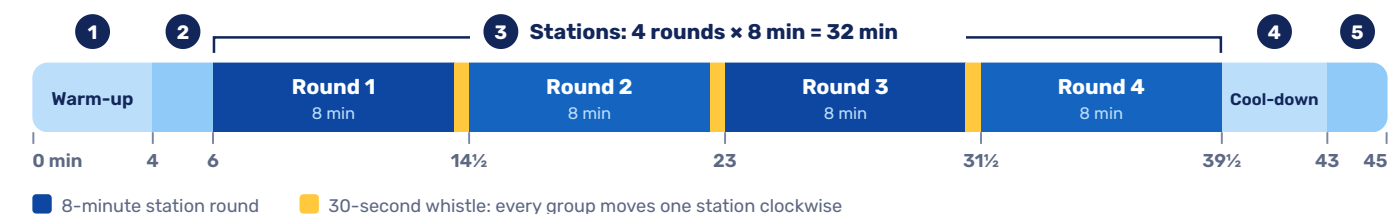
Figures assume a class of 24, one machine with two stages, and about 2½ minutes per song, including picking it. Whole-class play becomes practical every day at about one stage per 4 students: 6 stages, or 3 machines, for a class of 24.

A typical class period

A 45-minute class has 32 minutes of station time: a short warm-up, then four 8-minute rounds for four groups of 6. Each week's challenge from the eight-week unit plays out at all four stations.



Minute by minute



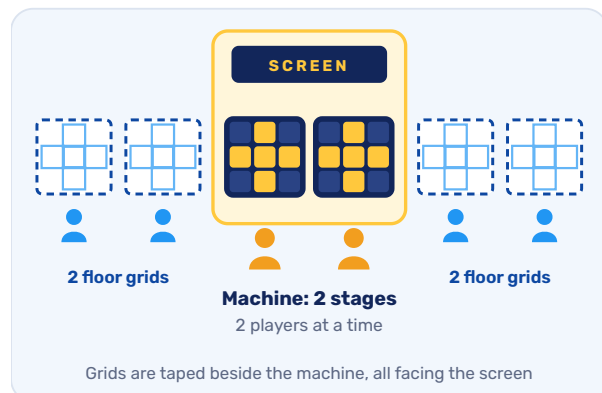
- 0–4 Warm-up, whole class.**
Dynamic stretches to music, then the week's step pattern on the floor grids together.
- 4–6 Challenge and groups.**
The teacher shows this week's challenge and sends four groups of 6 to their first stations.
- 6–39½ Stations.**
Four rounds of 8 minutes, starting at 6, 14½, 23 and 31½, with a 30-second whistle to rotate clockwise.
- 39½–43 Cool-down.**
Walking, stretching and a quick effort check on a 1–10 scale.
- 43–45 Wrap-up.**
Students fill in one row of their log card: the song they played on the machine, its level and score, and their effort for the whole class. Once StepUp login is ready, the machine saves the song for them.

Bigger classes. The plan is built for 24. For up to 30 students, make five groups of 6 and add a fifth station, such as an agility ladder or a second set of floor grids. Five rounds take about 54 minutes. In a shorter period, run four rounds and start the next class where you left off. If a group has an odd number, one student plays solo.

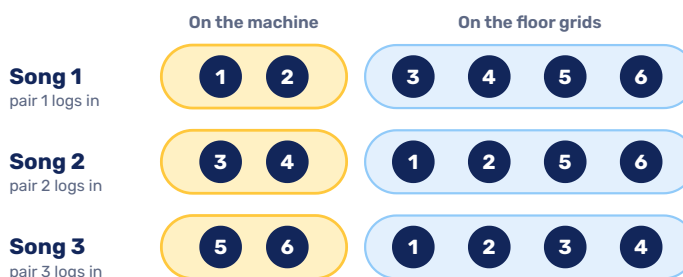
Inside the dance station

Every round has three songs, about 2½ minutes each, including picking the song. For each song, one pair dances on the machine's two stages (a StepManiaX cabinet holds exactly two players at a time), while the other four dance the same song on four follow-along grids taped beside the machine, facing the screen. Then the next pair steps up.

LAYOUT • ABOUT 20 × 20 FT



EVERY ROUND • 3 SONGS • ~2½ MIN EACH



Each student: 1 song on the machine
+ 2 songs on the grids, every class

THE UNIT

The eight-week unit

Each week brings a new goal, so the challenge keeps growing past the mid-unit point where interest usually dips. Students pick their own difficulty level; goals compare each student with their own earlier results, not with classmates.

Week	Focus	Dance-game goal	Other stations
1	Learn the stage	Clear one song on Beginner; use the bar for balance	Name the five panels; step on the beat
2	Find the beat	Clear two different Beginner songs	8-step pattern cards
3	Stamina	Dance all three songs in the round without a break: one on the machine, two on the grids	16-step patterns; 1-minute jump-rope sets
4	Level up	Try Easy; replay the week 1 song and compare scores	Mid-unit check of effort and logs
5	Speed and accuracy	Beat your own week 2 score on the same song	Faster tempo on pattern cards
6	Create	Hard for confident students, Easy for the rest	Groups build an 8-count routine on the grids
7	Team play	Try team mode with your partner	Rehearse routines; teach yours to another group
8	Showcase	Personal-best day: replay your favorite song	Perform routines for the class

1 Checkpoint weeks 1, 4 and 8: each student replays the same song at the same level, so growth shows in one number.

6 Weeks 4, 6 and 7 add something new: a harder level, a creative task and team play, timed to land as the first novelty wears off.

Whole-class days. On the kickoff (week 1, day 1) and the showcase (week 8), pairs take turns on the machine while everyone else follows along on the grids, facing the screen. At the kickoff, the teacher demonstrates, then every student plays one song on Beginner. At the showcase, teams perform the routine they built in weeks 6–7, then play a team song while the class cheers each team on.

By grade level

The routine stays the same at every age; what changes is station length, who runs the machine, and how much students plan for themselves.

Grade band	Station rounds	Who runs song selection	Emphasis	Adjustments
Elementary (K–5)	4 × 6 minutes in a 30-minute class, with shorter songs	Teacher or a helper, from a short preset list	Rhythm, the five panels, taking turns	Picture-based pattern cards; Beginner level and slower speed settings through week 4
Middle school (6–8)	4 × 8 minutes, as above	A student “DJ” role that rotates daily	Personal goals, stamina, building routines	Full eight-week plan as written
High school (9–12)	4 × 8 minutes, twice through in a 90-minute block	Students	Planning their own workout playlist; effort tracking; leading stations	Students design pattern cards for younger classes; option to run a lunchtime or after-school club

For students with disabilities, the support bar, slower song speeds and seated versions of the strength exercises keep everyone in the rotation.

CURRICULUM FIT

National PE standards

The unit maps onto all four of SHAPE America’s [National Physical Education Standards](#).

Standard	How the unit meets it	Evidence for the teacher
1. Develops a variety of motor skills	Footwork patterns, rhythm, balance, coordination at speed	Checklist from the step-pattern station
2. Applies knowledge related to movement and fitness concepts	Warm-up and cool-down, the effort scale, why leg strength helps on faster songs	Exit question on the log card
3. Develops social skills through movement	Taking turns, cheering, team routines, teaching another group	Teacher observation in weeks 6–8
4. Develops personal skills, identifies personal benefits of movement, and chooses to engage in physical activity	Personal goals, choosing a level, the optional club	Goal sheet, log card and club attendance

BEYOND PE

After-school club

On days the machine isn’t in PE, it can host an after-school dance club. Up to 12 students fit one machine: two dance while the other ten follow along on the gym’s taped grids, so each student gets two or three songs on the machine in an hour.

Time	What happens
0–10 min	Warm-up, then the week’s step pattern on the grids
10–45 min	Song rotation: two on the stages, the rest following along, swapping every song; students choose their own level
45–55 min	Small groups practice an 8-count routine
55–60 min	Cool-down, and everyone marks their effort

- Older students can lead the club and coach the younger ones.
- A showcase each month gives families a reason to come and watch.
- Club members use the same log cards (and, once it’s ready, the same StepUp login), so club songs count toward the same goals as the PE unit.

Tracking and badges

Teachers grade effort and growth, not game scores, so a beginner who improves earns as much as a student who was already good. StepUp, the tracker Get Up and Move is building, is planned to save every song from the machine to the student's own account, so nobody has to write anything down. Here is how it would work.



Log in on the machine.

Each student taps a card or scans the on-screen QR code with a phone. The screen greets them by a card nickname, like "Comet 44," never their name.



Dance.

Song, level, score and the effort face they tap afterward save to their own account. They're logged out when their turn ends.



See their progress.

Automatic, private feedback on their latest song, like "New personal best! +4,200 since last time," plus personal bests, levels and badges. "Not me" flags a mixed-up song for the teacher.

YOUR LATEST SONG

Today, 9:06

New personal best on Midnight Meteor!

90,469
Beginner

- +9,593 since last time
- You rated your effort "Good effort".
- Your 17th song this unit

Logged in with card on Stage 2

Saved by the machine

[Not me?](#)

StepUp prototype, demo data A student's latest song, saved by the machine after they logged in with their card on Stage 2.

Seven achievement badges

Achievement badges

6 of 7 earned. Every badge compares you only with your own songs.

First Song
 Play your first song on the machine
 Earned Sep 7

Explorer
 Play 5 different songs
 Earned Sep 16

Personal Best x4
 Beat your own best on a song you've played before
 4 times, first Sep 18

Level Up
 Clear a harder level than ever before
 Earned Sep 30

Hard Worker
 Rate your effort "Worked hard" or more on 5 songs
 Earned Sep 16

Steady Dancer
 Dance on 10 different days
 Earned Sep 30

Checkpoint Climber
 Beat your own week-1 checkpoint score when you replay that song
 To beat: 46,940

StepUp prototype, demo data A student's badge page: earned badges in color, the rest with progress toward them.



First Song

First song logged



Explorer

5 different songs



Personal Best

Beat your own best on a song



Level Up

First clear on a harder level



Hard Worker

Effort rated "Worked hard" or more on 5 songs



Steady Dancer

Dancing on 10 different days



Checkpoint Climber

Beat your own week-1 checkpoint score

Badges, privacy and progress

No letter grades

StepUp never turns a score into a grade, and every badge compares a student only with their own songs. The teacher grades effort and growth, and chooses how many songs Hard Worker takes and how many days Steady Dancer takes.

What the teacher sees

Names, plus who hasn't danced this week, who is ready for the next level, badges earned, and active time against the 50% target.

Privacy by design

The machine would only ever see card numbers and greet students by card nicknames. Names appear only on StepUp pages, for the student and the teacher. The prototype keeps its demo data in the browser; a school version would use school-managed accounts and follow FERPA and COPPA guidance.

How progress is measured

Three checkpoints

In weeks 1, 4 and 8, each student replays the same song at the same level, so growth shows in one number.

Active time

During the pilot, an observer times how many minutes a sample of students are moving, to check the class against the 50% target.

Fitness tests, optional

Schools that already run a mile run or PACER test can compare results before and after the unit.

No StepUp yet?

A paper log card works: date, song, level, score and effort (1–10).

LOGISTICS

Space, equipment and safety

The dance station needs a corner of the gym with a standard outlet. Plan a zone of about 20 by 20 feet, which leaves room for the machine and four taped follow-along grids where students can see the screen. That size is a planning estimate, to be checked on site.

Setup	What's included	Size and weight	Power
StepManiaX DX cabinet	65" touchscreen, two five-panel stages, six-speaker sound system, "Family Filter" for the song list	75" wide × 95" deep × 94.5" tall installed; ships in three crates, the largest 1,187 lb	110 V
Two stages + touch monitor bundle	43" touch monitor with the game built in, two stages; speakers bought separately. Sold out at Step Revolution in October 2026.	Each stage 35" × 47" × 7", 220 lb	100–240 V

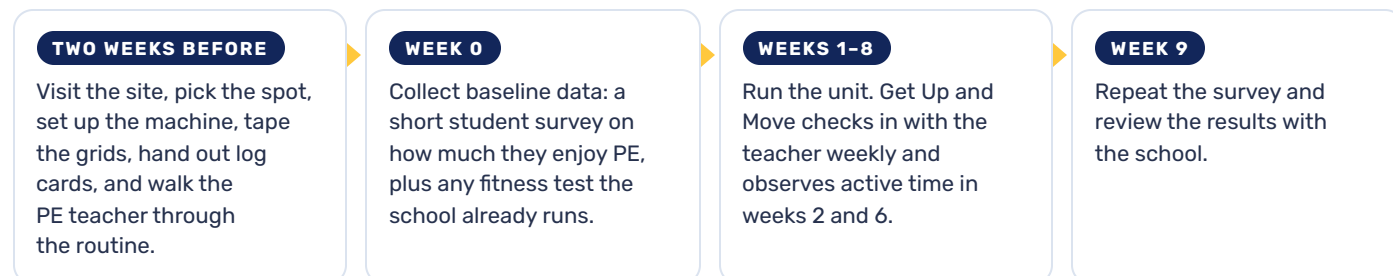
Check the delivery route to the gym before ordering a cabinet. A school that adds a second machine can run two dance stations, so each student plays two songs on a machine every class.

Safety rules for the dance station

- ✓ Sneakers with laces tied; no socks only and no sandals.
- ✓ One student per stage, always, and hands on the bar through week 3.
- ✓ Step off forward or to the side, never backward.
- ✓ Anyone can step off at any time; the effort scale tells the teacher who needs a break.
- ✓ The teacher stands where they can see the dance station and at least one other station.
- ✓ Wipe the bars and touchscreen between classes, and run power cords along the wall.
- ✓ The planned login uses a card, so no one needs a phone; phone login would be optional. Without StepUp, use the paper log card.

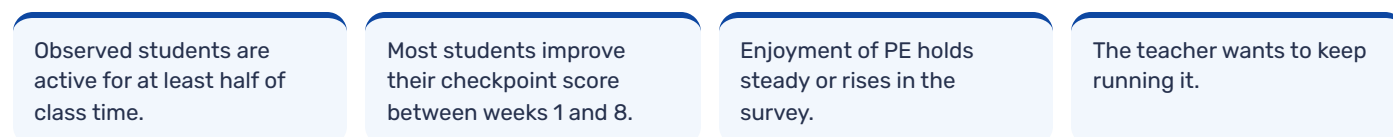
Start with a pilot

Start with one eight-week pilot at one school, with two or three classes, then decide together whether to expand.



Get Up and Move provides	The school provides
Setting up the dance-game station (we'll work out the machine with each school)	A PE teacher and two or three classes
Station cards, pattern cards and log cards	Gym space near an outlet
A teacher walkthrough and weekly check-ins	Time for the baseline and final survey
A results summary at the end	Permission for observers in class

The pilot counts as a success if

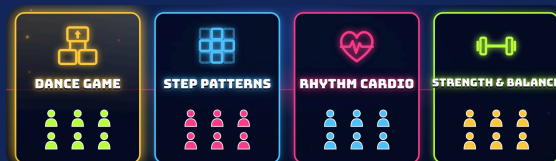


Bring dance games to your school

PE teachers, principals and after-school coordinators: tell us about your school and we'll plan a pilot together.

info@getupandmove.info

getupandmove.info



Sources

- Gaming: Eat Breakfast, Drink Milk, Play Xbox**, THE Journal, April 2007 • thejournal.com
- W. Va. schools try video game to fight obesity**, NBC News • nbcnews.com
- Exergaming intensity in children: Dance Dance Revolution at 5.4 METs**, ScienceDaily summary of Bailey and McInnis, Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine, 2011 • sciencedaily.com
- Project GAME research brief**, Zan Gao, Salud America!, 2011 • salud-america.org
- Comprehensive School Physical Activity Programs: A Guide for Schools**, CDC • cdc.gov
- Exergaming impact on physical activity and interest in elementary school children**, Haichun Sun, Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport, 2012 • pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov
- 2024 National Physical Education Standards**, SHAPE America • shapeamerica.org
- StepManiaX DX**, Primetime Amusements product page • primetimeamusements.com
- Two Stages + StepManiaX Touch Monitor Bundle**, Step Revolution shop • shop.steprevolution.com