

CAPOEIRA KIDS NOTTINGHAM

Gymnastics without pressure, martial arts without the conflict, and music without the rigidity

A safe, fun place for you and your child to experience all that the sport of Capoeira has to offer.

Our teachers

“Tatu” (real name Hugh), “Soneca” (real name Chie), “Sansão” (real name Kiri).

Parents Class teacher: “Gameleira” (real name Greg).

All our teachers are police checked and first aid trained.

What happens in our children’s classes?

Each class starts with us all sitting together in a circle and greeting one another with “tudo bem” (pronounced “too-doo baym”, meaning how are you/I am fine). Children are then separated according to age, with our teachers running activities based on the physical and emotional development needs of each group. Each group uses two rooms every class, on a weekly rotation basis: Room 4 for tumble work on the mats, the Small Hall for ball and music work, and the Large Hall for equipment-focused movement work.

At the end of the class we get together in the Large Hall for the “roda” (pronounced “hodder”): a circle made of children and adults, in which we show what we’ve learned, accompanied by live percussion, and sing our traditional Capoeira songs. In the roda, we encourage everyone to play with whomever they want to: little kids with older ones, with adults getting involved too. It’s what gives our group such an amazing community feel!

What should I do during class?

At your child’s first class it is natural to want to sit in to see they are settled. But, from week two, we ask parents to leave the room, as children are always much more focused when adults have left. We have a room for you to sit in. At the end of the class, however, we appreciate parents joining us in the Large Hall to help form the roda, which starts around 6.15pm on Fridays, and 10.45am on Saturdays. If you really are lost for things to do whilst your child is in class, then why not get involved as well? We run specially priced parents classes. More information on this later.

What should my child wear to class?

To take part in our weekly classes all they need are comfortable clothes they can move around in, and bare feet. To take part in the Batizado (grading event, more info on this later), they will need our group’s white uniform trousers, which we sell. We also have Capoeira t-shirts, and either can be bought whenever you like. No pressure!

Age groupings

Each age group has its own version of how we want them to play Capoeira, appropriate to their emotional and physical stage. Below is some information on how this informs our teaching. However, as you know, every child is different, and as such, their development will often cross age divisions. Patience is key. Capoeira is a fantastic sport, and we want your child's Capoeira to grow as they do, so they'll love doing it their whole life!

Ages 4-6: High Ten

Capoeira for this age group is High Ten - a game based on a physical narrative of easily achievable movements done with a friend. Children are growing rapidly at this age, placing real challenges on their physical abilities. As such, emphasis in the High Ten class is focused on developing their balance, aerobic fitness and basic coordination, using balls, hoops and other props, as well as Capoeira movement work. The emphasis in the High Ten game itself is less on getting Capoeira moves "right", and instead focused more on getting the children moving and interacting. In the High Ten class, we begin to teach the music of Capoeira: learning the name of instruments, how to play a simple rhythm, and sing a short song, with mime often used to teach them song meanings. Broader aims in this age group are to develop good habits of patience, turn taking and working in pairs.

Ages 7-8: CapoJam

In CapoJam, children will learn to "jam" with friends, putting their favourite Capoeira moves in the roda, whilst improving connectivity. A heightened sense of self can lead to uneven progress and drops in confidence, and as such, the goal in CapoJam class is to bolster your child's skills and motivation by teaching Capoeira techniques alongside lots of simple coordination exercises. We aim for every lesson to have some simple element that can give them the "I learned this today" feeling, whilst they continue to develop other (sometimes small or hidden) skills under the surface, which will help them blossom fully later. In the CapoJam class we teach them to vary sounds on the instruments, keep rhythm with others, and lead a song in the roda. Broader aims in this age group are to develop the child's ability to start to give basic constructive feedback to peers.

Ages 9-11: Brinca Capoeira

In Brinca Capoeira children learn to develop their Capoeira personality, starting to introduce elements of simple, respectful gamesmanship. They will start adding details to what they do, but will still find some moves too physically demanding. As such, in Brinca Capoeira class, whilst teaching more adult-like Capoeira sequences, we also enjoy fun team exercises. In the Brinca Capoeira game, though we can demand more precision in the way they execute their Capoeira movements, the focus is still on cooperation: encouraging them to adapt their "solo repertoire", to develop rehearsed and impromptu sequences that work with the strengths of others. In music, we start teaching them complicated verses, and introduce the idea of keeping rhythm whilst singing. The broader goal of Brinca Capoeira is "learning to train", developing a positive attitude towards physical fitness.

Ages 12+ Joga Capoeira

In Joga Capoeira, students will learn how to be competitive with friends through surprising acrobatics and tricky take-downs. This age sees children go through their growth spurt, bringing greater physical strength, but drops in flexibility, coordination

and energy. As such, whilst Joga Capoeira classes focus a lot on speed and power in technique, we will also do general strength and conditioning exercises. Though it won't be long before they are able to train with adults, as they start to develop sophisticated acrobatics and learn how to fall safely, we still expect them to enjoy elements of the simpler games Brinca Capoeira and CapoJam. In the musical element of this class, we teach students to start to lead Capoeira songs whilst holding rhythms on instruments. The broader goal of Joga Capoeira is to give them an environment to learn how to deal sensibly with difficult emotions.

What can I do to help my child's Capoeira develop?

Become familiar with what we are teaching them in class (watch now and then), and be aware of what kind of Capoeira is appropriate to their stage of physical and emotional development. We know it can be frustrating seeing your child doing what seems to be the same things again and again: as adults we can spot mistakes easily, knowing what adult Capoeira looks like. But remember, if we nurture their enthusiasm and co-ordination now, then there is nothing they won't be able to achieve in the future. One brilliant thing you can do is encourage their Capoeira musicality by learning some of the songs yourself. We made a YouTube video of the eleven songs we sing most often in the children's roda, "Songs for the Capoeira Family", which is available to see on our website, on the 'Kids' page.

Events

In mid-October we invite two guest teachers to Nottingham to run workshops for our Capoeira kids. In mid-March, we hold another, bigger event called the "Batizado" (pronounced "ba-tchi-zah-doh"), which again includes special workshops for our Capoeira kids, but also features the Capoeira grading, where they can receive their first belt, or move up grades. Capoeira emphasises the individuality and creativity of your child over a singular, rigid standard, and as such, the grades in Capoeira are markers as to how long they have been practising, and are not tests requiring a display of certain set skills. To get their belt they will need the group's white trousers, and will play a friendly (but sometimes feisty!) game of Capoeira with a visiting teacher in the roda.

Parent class

In a parents class, we teach you how much fun playing Capoeira with your child can be, and how it can motivate your whole family to be healthy. Though it's far easier for us to comprehend Capoeira tactics, memorise the steps of a drill, or understand why we do a particular movement, adults take longer to learn the really physical moves that kids get quickly. But that doesn't mean it's impossible for us to occasionally impress our children with what we can do! In this class we look to develop your confidence to be creative and play the game in a way that suits your body, whilst slowly improving your fitness. Many of our Capoeira parents have even been bitten by the bug so bad that they've gone on to train in our regular adults classes! The parents class runs alongside the Friday (5.30-6.30pm) and Saturday (10-11am) children's class.