

1 Jumping, vaulting, climbing and somersaulting over ‘urban furniture’-- Parkour is not for the faint-hearted. Invented in France in the late 1980s, Parkour (or ‘free running’ as it’s also known) developed from forms of military training, and is considered by some as like a martial art.

5 Put simply, it involves getting from one point to another in the fastest way possible on foot. When one point is the top of a tall building and the other is 40 feet below – that’s when the adrenaline takes over.

10 Believe it or not, this sport – often associated with daredevils leaping around concrete jungles – might soon be part of PE lessons across the UK. Some schools across London are already offering students lessons in free running, and teachers feel that these are having a positive influence on discipline.

‘Parkour might seem dangerous, but we don’t allow our students to jump over buildings or run around in the streets,’ said one head teacher. ‘It’s basically gymnastics. You need power, but balance, speed and control are equally important.’

15 ‘Many students at our school have behavioural problems and they are often in trouble outside of school. They lack confidence because they find lessons difficult, and this affects their behaviour. Parkour gives students that confidence, and gets them interested again in learning.’

20 Not everybody feels that teaching Parkour in schools is a good idea. Critics often talk about possible issues with health and safety. However, feedback from students is positive, which may lead to more schools introducing lessons in free running.

Comments

25 **Bob2015:**
Parkour is great exercise. What’s more, it requires focus. That’s exactly what these kids need, focus and discipline. I’d say it’s a great idea to have this in schools, plus it costs nothing! I mean, what equipment do you need?

30 **Lil_Lil:**
@Bob2015 I disagree. Parkour is such a dangerous sport, and people have died doing it. Not only that, what if these kids go free running in the street after school? There won’t be teachers around to supervise them – they might start jumping off buildings.

35 **Shilps555:**
@Lil_Lil, come on that’s a bit extreme! But I do agree that it has its problems. There are health and safety issues for these students for sure. On top of that, I’d worry that these students might encourage their friends to try out Parkour moves. These friends might not have had any experience of free running.

Jumper_Xtreeem:

I'm with **@Bob2015** here. I think that not only is Parkour a lot of fun it's also a great way to work out. Furthermore, there are people doing Parkour everywhere here in central London. Surely it's better for kids to learn how to do it properly rather than to copy others and risk injury?

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