



SPORTS
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INSTITUTE OF
SOUTH AFRICA



Discovery
Vitality

Junior netball

coaching manual



Primary

school



Junior netball

coaching manual contents



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Introduction

Junior netball
coaching manual



“We wish to change our nation’s children by instilling in them the desire to be more active, not just now but for all their lives. We aim to achieve this by teaching each child a competence in and passion for at least one sport. This we will do by building a sports coaching culture for our children ...”

Many factors in modern society have resulted in children and adults becoming increasingly inactive and this has had an alarming effect on their health. Regular physical activity plays an important role in the prevention and treatment of many lifestyle-related diseases such as coronary artery disease, strokes and type 2 diabetes (non-insulin dependent diabetes). Sports are a great way to encourage children to get more physically active and healthy, and that’s why Discovery Vitality has developed a series of sports manuals for primary schools in South Africa.

The purpose of the Junior netball coaching manual

This manual provides teachers and coaches with relevant information on how to coach netball so that children get the maximum benefits from doing the sport – to get physically active, healthy and fit. The focus of the manual is on developing the **basic skills needed** for juniors (up to the age of 12) to be competent on the court. The main focus is on **providing exercises and drills** to help you plan your practice and develop skills, rather than to give a comprehensive framework of the rules of netball.

Professor Tim Noakes of the Sports Science Institute of South Africa has a dream to make South African children the fittest in the world by 2020. He believes that through initiatives like the Vitality Schools Programme we can reach this goal. You too can play a part in making this vision a reality!

Get your girls active with the game of netball

Netball is a game that girls of all ages and fitness levels can enjoy and is one of the most popular female sports in South Africa. Good teamwork is essential for success in netball because the player with the ball cannot control the flow of the game and relies on her team mates to create opportunities. Players catch, throw and jump for a ball, and are required to run into and create space. It is about doing the simple things correctly every time. Not only is it fun, but it also builds fitness of the heart and lungs and is good for overall muscular development.



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Understanding the game

The aim of netball

The aim of the game is to score more goals than the opposing team. There are generally two phases of play: attack and defence. During attack, the team that has the ball must move down the court by passing the ball to each other, all the way to the goal circle and then score in the ring. Defence happens when the other team has the ball. The defending team must then try and get the ball away from them and stop them from scoring.

Safety

Netball is not considered a contact sport. Nevertheless, the likelihood of personal contact is high. Encourage players to stick to the rules and play a 'clean' game, to avoid unnecessary contact and possible serious injury. Netball should be played with skill and energy and always in good spirit.

The injuries most commonly suffered include sprained fingers and sprained ankle ligaments. More serious injuries include players injuring their knees. To lower the frequency and impact of these injuries it is essential that players are fit and thoroughly understand the rules of the game.

To avoid the likelihood of being scratched, players are not allowed to have long finger nails or wear jewellery when playing netball. The umpire checks all players before starting the game.

Planning your practice

Recommended practice frequency and duration

When trying to encourage children to participate in sport, it is essential that the sessions are fun. Training is not necessarily about quantity but rather quality, so we suggest that you have two one-hour sessions a week.

Putting your practice together

As the coach, use your imagination and creativity to get the most of your practice time. It is recommended that you stick to a framework that will help you cover all the important aspects of netball training. The table on the following page summarises the framework for how to set up a good practice session:



Phase	Description and principles	Length
Warm-up*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Important for preparing the body for the more vigorous exercise that follows • Should be as varied as possible to maintain the interest of the players • As the children warm up, increase the intensity and pace of activities • Make activities netball-specific 	10 minutes
Skills development and training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on introduction and reinforcement of new skills • Time spent on specific skill development will depend on the progress made by players. Don't teach more advanced skills until mastering the basic skills 	30 minutes
Match or game time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A short match is a great way to end off a practice session and expose players to proper play • Small-sided (5-a-side) games or 'attack vs. defence' matches work well 	15 minutes
Warm-down*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gentle activity such as a slow jog leading to a walking pace • Stretching of major muscle groups used during activity • Opportunity to get all players together at the end and reinforce key lessons of the practice 	5 minutes
		Total 60 minutes
All phases have drills and training games you can use to make sessions fun and enjoyable for your players while also helping you teach the skills properly. The drills are explained in the following sections.		
* Refer to the General coaching manual for a list of dynamic and static stretches.		

Warm-up drill and activities

The warm-up activities listed below have been selected not only to prepare the players for more strenuous activity to follow, but also to create awareness among the players of certain skills required to play the game.

Depending on the level of ability, some of the listed warm-up activities may need to be adapted to suit the players' skill level.

We also recommend that you spend a few minutes doing the dynamic stretches found in the General coaching manual.



Warm-up drills without the ball

Warm up activity	Description	Coaching points
Reactions	Players line up along the back line and slowly jog forward. The coach blows the whistle at random, at which point each player jumps as high as possible. This exercise can be repeated, but change the activity as the whistle is blown. Other examples are: side step (left or right) on the whistle, touch the ground on the whistle, run backwards on the whistle, etc.	By randomly blowing the whistle, this activity can become quite challenging. Encourage players to imitate catching a ball as they jump into the air and to land with bent knees to absorb the impact of the ground. The footwork rule can also be practised during this activity.
Fast feet	Divide players into pairs and let them face each other. One player must try to stand on her partner's toes. The other must try to avoid using fast-feet movements. Swap roles after 30 seconds.	Be sure that players don't crush each other's feet. Make small foot movements and make sure players don't cover a large distance.
Bib tag	Divide players into pairs. One partner tucks her bib in the back of her skirt/shorts. Using quick footwork, the other partner should try to take the bib. Once a player gets the bib, swap over.	Encourage players to use fast dodging movements, and to get a clean take of the bib while avoiding contact with the other player.
Touch and go	Divide players into pairs. Partners stand behind one another on the sideline. One follows the other as they slowly jog across the court. The back partner randomly taps the front partner, who then turns and tries to catch her as they sprint back to the sideline.	Encourage players to react quickly to the tap and turn quickly to catch their partners.
Relays	Two groups of players line up about 5 m apart (increase space as players improve). One player in front of the line passes the ball to the player in front of the other line. The passer then follows the ball and joins the back of the line at the opposite side.	The less players in each line, the better.
Passing down the court	In threes As in pairs, but as the player passes the ball, she follows the ball, runs around the back of the receiver and takes the place of the receiver, ready to receive the next pass. All normal netball rules apply.	This is a more advanced warm-up drill – especially when done in groups of three.
Numbers	Players huddle in a small circle with one ball. Each player has a number (usually from 1 - 7). The player with the ball holds the ball in the centre of the huddle about hip height. She calls a number and quickly releases the ball. The person whose number is called must try to catch the ball before it touches the ground.	Encourage quick calling and catching so as to speed up the player's reaction times. If players are battling to catch the ball, simply raise the level from which the ball is released.

Skills development and training

Skills development and training should be the focus of your practice sessions so that the basic skills of netball can be taught. The aim with young players is to spend about 70% of the time focusing on skills development and only 30% on competition. This way, training is fun and stimulating and not too competitive.

It is important that players don't have to wait in lines where they get bored – you should have a 'no queue' policy during your practices! Make it a priority to teach the skills on both the left and right side. Remember to get creative.

Netball skills

Skills for netball include individual skills and defensive and attacking skills.

Individual skills include:

- Catching
- Passing

Attacking and defensive skills include:

- Passing
- Dodging
- Changing direction
- Changing pace
- Marking opponents
- Shooting goals.

Each skill is explained in more detail in the next section.

Although it is beneficial for players to be versatile and to develop all these skills, the specific positions in netball determine which skills are most important for each position.

Individual skills

Skill/attribute	Position
Height	Goalkeeper and Goal Shooter
Speed	Goal Attack, Wing Attack, Centre, Wing Defence and Goal Defence
Accuracy	Goal Shooter and Goal Attack
Agility	Goal Attack, Wing Attack, Centre, Wing Defence and Goal Defence
Explosive vertical power	Goal Shooter, Goal Attack, Goal Defence and Goal Keeper
Anticipation	All
Balance and body control	All
Teamwork	All
Versatility	All
Communication	All
Calm and focused	All

Note: These attributes are not limited to specific positions, but are particularly important for the positions listed above.



Teaching correct technique



Catching the ball

Players need to learn to handle and control the ball. Ball handling is about sensitivity and feeling, and when successfully achieved gives the impression that the ball is attached to the player's fingers and can easily be brought under control when received. Encourage players to always catch with two hands in the early stages.

- Players need to be able to judge the speed and direction of the ball in flight. Encourage players to keep their eyes on the ball at all times
- Players should keep both arms outstretched towards the ball, with fingers spread wide and thumbs behind the ball
- When receiving the ball, the arms should bend at the elbows so as to absorb the force of the ball as it is received
- Often players need to jump to catch the ball. Teach players to absorb the force of the landing by bending their ankles, knees and hips as they make contact with the ground.

Figures 1a and b show a player catching the ball with her arms outstretched, fingers spread wide, thumbs back, and pulling the ball in towards her chest.

Figure 1a



Figure 1b



2

Passing the ball

In the game of netball different passing styles are used, but the shoulder pass is the most popular. The accuracy of the pass greatly influences another player's ability to catch the ball.

Shoulder pass

The shoulder pass is the most successful passing technique to use for long, accurate passes.

- Have a solid base of support, with feet shoulder-width apart and weight on the back leg. Stand side-on to the direction you are throwing. Make sure you have the opposite foot to your throwing arm, forward
- With fingers spread wide and the ball held on one hand, bring the ball behind the body at shoulder height
- Generate momentum through the shoulders, elbow, wrist and fingers as the arm extends in the desired direction of the pass
- Transfer body weight from back foot to front foot, with extra momentum generated from the rotation of hips and torso
- Maintain contact between hand and ball for as long as possible. Follow through after each pass with fingers pointing in the direction of the pass
- Keep eyes focused on where you want to pass the ball.

Figure 2a



Figure 2b





Chest pass

For shorter and quicker passes the chest pass is best:

- Hold the ball with both hands at chest height
- Spread fingers around the side of the ball and thumbs towards the back, with elbows bent and tucked in
- With a quick thrust, pass the ball forward by straightening the elbows, fingers and thumbs, giving a final push and follow-through after the ball is released
- As the ball is passed, the player should step forward into the pass, transferring weight onto the front foot. Foot and thumbs should point towards the ground
- Keep eyes focused on where you want to pass the ball.

Figure 3a



Figure 3b



Figure 3c



Overhead pass

A two-handed pass is often used to pass the ball quickly over the head of an opponent.

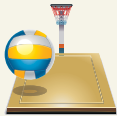
- With the ball in both hands, arms are extended above the head
- Fingers are spread each side of the ball and thumbs are placed behind the ball
- The ball is taken back, slightly behind the head
- Players should step forward and transfer their weight onto the front foot
- Release the ball with forearms, wrists and fingers directed towards the receiver
- Straighten elbows on the follow-through.



Lob pass

A lob pass is a one-handed pass often used to lift the ball over the arms of an opponent.

- The shoulder pass action is used when performing a lob pass. However, the point of release is different
- To gain height, extend the arm upwards, straighten the elbow, and release the ball with the wrist and finger tips still following through
- Players should transfer their body weight from back foot to front foot, and keep their eyes focused on where they want to pass the ball
- A good lob will have a high looping arc.



Footwork

Good footwork requires the player to stick to the footwork rule when receiving the ball. The footwork rule means that as you catch the ball you need to land on one foot or both feet at the same time. When turning to pass the ball, the landing foot must remain grounded.

When catching the ball, players will usually jump to get the ball and land on only one foot. Players should learn to land in a balanced position to minimise the chances of making a footwork infringement or getting injured.

- Describe and demonstrate the footwork rule in detail to all players
- To minimise the chances of making a footwork infringement, players must learn the following:
 - When landing on one foot, they should bring the second foot to the ground to give more support;
 - Cushion the force of the landing for more stability by absorbing the force through the toes, ankles, knees and hips;
 - Feet should be shoulder-width apart, which gives more stability;
 - Players should keep their head and eyes up to watch the ball.



4

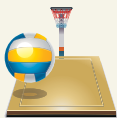
Goal shooting

Accurate goal shooting is a vital skill in netball as goals need to be scored to win a match. Accurate shooting is all about balance, rhythm and technique. It's about developing a sequence of actions that, with regular practise, become automatic and allow for more accuracy. Goal shooting is considered a 'closed' skill, ie it can be practised in isolation from other game skills. So the GS and GA should be encouraged to practise shooting outside of formal team practice sessions.

- Players stand with feet **shoulder-width apart** and in line (one foot should not be in front of the other) and body facing the goal post. This ensures balance before taking the shot
- Players should extend their shooting arm upwards, holding the ball above their head, with their elbow close to the ear and pointing towards the ring
- Rest the ball on shooting hand, on all five finger tips. Make sure fingers are evenly spread
- Place free hand gently to the side of the ball as support to help balance the ball
- The shooting action is a rhythmical movement starting with the bending of the knees and flowing up through the hips, shoulders, arm and wrist, and eventually the ball is released with a flick of the wrist and fingers
- Release the ball only when the arm is fully extended. The finger flick allows for a slight back spin of the ball, with fingers following the high arc of the ball towards the post (Figure 5c)
- Make sure players keep their heads up and eyes focused above the ring. Players should always aim for the same point to gain consistency.



Figures 5a, b, c, show the shooting position and flow of movement as the ball leaves the shooter's hand.



Attacking skills

The team possessing the ball is in attack. All seven players should adopt an attacking style to move through the court to the goal circle. When on attack, each player must try to make herself available or 'get free' so that she can receive a pass. It is important that players find space to move into so they can lose their immediate opponents.

The following are different attacking strategies:

Dodge

Dodging is a quick and sharp movement, usually from a stationary position, aimed at wrong-footing the opponent.

- Feet should be no more than shoulder-width apart. Keep knees bent in preparation for the quick movement and make sure the head is kept up
- Dodging then consists of making one or two steps away from the intended catching position.

Change of direction

Being able to change direction quickly will assist the player to create space and often wrong-foot their opponent.

- When changing direction, players should push off using their outside leg
- The dodge, pivot and a change of speed are useful skills used in changing direction.

Change of pace

Sometimes players can't beat their opponents using the dodge or direction change tactic. In such cases a change of speed is the best way to get free.

- This tactic can be used when in a full sprint and the opponent is managing to stick with you
- The player can decide to adopt a very abrupt change of speed (a sudden stop) leaving the opponent to continue running
- The player can also sprint, slow down and then suddenly sprint off again in a new direction outstripping the opponent who, not expecting a second increase in speed, has also slowed down.



6

Defending skills

When your team is not in possession of the ball, every team member switches to defence mode. The primary aim of defensive play is to place the attacking opponents under pressure. This forces them to make an error or otherwise create an opportunity for an interception.

There are two primary components in defensive play, the first is to prevent your opponent from getting the ball (marking) and the second is defending the player when she gets the ball.

In most instances, and especially at the beginning stages of learning netball, a 'one-on-one' defending tactic is advised. In this tactic each player defends her own opponent.

Marking your opponent

By marking your opponent you are standing so close to her that she is not a safe option for receiving a pass. This is a primary objective in defence, that is preventing your opponent from taking part in the game.

As a defender your body position should at all times allow you to see the flow of the game – the movement of ball and opponent. To achieve this, one option is to position yourself side-on to your opponent, either slightly in front or slightly behind, depending on which direction you would like to prevent movement.

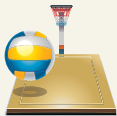
Figure 6 shows the Wing Defence in an effective defensive position marking the Wing Attack.

The defender needs to keep her feet shoulder-width apart, her head should be up at all times, and she must maintain extreme concentration to anticipate the opponent's movements.

When defending it is critical not to touch the opponent. The defender's arms must stay close to her body.

Figure 6





Defending the player with the ball

If the opponent gets the ball despite the player's attempt at marking, the defender must quickly move into position to defend the pass. The defender should take up the new position 0.9 m from the landing foot of the opponent and apply pressure over the ball in order to force a poor pass or shot.

- The player must quickly recover from marking and take up a position 0.9 m from the opponent's landing foot
- Once 0.9 m apart, the player should lift both arms up and forward and attempt to block the direction of the pass. It is important that defence is focused on the ball and not on obscuring the vision of the opposing player (Figure 7a)
- When defending a shot at goal, the defender, knowing the direction of the shot, should focus all attention on the trajectory of the ball towards the goal post. The defender generally needs good balance, shifting all weight onto the front foot, lifting the back foot off the ground, and reaching upwards and forwards in an attempt to block the trajectory of the ball (Figure 7b).

Figure 7a



Figure 7b



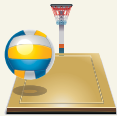
Activities

All the activities below can be used to help you design practices for your team. As you grow in experience and knowledge, you'll be able to modify some of these activities and make them more challenging and more exciting for players. Pay very close attention to the proper technique for each activity.

Activity summary

The table below shows all the activities explained in the following section, indicating which skills can be taught using each activity.

Drill letter and name	Catching	Passing and defending	Passing while on the move	Passing into space	Catching different types of passes	Anticipating the ball	Defending the pass	Teamwork
A. Player in the circle	✓	✓						
B. Short pass, long pass	✓		✓	✓				
C. Short pass, drop and over the head	✓		✓		✓			
D. Side to side	✓		✓	✓				
E. Three corners of a square	✓		✓	✓				
F. Defending the pass						✓	✓	
G. Two balls in a circle			✓					✓
H. 10 catches							✓	✓
I. Quick reactions	✓					✓		
J. Catch from the side and pass it forward	✓						✓	



Player in the circle

Set up

- Up to 10 players in a circle
- One player has the ball.

How to do the activity

- Players stand in a circle and hold hands
- Players let go and each take four steps backwards to create a wide open circle
- One player has the ball and can throw to any of the players in the circle
- On passing the ball she must follow her pass and defend the next pass made.

Coaching points

- Vary the type of pass
- Stick to three-second rule
- Stay 0.9 m from passer and defend the ball.

Progression

- Stand further apart
- A second ball can be added to the circle.





Short pass, long pass

Set up

- Two players with one ball.

How to do the activity

- Two players stand 2 m apart
- Player 1 passes a short quick chest pass directly to player 2 who catches and returns the ball
- Player 1 then passes a lob over the head of player 2 and into the space behind her
- Player 2 must keep her eye on the ball, turn body on an angle and run to get body under the ball in order to catch it. Player 2 passes a shoulder pass back to player 1 and quickly returns to her starting position. Player 2 alternates between receiving short-pass passes and high overhead passes
- Swap after 30 seconds.

Coaching points

- Only one player moves at a time while doing this drill, the other is the passer
- The catcher must move quickly backwards and again forwards to her starting position, always keeping her eyes on the ball
- The catcher must not pre-empt the pass and move too soon.



Short pass, drop and over the head

Set up

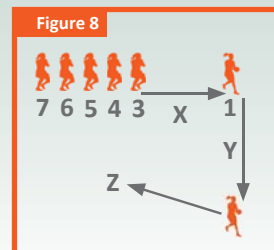
- Between six and eight players are ideal for this drill
- One ball for the group.

How to do the activity

- Players 1 - 7 stand as shown in the diagram
- Player 3 has the ball and passes using a shoulder pass to player 1
- Player 3 moves to the X and receives a short chest pass back, and then passes a chest pass to player 1
- Player 1, on receiving the ball, drops the ball at point Y
- Player 3 must run around the back of player 1 and catch the ball before it bounces twice
- She then passes the ball to player 2, again using a chest pass then runs around the back of player 2 to collect a lob pass at point Z
- She passes the ball back to player 4 at the front of the line who repeats the exercise.

Coaching points

- The more skilled the players, the faster the ball can be passed
- As players improve, the lob should be passed into the space where the player is moving
- Players must be sure not to make a footwork infringement when running to catch the ball
- Should players fumble with the ball, encourage them to complete the drill a little slower and to keep their eyes on the ball.





Side to side

Set up

- Two players with one ball.

How to do the activity

- Players stand 2 - 3 m apart
- One player is the passer and the other the catcher
- They start off facing each other, and the passer throws the ball to the left of the catcher
- The catcher must quickly move from left to right catching and passing the ball
- Swap after 30 seconds.

Coaching points

- Be sure that the passer is not passing the ball directly to the catcher but is actually passing into the space to the left or right
- Similarly, the catcher must not anticipate and move ahead of the ball being passed
- It is imperative that the catcher keeps her head up and eye on the ball at all times. Her footwork should consist of small, quick steps
- The catcher should practise landing on the outside leg every time
- Here is the best way to remember which is your outside leg: When you lead to the left, you land on the left leg. When you lead to the right, you land on the right leg.

Progression 1

- The passer passes at random between the two sides.

Progression 2

Set up

- Two passers, one catcher and two balls .

How to do the activity

- The two passers stand approximately 3 m apart, each with a ball
- The catcher moves from left to right, taking small steps and receiving the ball from each passer.



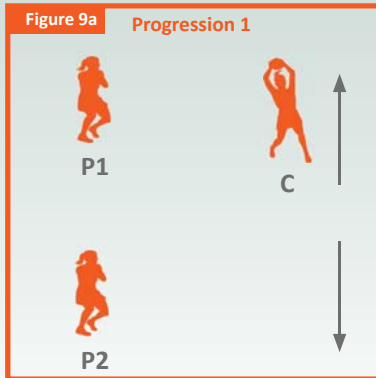
Progression 3

Set up

- Two passers, two catchers and two balls.

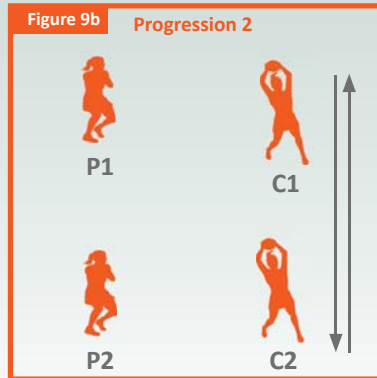
How to do the activity

- The two passers stand approximately 3 m apart, each with a ball
- The catchers move from left to right, avoiding each other while receiving the ball from each passer.



P= Passer

C= Catcher





Three corners of a square

Set up

- Three players with one ball.

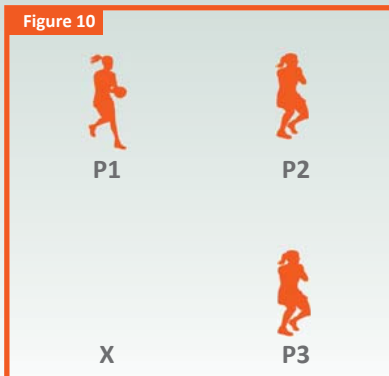
How to do the activity

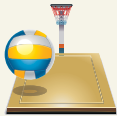
- Players form three sides of a square, with the fourth side open
- Player 1 has the ball and passes into the empty corner as player 3 moves to this space and catches the ball
- A new corner is left open into which player 2 now moves to get the ball from player 3, etc
- Players should perform this drill in both a clockwise and an anti-clockwise direction.

Coaching points

- Players should not move into the corner too early
- The activity is used to master the skill of accurately throwing into the space
- The more skilled the players, the greater the size of the square so that the long shoulder pass can be practised
- Very skilled players with strong throwing arms should practise using the centre third as the square
- Make sure players are not making a footwork infringement when catching and landing
- Players should land on their outside leg when catching the ball.

Figure 10





Defending the pass

Set up

- Four players with one ball.

How to do the activity

- Two players act as receivers
- The receivers are 3 m apart
- In between the receivers, also about 3 m away, is the passer
- The passer will pass from left to right to each receiver while the defender, who is standing between the passer and the receivers, attempts to intercept the pass.

Coaching points

- The passer should be passing quick, hard passes
- The defender must anticipate the pass and attempt to intercept it before the receiver gets the ball
- The defender should return to the middle after each pass
- Rotate positions after 30 seconds
- Encourage the defender to always attempt the intercept with two hands.

Progression 1

- The passer passes at random between the left and right receiver, even faking a pass at times.

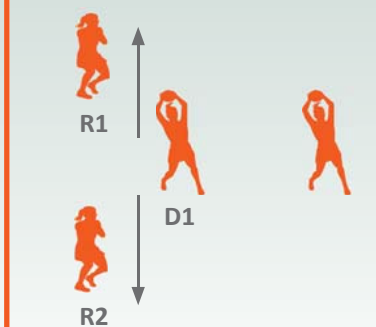
Progression 2

- The passer makes use of the chest pass, lob, overhead pass, bounce pass and shoulder pass.

Progression 3

- The defender starts slightly behind the two receivers
- The defender then runs across the path of the ball towards receiver 1 to intercept the pass
- The defender then moves around the back of receiver 1, always facing the passer, and back to the starting position
- This move is repeated around receiver 2 so the defender completes a figure of 8 movement around the receivers
- At no stage can the defender make contact with either of the receivers.

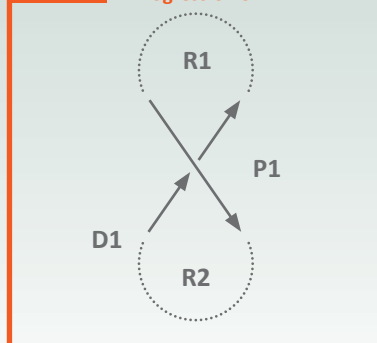
Figure 11a Progression 1 and 2



R1 = Receiver 1

R2 = Receiver 2

Figure 11b Progression 3



D1 = Defender 1

P1 = Passer 1



Two balls in a circle

Set up

- Seven players with two balls.

How to do the activity

- Six players form a 3 m circle
- Player 7 stands in the middle
- The middle player and player 1 (part of the circle) each have a ball
- Using quick passes, player 7 passes the ball to player 2 (next to player 1) and gets the ball from player 1
- Player 7 then passes to player 3 and receives from player 2
- Do drill fast until player 7 has completed a full circle.

Coaching points

- Player 7 should try to move through the circle of players as quickly as possible without losing accuracy
- She must learn to catch, pass and pivot in a very short time frame
- The passers must make eye contact as a means to communicate readiness.

Progression

- Add a third ball.



10 catches



Set up

- Eight to 12 players with one ball.

How to do the activity

- Two teams
- This is a mini game of passing in a third of the court

- The team with the ball is on attack and must successfully complete 10 consecutive passes
- The other team is on defence and attempts to intercept or to force an error
- All normal netball rules apply. The ball may not be dropped. Any infringement results in the opposite team getting the ball.

Coaching points

- Encourage players to create space in a confined area
- Players must work together to avoid clutter and getting in each other's way
- Defenders should stick to a one-on-one set-up
- The coach can instruct specific passes to be used during the drill.



Quick reactions

Set up

- Two players with one ball.

How to do the activity

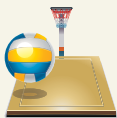
- Player 1 has the ball and is the passer
- Player 1 is stationary throughout the drill
- Player 2 stands 2 m away but facing away from player 1
- Player 1 calls either left or right and passes the ball in that direction
- Player 2 rapidly spins around to the left or right and attempts to catch the ball.

Coaching points

- This skill must be well timed
- The ball should not be passed too early and the catcher should not turn too quickly
- Beginner players should attempt this skill at a slower speed with the ball rolling on the ground rather than being passed.

Progression

- The passer should use different passes at different heights.



Catch from the side and pass it forward (crossovers)

Set up

- Eight or more players and two balls.

How to do the activity

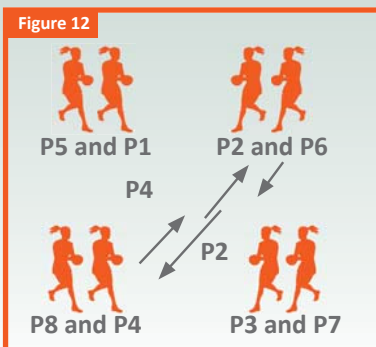
- Players form a square with two players standing at each corner
- It is ideal to do this drill in the centre third, using the centre circle as the cross-over point
- Players 1 and 3 each have a ball
- Players 2 and 4 run towards the centre circle and get the ball from their left
- On getting the ball they pass it forward to the players waiting on the opposite corner (players 6 and 8)
- Players 1 and 3 then begin to run towards the centre circle, get the ball on the left from players 6 and 8 and pass forward to players 5 and 7.

Coaching points

- This drill requires high levels of concentration
- Players must be able to get a ball on the move from one direction and pass it in another direction without making any footwork or handling errors
- As players progress, this drill should be done with more speed
- Players can progress to get the ball on the right, ie change the direction of the drill.



Figure 12



The Warm-down

It is tempting to finish your training sessions with a short match. However, a good way to wrap up the session is to do a gentle activity such as a slow jog leading to a walking pace, as well as to stretch the major muscle groups used during activity. Also reinforce the key skills and aspects of the session, and give homework so learners can practise at home. This can consist of developing one of the skills you've taught them that day, such as passing or shooting skills. For more on the warm-down please see the General coaching manual.

Putting it together

To put the practice session together we gave a number of examples of drills and activities you could choose from. These are guidelines only and you should feel free to adapt the drills and create new ones depending on your players.

Evaluation

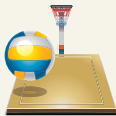
One of the most important things you will naturally learn to do is evaluate your players. At every practice session you will watch and observe, looking for players who are learning the skills and those who are battling with certain concepts.

For you to be a successful coach it is absolutely vital that you constantly notice which of the players are battling with skills so that you can address them early. The typical problems encountered will be difficulty in executing the key components of a skill and a tendency to fall back into bad habits.

The checklist on the next page is a summary of some of the key coaching points that were explained in detail in the skills and activities sections earlier. We recommend that you pay very close attention to all those skill descriptions, but use this checklist as a quick evaluation for individual players.

Checklist

Question	Yes	No
Level 1: Is the player consistently able to catch the ball using both hands without fumbling or dropping the ball?		
Level 2: Is the player able to successfully catch the ball with only one hand, especially when the pass has not been that accurate?		
Level 1: Is the player able to execute an accurate shoulder pass, chest pass, lob and overhead pass with and without defence?		
Level 2: Is the player able to execute the different passes with defence in front of her?		
Level 3: Is the player able to make the correct decision when it comes to the type of pass for the specific situation?		
Level 4: Is the player successfully passing the ball into an open space, rather than directly to the person?		



Question	Yes	No
Level 1: Has the player understood and mastered the footwork rule? Is she able to catch and pass the ball without making a footwork infringement?		
Level 2: Has the defensive player effectively mastered the ability to defend her opponent one-on-one, minimising the opponent's ability to get the ball?		
Level 3: Is the defensive player quick to take her 0.9 m defensive position and effectively defend the next pass?		
Level 4: Are the Goal Shooter and Goal Attack accurate in their attempts to shoot at goal?		

Name	Question	Yes	No
Catching the ball	<p>It is important to actually look at the way in which players catch the ball to try to correct mistakes being made. Ask:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the fingers doing? Are the players' fingers spread wide and thumbs behind the ball? • What are the arms doing? Are the arms outstretched in anticipation of receiving the ball? • As the ball is received, do the arms bend to absorb the impact of the ball? • What are the player's eyes focused on? Are the players keeping their eyes on the ball until it is safely in their hands? 		
Shoulder pass	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the player balanced and standing side-on when executing the shoulder pass? • How and where is the player holding the ball? Are her fingers still widely spread with the ball on one hand behind her dominant side? • Can you see that the player's weight is transferred from her back foot to the front foot, and does she generate momentum through her hips as she extends her arm to pass the ball? • Does the player follow through on her pass? • Does the player keep her eyes focused on where she wants to pass the ball? • Can the player throw with both left and right hands? 		
Chest pass	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the ball being held with both hands, fingers spread and thumbs pointing behind the ball? • Is power being generated from the elbows, hands and fingers when passing the ball? • Is a quick straight pass being generated? 		
Overhead pass	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the ball being held above the head with both hands? • Are the fingers spread wide and the thumbs behind the ball? • Are the elbows bent, and do the wrists drop in preparation to make the pass? • Do the elbows, wrists and fingers extend in unison to generate momentum for the pass? 		

Name	Question	Yes	No
Lob pass	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the player balanced and standing side-on when executing the lob? Is the arm extended upwards and the elbow straight? Do the wrist and fingertips follow through when releasing the ball? Does body weight transfer from back foot to front foot and are eyes focused on where the pass is going? Does the pass have a high looping arc? 		
Footwork	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the player sticking to the footwork rule? If not: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the player find her balance quickly after landing on one foot, ie bring her second foot to the ground? Are her feet too close or too far apart? Is the player absorbing the impact of her landing by bending her ankles, knees and hips? Where are the player's eyes focused? 		
Goal shooting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the shooter comfortable and balanced in preparation for the shot? Are the player's feet shoulder-width apart and is the body facing the goal post? Is the player holding the ball correctly? Is the ball comfortably resting on all finger tips? Often if players are shooting off centre, too much power is coming from the ring and little finger rather than the index and middle fingers. Is the shooter adopting a rhythmical movement initiated in the knees and ending with the finger tips? Is the player consistently focused on only one point on the ring when shooting? 		
Dodge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are the player's feet shoulder-width apart? If too close or too far the player will not successfully be able to dodge and get away from the opponent. Is the player taking one or two steps then pushing off on the outside leg in the desired direction? 		
Change of direction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the player use a variety of movements when changing direction, including dodging, pivoting and using a change of speed? Does the player push off using the outside leg when changing direction? 		
Defending skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the defender standing in such a way that she can see both her opponent and the ball? Is the defender looking up and in a ready position to react to any attacking movement, ie knees slightly bent? 		
Marking your opponent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the player quickly recovering and positioning herself at least 0.9 m from her opponent? Does the player quickly lift her arms upwards and forwards, obscuring an easy pass for the opponent? When defending a shot at goal, is the defender getting well positioned and able to balance for three seconds on one foot while extending one, or both arms, upwards and forwards? 		



Appendix: Rules, positions and equipment

General fitness for netball

A netball game consists of four quarters, each lasting 15 minutes. For children, games are usually reduced to two halves, each lasting 15 or 20 minutes. Netball is an interval-type game that involves short bursts of high-intensity sprinting, jumping and changes of direction, combined with slightly longer rest periods.

Starting the game

The game is started with a toss of the coin with the captains selecting either first centre pass or direction of play. The centre pass is taken by the Centre, standing in the centre circle.

The general position of each player at the start of the game and each centre pass after this is shown in Figure 13 on page 35. On the umpire's whistle the Centre passes the ball to a team mate who must catch/touch the ball in the centre third.

The aim is to pass the ball to the Goal Attack or Goal Shooter, in the goal circle, who is responsible for shooting goals.

The opposing team aims to intercept the ball and pass it towards the goal circle on the opposite end of the court. After each goal, play is restarted with a centre pass taken alternately throughout the game by the two centres.

Out of court

The ball is considered out of court if it touches the ground outside the court, or is held or touched by anyone making ground contact outside the court. In both cases the team that touched the ball last loses possession. Play is resumed when a throw-in is taken by the opposing team where the ball crossed the line.

Footwork

On receiving the ball, the player can't lift and again put down her 'landing foot' before passing the ball. The 'landing foot' is the first grounded foot after jumping to get the ball. A footwork infringement results in a free pass being awarded to the opposing team and happens when the:

- Landing foot is lifted and again grounded before the ball is passed
- Player double hops on the same foot
- Player does not keep her landing foot stationary.



The player can:

- Pivot on her landing foot
- Lift the landing foot (as long as she passes the ball before putting her foot back on the ground. This technique is not advised for beginner players).

If the player lands on both feet when catching the ball, she can choose any foot as her landing foot.

Free passes are awarded in the following cases:

Held ball (three-second rule)

The player with the ball must pass the ball or take a shot at goal within three seconds. If she holds the ball for longer, a free pass is awarded to the opposing team.

Short pass

When passing the ball, there must be room for a third person to move between the hands of the thrower and catcher.

Playing the ball

If the player has control over the ball and then loses control, she can't pick it up again and continue playing.

Over a third

The ball must be caught or at least touched by a player in each third of the court.

The player must be wholly in the third or at least have her landing foot in the third.

The ball must be caught or touched in the centre third when taking a centre pass.

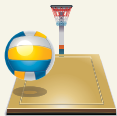
Passing the ball over a third results in a free pass being awarded. The opposing team must take the free pass in the third where the infringement took place.

Offside

No player, with or without the ball, can step outside their playing zones.

The playing area

The netball court is 30.5 m long and 15.25 m wide and is divided by transverse lines into three equal thirds (Figure 13). There are five playing zones that influence where players are allowed.



Positions

Netball is played between two teams, each consisting of seven players. Each of the seven players has a very specific position, and the court is divided into designated playing zones for each position. The rules of the game do not allow any single player access to the entire court.

Although each position is clearly defined as either attack or defence, each player must be able to perform both functions depending on which team has the ball. If the opposition team has the ball, all players must defend their immediate opponents in an attempt to win the ball back. If the home team has the ball, all players adjust their playing styles to an attacking game in an attempt to get the ball to the goal circle and score.

The seven positions in netball

- **Goal Shooter (GS)**
Responsible for work in the goal circle and shooting and scoring goals
- **Goal Attack (GA)**
Works with the Wing Attack and Centre to get the ball to the Goal Shooter
- **Wing Attack (WA)**
Works with the Centre around the circle edge to feed the ball to either the Goal Shooter or Goal Attack
- **Centre (C)**
The Centre works with the Wing Attack to feed the ball to either the Goal Shooter or Goal Attack. The Centre will also work with the Wing Defence to help defend the opposition goal circle
- **Wing Defence (WD)**
This player defends her immediate opponent and tries to prevent her from feeding the ball to the opposition
- **Goal Defence (GD)**
Also a defending position, in which the player defends her immediate opponent, the GA, and tries to limit her goal-shooting opportunities. She also works with the Goal Keeper in the goal circle
- **Goal Keeper (GK)**
Defends her immediate opponent, the GS, and tries to prevent her from shooting goals. She is assisted by the GD.



Figure 13



Toss-up

In certain situations there can be a simultaneous infringement of the rules such as simultaneous possession, simultaneous offsides or even simultaneous contact between two opposing players. In these instances a toss-up is necessary.

When taking a toss-up the two players involved in the simultaneous infringement stand facing each other approximately 0.9 m apart with their hands by their sides. The umpire then holds the ball midway between the two players, just below shoulder height of the shortest player (see Figure 14a). The umpire holds the ball momentarily and then flicks it no more than 60 cm vertically upwards while blowing the whistle at the same time (Figure 14b). Both players attempt to catch or tap the ball. Fellow players can't be within 0.9 m of the toss-up.



Obstruction with the ball

A player trying to defend an opponent with the ball must at all times be a minimum of 0.9 m (as measured on the ground) from the opponent's landing foot. Should the opponent lift her landing foot, the minimum 0.9 m is measured from the place on the ground where the foot was first grounded. At all times the defending action should be aimed at the ball rather than the players, ie watching the ball rather than the player. A defender can defend her opponent from the front, side or back. She may not defend from outside the court. Should obstruction occur, a penalty pass or shot is awarded.

Figure 14a



Figure 14b



Contact

Players without the ball are constantly moving to create an opportunity to get the ball and this increases their chances of making contact. Regardless of whether it's deliberate or accidental, any contact that interferes with an opponent's ability to play, is penalised.

It is also considered contact if a player deliberately moves into the path of a player who is already moving. The natural landing area of a player who has jumped and is airborne must be kept clear.

The ball is considered part of the player when held. So any contact with the ball is penalised as contact, ie a penalty pass or shot is awarded. A player can't bat the ball out of the hands of her opponent or touch the ball held by the opponent.

Equipment

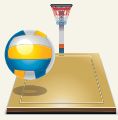
Ball sizes

- A universally accepted size is 5.

Your coaching sessions will also need:

- A whistle
- Bibs (two sets in two colours with positions labelled on front and back)
- First-aid kit
- Clipboard.

Discovery has endeavoured to ensure that all the information contained in this manual is accurate and based on credible clinical and scientific research. Discovery cannot however, be held responsible for any injury, loss or damages that may result from reliance on the information, and by utilising the information you specifically waive any claim you may have against Discovery in this regard. You are advised that each individual has their own unique clinical make-up and while the lesson plans were designed with all individuals in mind, some may respond differently to others. You are therefore advised to take due caution when participating in any of the activities recommended.



Notes

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

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