Gross Motor Development Tips for Children With Visual Impairments
A quick reference to help teach Locomotor Skills

Run
Arms in opposition to legs, elbows bent
Brief period where both feet are off the ground
Landing on heels or toes (i.e., not flat-footed)
Non-support leg bent approximately 90°
- Use a guidewire or guide runner
- Use hockey sticks to teach arm swing motion
- Treadmill to hear rhythm and tactile modelling

Gallop
Arms bent at waist level at take off
Step the lead foot forward; trailing foot comes adjacent or behind lead
Brief period where both feet are off the ground
Maintains a rhythmic pattern for four consecutive gallops
- Listen to rhythm of gallop to understand step sequence
- Sighted guide provides “physical rhythm” or cadence

Hop
Non-support leg swings forward
Foot of non-support leg remains behind body
Arms flex and swing forward to produce force
Takes off and lands three consecutive times on preferred foot
- Hop on a mini trampoline, transfer skill to floor
- Always surround the trampoline with floors mats

Leap
Take off one foot and land on the opposite foot
A period where both feet are off the ground longer than running
Forward reach with the arm opposite the lead foot forward
- Provide verbal guidance
- Rolled up mat to teach child to lift toes up and forward
Horizontal Jump
Knees flexed, arms extended behind body
Arms extend forcefully forward and upward
Take off and land on both feet simultaneously
Arms thrust downward during landing
  • Use mini trampoline, transfer skill to floor
  • Use submersible stool in pool, transfer to pool deck

Slide
Shoulders aligned with line on the floor
Side step with lead foot, slide the trailing foot next to lead foot
A minimum of four continuous step-slide cycles to the right
  • A minimum of four continuous step-slide cycles to the left
  • Remove shoes to feel tactile line
  • Stand on carpet squares and slide with child
  • Use a guidewire
  • Have child slide along a wall

Tactile Modeling: The child touches a model (teacher, aide, or peer) who demonstrates a skill. Use tactile modeling or “Adapted Demonstration” to teach the component parts in the task analysis.

Physical Guidance: Involves the manipulation of the child; the instructor, aide, or peer actively touches and moves the child in some way. It is important to couple physical guidance with a verbal explanation or sign. Always discuss physical guidance before doing so.

Sources and Recommended Reading
www.aph.org/pe and www.campabilities.org