

# **The neural basis of motor primitives**

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Motor primitives are an attractive idea to cut through the degrees of freedom problem and bootstrap motor learning. Data from several lines of research suggest that the lower levels of the motor system may possess a set of motor primitives. These are compositional or constructive 'building blocks'. In a fashion similar to primitives used in computer graphics or robotics, these may simplify the problem of early movement construction and form an initial scaffold for motor learning. The motor primitives for limb movement are likely to reside in the vertebrate spinal cord. The two competing perspectives on such modularity provide different accounts of the ontogeny of these modular basis sets and primitives, and present differing perspectives on how labile the bases and primitives are.