Netball Smart

for Coaches

NETBALL NEW ZEALAND
Poitarawhiti Aotearoa

ACC
PREVENTION. CARE. RECOVERY.
Te Kaporeihana Āwhina Hunga Whara

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Rārangi kōrero

INTRODUCTION

Whakatūwheratanga

This NetballSmart resource has been developed for netball coaches to provide important information for enhancing player performance and preventing injuries. The principles outlined should be taught to players and integrated into all practices and games.

NetballSmart is based on the ACC SportSmart 10-point action plan for sports injury prevention.

This resource contains information on each of these points in relation to netball.

Further information can be found on **www.netballsmart.co.nz**

Section One:

PLAYER PROFILING

Whakaaturanga Kaitākaro

(PLAYER SCREENING)

As a coach, player profiling enables you to assess your players prior to the season to identify:

- Any past or current injuries or health conditions that might increase the risk of player injury
- If your players have the necessary level of fitness for the grade they are participating in
- If there are any areas of weakness that specifically need to be addressed with a physical conditioning programme.

Depending on the level of the netball player, the following components may be included in the physical assessment: flexibility, strength, balance, core stability, speed, aerobic and anaerobic endurance and muscle balance.

Follow-up player profiling can be used to assess improvements and progress in your players throughout the season. It can also be used to assess if a player is fit to return following an injury.

To download netball player profiling forms visit **www.netballsmart.co.nz**

Section Two:

WARM-UP, COOL-DOWN AND RECOVERY

Whakamahana, whakamātao, whaioranga

WARM-UP

Whakamahana

Warming up prepares the body for netball. It increases blood supply to the heart and muscles, increases muscle temperature, makes the muscles more pliable and prepares the body for physical activity.

A well structured warm-up not only prepares the player for the game but helps with conditioning and technique. It helps to improve performance and reduce the risk of injury.

The warm-up should take about 20 minutes and be done before every game and practice.

It is important for coaches to lead a well structured warm-up until players are familiar enough with the regime to be able to undertake the warm-up independently.

The warm-up should include:

- Aerobic exercise
- Static stretching
- Dynamic stretching
- Anaerobic exercise
- Netball specific exercises.

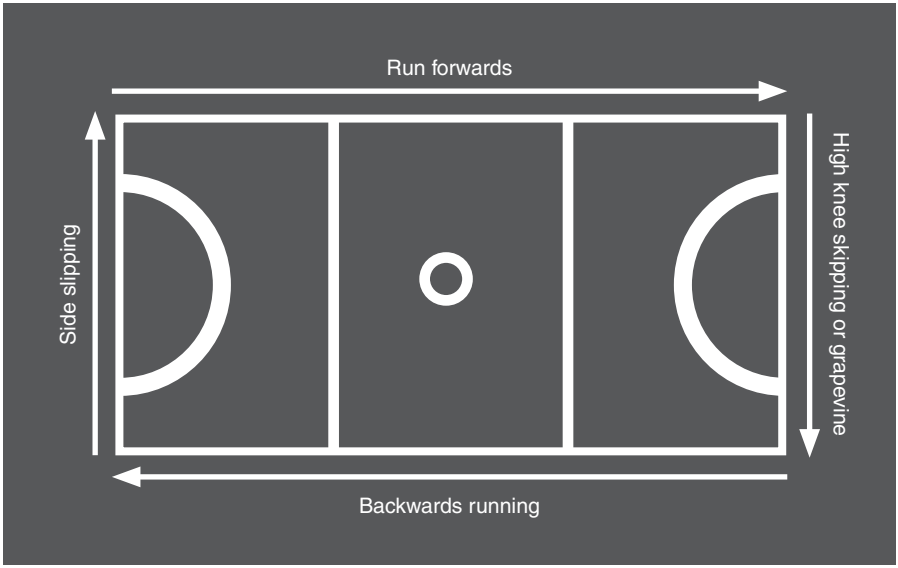
1. AEROBIC EXERCISE
Haukori tinana

This part of the warm-up should last at least ten minutes.
Begin slowly and at low intensity, gradually building up.
This will raise the body temperature so that the player is sweating slightly.

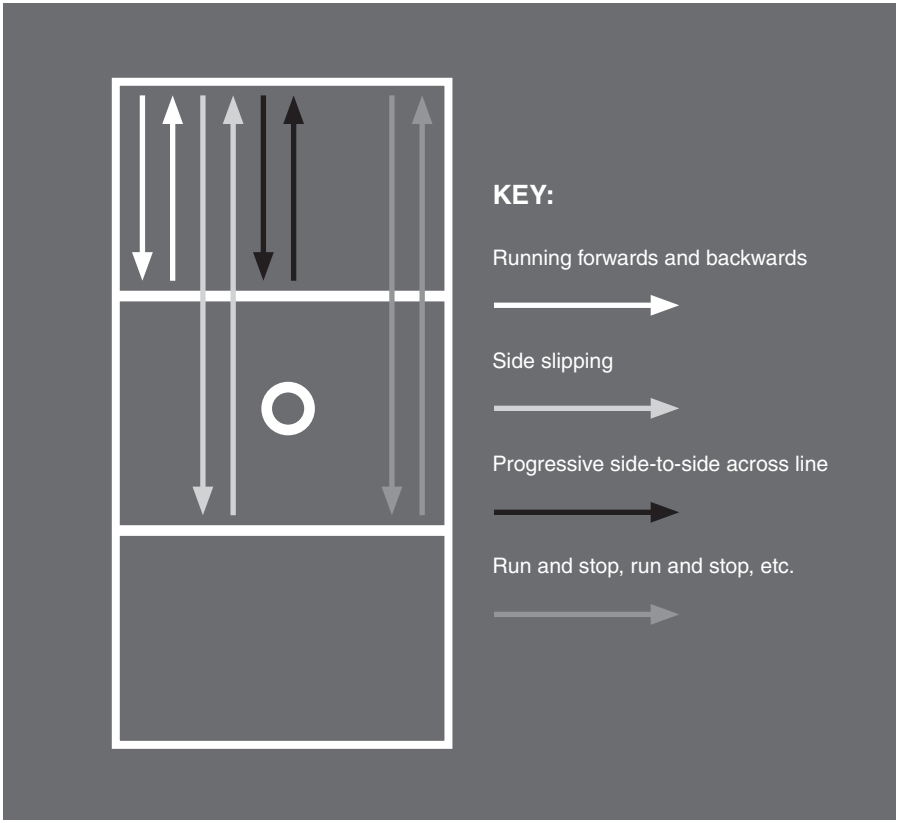
OPTION A

- Light jogging building up intensity progressively.
- Running in varying directions: forward/backwards/sideways/diagonal.
- This can be done anywhere, a netball court is not necessary (e.g. on a grassed area).

OPTION B



OPTION C



OPTION D

Often lack of space is an issue for the aerobic warm-up.

Try this option:

- Jog on the spot for one minute (variation: include high knees and fast feet)
- Skip on the spot for one minute
- Side to side agility.
- Low double foot jumps:
  - Forwards/backwards
  - Side to side.

2. STATIC STRETCHING
Ka tū ka hōkari

Static stretching of the major muscle groups that are used during a game of netball will help to increase muscle flexibility and reduce muscular stiffness and post-exercise soreness. Static stretching is most beneficial during the cool-down but can also be used in the warm-up.

- Stretching needs to be slow and gentle.
- Stretch to a point of tension, not pain.
- Hold each stretch for at least 20 - 30 seconds.
- Breathe normally.
- Static means stationary - DO NOT allow bouncing up and down or stretching rapidly.
- Stretch two to three times on each side if the muscle is very tight.

CALF STRETCHES

KEY POINTS

Calf muscles are commonly tight in netball players due to the amount of jumping and landing in the game of netball.

Calf tightness can be associated with a number of injuries:

- Ankle injuries
- Achilles/calf injuries
- Shin pain
- Stress fractures.

There are two calf stretches to do:

1 Long calf stretch (straight leg)
2 Short calf stretch (bent knee)

LONG CALF STRETCH

1 Place hands on wall, with one leg to rear.
2 Keep rear leg locked straight and foot flat.
3 Turn rear foot slightly inwards.
4 Bend front leg, taking stretch through rear calf.

SHORT CALF STRETCH

1 Place hands on wall taking weight through rear leg.
2 Turn rear foot slightly inwards and keep heel flat.
3 Bend rear knee forward over rear foot.

QUADRICEPS STRETCH

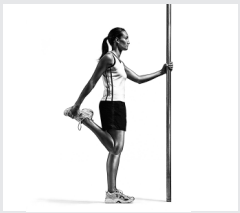
KEY POINTS

Tight quadriceps can affect the knee. Encourage your players to use either one of these stretches. Knee pain/injury can be related to tight quadriceps.

OPTION 1 ▶

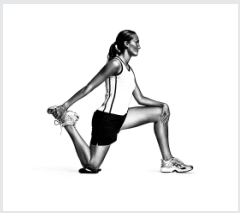
1 Pull heel towards buttock.
2 Keep back straight.
3 Keep knees together and in line.

To promote better balance try not to use the post/wall.



OPTION 2 ▶

1 Kneel on sweatshirt.
2 Pull heel to bottom and push pelvis forward.
3 Keep pelvis facing straight ahead.
4 Keep back straight and in neutral position.



HAMSTRING STRETCH

KEY POINTS

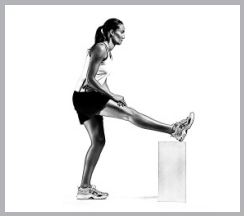
If tight, hamstring muscles (back of thigh) affect the ability to get low to the ball. Tightness also has a negative effect on the lower back. There are a number of variations of hamstring stretches. Some players will be very tight in their hamstrings and need to stretch regularly.

OPTION 1 ▶

1 Kneel on sweatshirt.
2 Keep back straight.
3 Ensure hips are facing forward.
4 Lean forwards towards feet while keeping back straight.

OPTION 2 ▶

1 Place foot on a raised surface.
2 Stand with supporting foot turned in slightly.
3 Bend supporting knee.
4 Keep back straight.



HIP FLEXOR STRETCH

KEY POINTS

Flexibility of hip flexors (at the front of the hip) is important. If tight they can affect the lower back.

1 Kneel on ground with front knee at 90 degrees.
2 With back straight, tilt the pelvis back by tucking abdomen up and in and squeezing buttocks.
3 Keep head up.

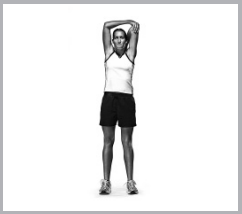
CHEST AND SHOULDER STRETCHES

KEY POINTS

Chest and shoulder flexibility is important in netball, especially for passing and shooting. Encourage your players to stretch using either/both of these options.

TRICEPS/SHOULDER ▶

1 Place hand between shoulder blades.
2 Place opposite hand on elbow.
3 Pull elbow towards midline with help of opposite hand.
4 Keep trunk strong and do not arch back.
5 Keep tummy muscles pulled in.



CHEST ▶

1 Stand side-on to wall/post with one leg forward.
2 Place forearm on wall/post with shoulder slightly above 90 degrees.
3 Tummy muscles pulled in.
4 Turn upper body away from wall/post.

3. DYNAMIC STRETCHING
Hōkari mātātoa

The movements in dynamic stretching prepare the body for the movements performed during a netball game. They also help to maintain the increase in body temperature achieved during the aerobic part of the warm-up.

Dynamic stretches are smooth, controlled movements where muscles are moved through a full range of motion (ROM). The position is not maintained and the range of motion is gradually increased with each repetition.

As a coach, ensure that players have good core stability when doing dynamic stretching activities and the trunk is strong and not swaying around. Refer to page 37 for more information on core stability.

SQUATTING

KEY POINTS

Squatting is a vital movement to master. It is the fundamental movement pattern for landing and jumping. Practising squatting should occur during dynamic stretching but also be part of training and conditioning exercises.

The squatting movement must occur in hip joints as well as knee joints.

1 Trunk upright and in the neutral position. Look up.
2 Bend at hips and knees and stick bottom out.
3 Imagine you are sitting on a chair.
4 Feet shoulder width apart.
5 Knees in line with toes.
6 Knees not in front of toes.
7 Heels on ground.

Do ten squats.

LUNGING

KEY POINTS

Lunging is an important movement to master as it mimics the stopping action during netball.

1 Trunk upright and in the neutral position.
2 Ensure feet are shoulder width apart.
3 Body should be controlled (no swaying of the trunk).
4 Bend in hips and knees.
5 Knee in line with toes.
6 Knee not in front of toes.
7 Heel on ground.
8 Front knee bent up to 90 degrees (no greater - less if necessary for control).

Do five each leg moving from the baseline towards the transverse line.

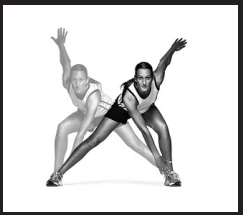
BENT OVER UPPER BODY ROTATION AND STRETCH UP

KEY POINTS

This is a generalised body stretch that takes the legs and arms through a large range of motion.

1 Keep back straight throughout.
2 Bend knee as the weight is transferred over.
3 Reach with arm to opposite foot.
4 Ensure one knee is always bent.

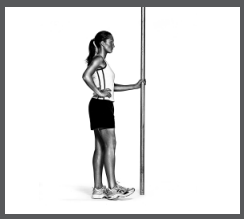
Do five each side.

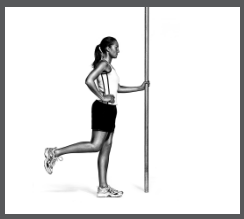


1 Reach up high.
2 Ensure one knee is always bent.
3 Keep back straight.
4 Pull in abdominals.

Do five each side.

HAMSTRING SWINGS

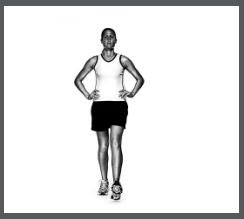


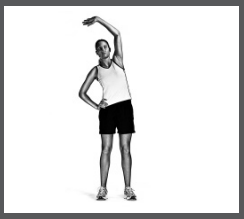


1 Hold post/wall.
2 Swing leg out, straight out in front.
3 Keep back straight.
4 Swing leg back to mid-line.
5 Bend knee and swing behind.
6 Keep back straight.
7 The swing movement should not be rushed. Speed will prevent control.

Do ten each leg.

WALK, WALK AND STRETCH





1 Walk four steps and stretch up and out to the right.
2 Keep heels on the ground.
3 Repeat the process and stretch to the left.

Do five stretches each side.

4. ANAEROBIC EXERCISE
Haukori tinana hā ora-kore

The anaerobic part of the warm-up should last at least 5 minutes and is a progression to high intensity activity. It involves a combination of sprints and recovery to prepare the anaerobic energy systems for netball.

At the end of this part of the warm-up, players should be breathing more heavily.

OPTION A

Court shuttles:

- Sprinting court thirds and returning at a slow jog
- Sprint widths of the court and jog lengths
- Sprint lengths of the court and jog widths.

OPTION B

Use skipping ropes and skip at an increased speed on the spot.

OPTION C

Triangle cone sprints. Place cones in a large triangle. Sprint and jog alternate edges of the triangle.

5. NETBALL-SPECIFIC EXERCISES
Kori tinana mō te poi tarawhiti

Players' bodies need to be prepared for a lot of sudden, sharp and stop-start movements during the game. Players will be jumping and landing often and landing safely is important for improving performance and reducing the risk of injury.

Netball-specific exercises involve activities such as jumping/landing/ agility/stopping as well as ball skills. Make sure these are part of the warm-up before every game and practice and ensure that good technique is used.

Section Four of this resource provides detail on basic techniques, skills and movements that can be incorporated as part of the warm-up before every game and practice.

Section Three:

COOL-DOWN AND RECOVERY

Whakamātao hei whaioranga

Cool-down and recovery are very important for preparing the body for the next game/training and to assist in preventing injury.

Cool-down and recovery involves:

- Light aerobic exercise
- Hydration
- Static stretching
- Nutrition
- Treating any injuries.

Cool-down and recovery is not complete until all five recovery processes have been completed. They are all equally important.

Set up a routine with your team that is followed at every training/game. Explain why cool-down is important and that it involves all five components.

Within a tournament environment, when the team plays multiple games in a day or day after day, cool-down and recovery and nutrition are vital.

1. LIGHT AEROBIC EXERCISE

Kori tinana ngāwari

Light aerobic activity helps to assist the body in removing lactic acid (waste product produced in the muscles during exercise), which aids recovery.

Light aerobic exercise should start shortly after the final whistle.

Slowly jog three to four lengths of the court and then continue walking on the court for up to five minutes.

If you have to leave the courts, as the next game is to begin, then walk to the pavilion or to a central space that can be used as part of the five-minute light aerobic exercise.

2. HYDRATION
Me inu wai

As soon as cool-down starts, hydration should begin. Encourage players to drink while cooling down. Re-hydrating is important to replace fluids that have been lost during the game/training.

Refer to Section Seven for more information on hydration.

3. STATIC STRETCHING
Ka tū ka hōkari

Static stretching after a game of netball is important to increase flexibility and reduce muscle stiffness and post exercise soreness.

Refer to page 10 for further information on static stretching.

4. NUTRITION
Kai tōtika

It is important to eat appropriate food after exercise to replace energy and assist with muscle repair.

Restoration of muscle energy stores is important after exercise. The body readily absorbs energy in the first one to two hours after activity. If a player is to play another game that day the first 30 minutes are vital for restoration or energy levels.

During static stretching players can start eating recovery food.

Refer to Section Seven for more information on nutrition

5. TREATING ANY INJURIES
Whakamaimoa whara

Ensuring that players receive appropriate treatment for any injuries they may have sustained is an important part of recovery.

Refer to Section Ten for detailed information on injury management

Section Three:

PHYSICAL CONDITIONING

Whakaora i te tinana

Players that are in good physical condition will benefit from:

- Reduced fatigue
- Reduced rate of injury
- Enhanced performance

As a coach, you should provide guidance for your players on appropriate training activities outside of netball coaching sessions.

Training activities must be appropriate to a player's age, ability and level of play.

Careful consideration needs to be given to children and adolescents as their bodies are still developing.

A useful resource is the NetballSmart website **www.netballsmart.co.nz** . This enables players to develop specifically tailored physical conditioning programmes for the pre-season, in-season and off-season.

OVER-TRAINING

Netball is a physically demanding sport. Over-training and over-performing can be a concern in netball players. Players and coaches need to be aware of the potential for over-training and be aware of the signs and symptoms associated with it.

Over-training occurs when netball players push their bodies too hard and train without adequate rest and recovery.

Over-performing is where netball players over commit themselves during the netball season. This could occur through players playing at several different levels of netball at one time or being involved in multiple sports.

Young players in particular may often be involved in a range of sports and teams - Basketball, Rugby, Touch, Volleyball and more than one Netball team (ie – school, club, representative). Over-performing will lead to over-training and the symptoms that occur with this.

Too much training / exercise + too little rest = over-training

The start of the season is a good time to identify which players may be at risk of over-training due to their level of sporting commitments. Start to think about how you can manage the amount of training they are doing so that they perform at their best.

Players should be having at least one complete rest day per week doing no exercise (often the day before game day).
Try to avoid two or three hard training days in a row as this will lead to fatigue, stress injuries and ultimately over-training.
Ensure that hard training days are mixed up with moderate or easy sessions, such as a light jog/cycle, pool session, pilates or yoga.

As the season progresses coaches may notice that players are struggling to cope with the demands, both physical and mental, of training.

COMMON SYMPTOMS OF OVER-TRAINING

- Decrease in training capacity / intensity
- Moody, easily irritated
- Decline in physical performance
- Decreased or disturbed sleep
- Loss of competitive desire and enthusiasm
- Decreased appetite
- Increased incidence of injuries, particularly stress injuries (shin splints, joint pain)
- Pain and aches in muscles and joints
- Washed-out feeling, tired, drained, lack of energy, including headaches
- Significantly decreased or increased resting heart rate or blood pressure.
- Inability to relax, twitchy, fidgety
- Lowered resistance to common illnesses; colds, sore throat, etc.

HOW TO MANAGE OVER-TRAINING

As a coach, if you think that a player may be overtraining, you should take steps to address the situation. Review the amount of training they are doing taking into account other activities that they are involved in.

Managing a player's training load can be difficult and coaches may have limited control over this. Making modifications to training may require speaking to players, so player's parents and other coaches can reach an amicable arrangement.

Possible options for reducing training load may include the player reducing the number of training days or selectively reducing intensity at training i.e. walking through moves rather than doing the impact part of the season.

In some cases of overtraining where the symptoms are more severe, players should seek advice from their doctor. It may be appropriate for them to take some time off and rest from all sports.

Regular massage can be a useful treatment in those who undertake a lot of physical activity to assist with relieving stiffness and post exercise soreness

A player's dietary requirements will be affected by the amount of training they are undertaking. Adequate nutrition and hydration is essential to provide energy for physical activity and assist with recovery. A doctor should be able to identify whether a player has any dietary issues that need to be addressed and provide them with guidance in this area (or refer them onto a nutritionist if necessary).

Section Four:

TECHNIQUE AND SKILLS

Ngā whakahaere me ngā pūkenga

Having good techniques for netball specific skills is essential to prevent injury and enhance performance on the court.

This section provides advice on correct technique for key skills and examples of activities to develop these skills.

1. PASSING – Te maka

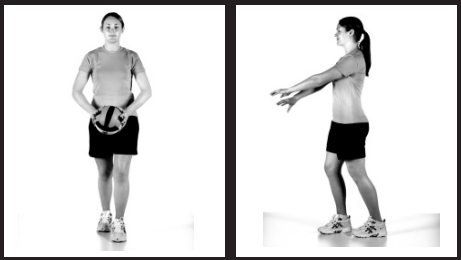
CORRECT TECHNIQUE ▶

TEACHING POINTS

1. Hold the ball with the hands in a "W" shape.
2. Hands behind the ball.
3. Ball at chest height.
4. Step forward into the pass.
5. Follow-through in direction of pass.
6. As you step forward ensure your feet are shoulder width apart.

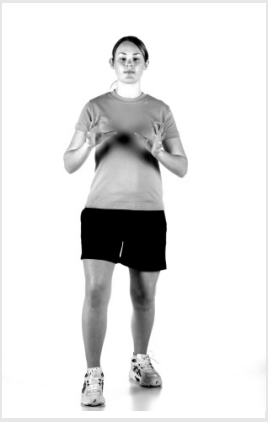
COMMON FAULTS ▶

1. Base too narrow.
2. Ball not at chest height.
3. Poor follow-through of arms.



2. CATCHING – Te hopu

CORRECT TECHNIQUE ▶

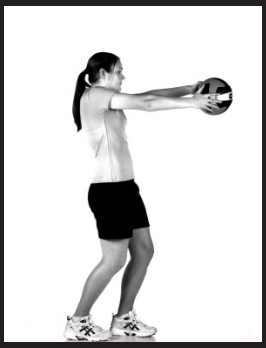


TEACHING POINTS

1. Step forward and reach with hands to receive the pass.
2. Ensure landing is controlled and balanced. Allow time to gain balance.
3. Ensure feet are shoulder width apart.
4. Soft fingers and hands.
5. Spread fingers wide.
6. Bend arms as receiving the ball to lessen impact.
7. Bring ball back to chest ready for return pass.

COMMON FAULTS ▶

1. Poor landing position.
2. Base too narrow.
3. Not stepping into pass.
4. Arms too rigid.
5. Not looking at ball.



3. SHOOTING – Te kuru

CORRECT TECHNIQUE ▼

TEACHING POINTS

1 Feet shoulder width apart for balance.
2 Bend knees.
3 Bend elbows and lower ball to head.
4 Aim above the hoop.
5 During shooting motion straighten knees and extend up through the body.
6 Straighten elbows to shoot ball towards goal.
7 Follow-through with hand/wrist.



COMMON FAULTS ▶

1 Ball dropped behind head.
2 No bending of knees.
3 Shooting action involves arms only.
4 No follow-through with arms.
5 Poor balance because weight is too far forward onto toes.

ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT

1 Practise squatting – the player must be able to squat and use legs as part of the shooting action. Do 10 – 20 squats. Ensure technique is correct.

2 In shooting position, practise bending elbows and lowering ball to head. Do 10 – 20 times. Ensure technique is correct.

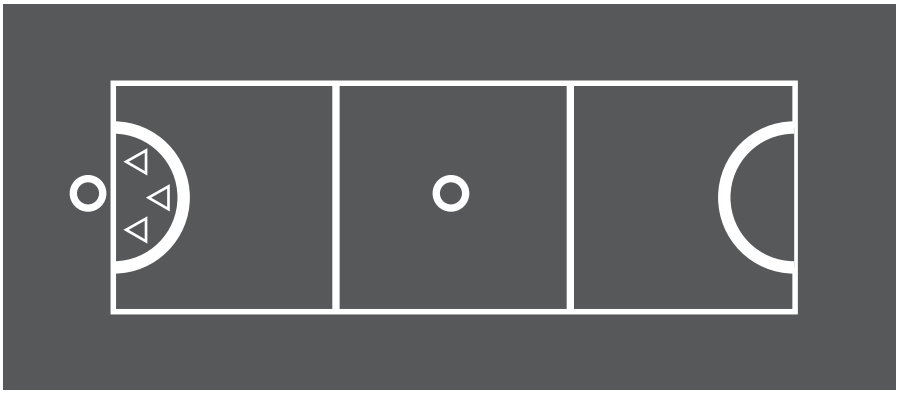
3 Practise number two and add bending the knees.

4 Practise shooting.

POSSIBLE GAMES

A Place three cones in goal circle.

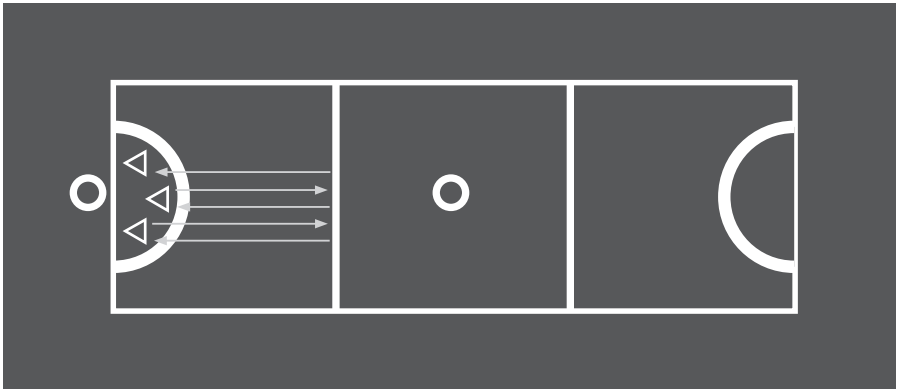
Practise shooting from each cone.



B Set up cones in goal circle.

Starting at a cone, run to transverse line and back to goal and shoot two goals.

Repeat five times.



4. JUMPING AND LANDING
– Te peke me te whakatau

JUMPING

CORRECT TECHNIQUE ▼

TEACHING POINTS

1 Head upright.
2 Shoulders level.
3 Trunk strong and upright.
4 Controlled trunk.
5 Feet shoulder width apart.
6 Bend at hips (like sitting on a chair).
7 Bend at knees.
8 Knees in line with feet and not in front of toes.
9 Drive up using arms and buttocks and leg muscles.

DOUBLE FOOT LANDING

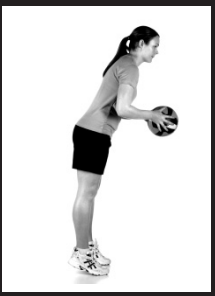
CORRECT TECHNIQUE ▼

TEACHING POINTS

1 Head upright.
2 Shoulders level.
3 Trunk strong, upright and controlled.
4 Feet shoulder width apart.
5 Bend at hips 45 degrees (like sitting on chair).
6 Bend at knees 45 degrees.
7 Knees in line with toes and not in front of toes.
8 Soft landing (you should not hear the player landing).

COMMON FAULTS ▶

1 Feet too narrow (should be shoulder width apart).
2 Knees not in line with toes.
3 Insufficient bend in hips/knees.
4 Weight distribution too far forward.
5 Knees in front of toes, or off balance and falling forward.
6 Heavy landing.
7 Looking down.



1-2 FOOT LANDING

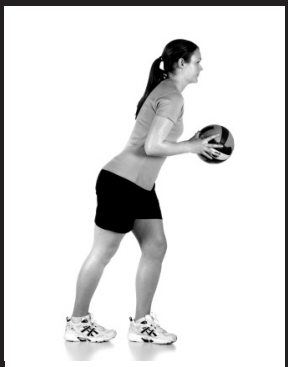
CORRECT TECHNIQUE ▶

TEACHING POINTS

1 Feet shoulder width apart.
2 Bend at knees.
3 Bend at hips.
4 Knees in line with toes.
5 Knees not in front of toes.
6 Equal distribution of weight.
7 Trunk/vision upright.
8 Soft landing.
9 Ensure second foot lands shortly after first foot.

COMMON FAULTS ▶

1 Feet too close together.
2 Knees not in line with toes.
3 Insufficient bend in hips/ knees (especially back leg).
4 Stride length too long.
5 Weight not equally distributed.
6 Weight too far forward and trunk leaning too far forward. This position promotes over balancing and stalking on the front foot.



ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT

1 SQUATTING

- A squat is fundamental for landing from a jump. Practise the squat.
- Do 10 times.

2 JUMP AND LAND

- Practise jumping and landing, with good technique.
- Jump and perform a double foot landing/1-2 foot landing.
- Jump forward slightly and perform a double foot/1-2 foot landing.
- Jump up and touch the wall and double foot land/1-2 foot landing.

3 JUMP, CATCH AND LAND WITH THE BALL

- It is important to add catching into the landing process but ensure that the quality of landing is maintained.
- Practise double foot landings and 1-2 foot landings while receiving a pass.

5. STOPPING – Te Tū

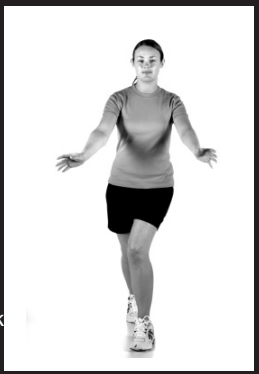
CORRECT TECHNIQUE ▶

TEACHING POINTS

1. Head up.
2. Upright trunk.
3. Bend in hips.
4. Bend in knees.
5. Knees in line with toes.
6. Feet shoulder width apart.
7. Equal distribution of weight between both feet – centre of gravity balanced.

COMMON FAULTS ▶

1. Feet not shoulder width apart.
2. One or both knees buckling in and not in line with feet.
3. Knees and hips too rigid and not enough bend.
4. Stride length too large and weight too far forward.
5. Weight not equally distributed.
6. Leaned forwards in the trunk



ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT

1 LUNGING

- Practise small lunges onto front foot to rehearse the stopping position.
- Focus is on keeping feet shoulder width apart and weight evenly distributed. Do 10 each leg.

2 RUN AND STOP

- Running in different directions and practise stopping with good technique.
- Alternate stopping on the right and left feet.
- Change the speed – slow/medium/fast pace.
- Add a pivot on the left and right foot.

6. PIVOTING – Te Takahuri

CORRECT TECHNIQUE ▼

TEACHING POINTS

1 Weight over grounded foot.
2 Turn on the ball of the foot.
3 Non-grounded foot is lifted and regrounded to maintain balance.
4 Turn head to begin pivot.
5 Rotate towards the play on the court.
6 Keep ball close to the body as pivoting.
7 Inside and outside rotation needs to be mastered.

COMMON FAULTS ▼

1 Insufficient weight on grounded foot and it is dragged during pivot motion.
2 Grounded foot lifted and re-grounded (ie stepping).
3 Pivot not on ball of foot.
4 Inability to pivot in both directions.

7. AGILITY AND DODGING

– Whakaoreore me te karo

BALANCING ON ONE LEG

Propping, changing direction, dodging and landing on one leg are all parts of netball. These skills need to be practised. In addition, strength and stability on one leg is vital! Single leg work should be part of netball training and part of conditioning netball players.

CORRECT TECHNIQUE ▶

TEACHING POINTS

1 Head still.
2 Upright trunk.
3 Slight bend in supporting knee.
4 Hips in line – do not let hip sag.
5 Stomach muscles pulled in.
6 Get players to balance on one leg and attempt to balance for as long as possible.
7 Ensure the player balances on each leg.

COMMON FAULTS ▶

1 Hip sags on the supporting leg.
2 Poor balance.
   – If player is having difficulty balancing get them to focus their gaze on a particular point. Alternatively place a book on their head and ask them to control it. Often balance will be better when the player is focusing on something external.
   – If a player is better at balancing on one leg they will need to practise more at balancing on the leg that is not as good.

PROGRESSION:

- Balancing on one leg throwing and catching a ball.
- Vary the passing – chest, bounce and pass.

STEP-UPS ONTO A BOX

CORRECT TECHNIQUE ▶

TEACHING POINTS

1 Keep truck strong and upright.
2 Pull in stomach muscles.
3 Do not let hip sag.
4 Step up with the left leg.
5 Drive up using the left leg and bring the right foot up onto the step.
6 Step down with the left leg first, then the right leg.
7 Repeat 10 times alternating legs.

PROGRESSION:

- Step up with with netball in hand and push netball up above head.
- Step up and catch ball, throw ball back and step back down.

PROPPING SIDE TO SIDE ACROSS A LINE

CORRECT TECHNIQUE ▶

TEACHING POINTS

1 Balance on one foot.
2 Shoulders level.
3 Trunk upright, straight and strong.
4 Pelvis level.
5 Bend in hip and knee.
6 Knee in line with toes and not collapsing inwards.
7 Prop from one foot to the other.
8 Land ball of foot and then drop onto heel.
9 Balance after each landing.
10 Do five each side.

COMMON FAULTS ▼

1 Shoulders not level.
2 Trunk not strong.
3 Sagging in pelvis of weight-bearing leg.
4 Knee turned in.
5 Knee not in line with toes.
6 Insufficient bend in hip and knees.

PROGRESSION:

- Add a ball. Hold on to a ball while propping side to side.
- Maintain control of trunk and pelvis.
- Prop to side, land on one leg, catch the ball, land and balance and then throw back to passer.
- Prop to other side and repeat process.

DODGING

CORRECT TECHNIQUE ▼

TEACHING POINTS

1 Prop off left leg.
2 Transfer weight and body onto right leg.
3 Drive off right leg out towards the ball.
4 Turn body in direction of ball.
5 Repeat in opposite direction.
6 A player will often be better one way. Practise both sides.
7 Do five each side.

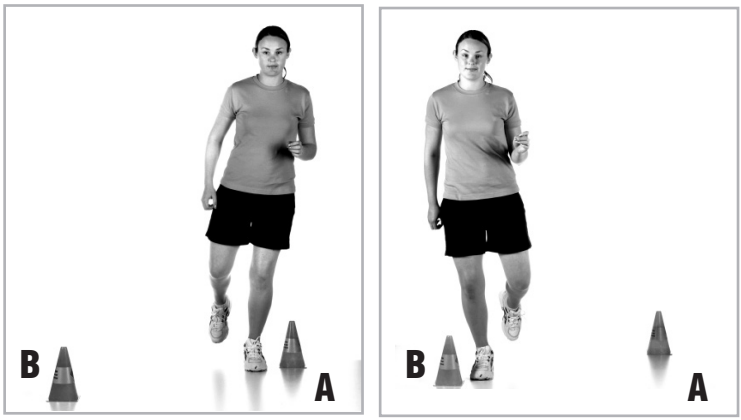
COMMON FAULTS ▼

1 Initial prop hips sag.
2 Body sags on second prop and trunk not strong.
3 Insufficient transfer of weight onto stabilizing leg.
4 Not a definite enough movement in direction of the ball.
5 Poor landing on catching of ball.

ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT

CONE DODGING

- Run forward.
- Place left foot up to cone A, prop and dodge to cone B landing and pushing off right foot.
- Repeat propping opposite way.
- Repeat and catch a ball after second propping.



AGILITY DRILLS

UPS AND DOWNS (4 VS 4)

Working in a third of the court, cones are scattered randomly; some are lying down, while others are upright. The teams have 15 seconds in which one team is responsible for tipping over the cones while the other team has to pick them up. Each time they reach a cone they have to make a change in direction before moving off to the next cone.

IN THREES

In threes, working in a third of the court, an attacking player stands on either side of the third, while the third person is defence in the middle. The attacking players have to run up to the defence and make a change of direction to beat the defence to receive the pass. Defence is stationary.

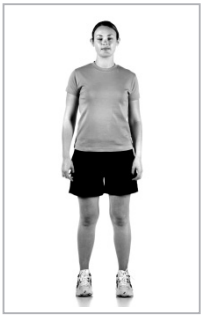
8. CORE STABILITY

– Kia tū pakari te tū

What is core stability?

Core stability involves using the muscles around the trunk and pelvis to support the spine and provide a solid foundation for all movements. Having good core stability is important for performing well on the netball court.

What does good core stability look like?



A player with good core stability will:

- Have good stability when landing, passing and turning
- Be a strong player on the court and in the air
- Be agile and quick with dodging and changing direction.

What does poor core stability look like?

It is easy to identify the athlete with poor core stability – they will walk, stand and generally present their body in a sloppy manner. They often stand by hinging on one leg/hip, with their tummy sagging and shoulders hunched.

A player with poor core stability will:

- Step or lose control of their footing frequently
- Land poorly and often off balance or stalking onto one leg
- Have a weak pass that is not very accurate
- Go offside often as they are unable to maintain a stable balanced position
- Be unable to hold defending of shot position for three seconds often falling forward causing contact on the opposition
- Have poor body control when one-on-one defending.

By getting the player to start by standing tall and evenly on two feet, and reminding them of this throughout not only training but daily activities in general, you can start to change poor habits and improve body control.

Remember: The ‘sloppy floppy’ player in everyday life, will be a sloppy and floppy player on the court!

ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT

ACTIVATING CORE MUSCLES:

The player needs to spend time learning how to activate these muscles before they move on to the specific exercises.

1 Ask your players to lie on their back placing their fingers on the inside of their hips.

2 Now get them to cough. They should feel the muscles tighten under their fingers – these are the lower abdominal muscles, which are the main core stability muscles.

3 See if they can activate these muscles by reproducing that same sensation – but without coughing tightening the pelvic floor muscles at the same time, may help. These are the muscles that you use to hold on when you need to go to the toilet.

Note: The player should still be able to breathe normally and keep their shoulders relaxed. The lower back should stay in a neutral position (ie not curved, but not flat against the floor – somewhere in between).

As the player gets better at activating these muscles on the floor, they will be able to try activating them in different positions (standing, standing on one foot, throwing a ball, lunging, squatting, jumping, landing and dodging).

Encourage players to activate their lower abdominal muscles with all their netball skills and activities to promote good stability.

SPECIFIC CORE STABILITY EXERCISES:

Below are some specific exercises that you can get your players to do to progress core stability. Encourage them to do these on a daily basis.

1 LOWER ABDOMINALS KNEE LIFTS

- Lie on back with knees bent.
- Acitivate the lower abdominal muscle.
- Lift the right leg slowly bending the hip and knee to 90 degrees. Maintain abdominal control while doing this.
- Lift the left leg slowly to the same position.
- Ensure activation of the abdominal muscles is maintained.
- Lower the right leg slowly and then the left leg.
- Repeat 10 times alternating the leading leg.

2 PRONE BRIDGING

- Lie face down propped up on forearms with toes tucked under.
- Activate the abdominal muscles and come up to a bridging position keeping the back straight.
- Hold for 10-15 seconds. Repeat five times.

3 FIGURE OF EIGHT

- Balance on the left leg holding onto a ball.
- Pass the ball under the right leg from your left hand to your right hand.
- Now pass the ball behind the left knee from the right hand to the left hand.
- Repeat five to 10 times, then do the same exercise on the opposite leg.

Section Five:

FAIR PLAY

Tākaro pono

You and your players should know the rules of the game and stick to them.

Encourage your players to 'play hard but fair' and respect umpire decisions. Foul play can result in injury and also damage the image of the game of netball.

Section Six:

PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

Taputapu ārai tinana

Encourage your players to wear the correct footwear during training and games.

The following elements are important in a good pair of netball shoes:

- Provide good support for the foot
- Have good cushioning to help reduce impact
- Have good tread to assist with grip on the court.

Taping or bracing may be used to provide added support for players who have had a previous injury.

Body parts that are commonly taped in netball include:

- Knees
- Ankles
- Thumbs
- Fingers.

Taping or bracing should not be used to get injured players back on the netball court early and is not a substitute for treatment and rehabilitation.

Section Seven:

HYDRATION AND NUTRITION

Te inu wai me te kai tōtika

Good hydration and nutrition will provide the following benefits for players during training and games:

- Enhanced performance
- Reduced fatigue
- Reduced rate of injury.
- Efficient recovery
- Improved concentration

The following factors need to be considered when determining what food and fluid requirements are appropriate for players:

- Age
- Duration, intensity and frequency of training and games
- Size
- Weather conditions.

HYDRATION
– Me inu wai

Hydration is vital before, during and after the game.

Pre-hydration (superhydration):

- Consume 500-600ml of water two hours before the game.

Hydration:

- Consume 200-500ml during warm-up
- Consume 150-300ml at a time during breaks.

Re-hydration:

- Consume one to two litres after the game.

As a coach, encourage players to bring a drink bottle to every training session so that they can re-hydrate continuously throughout, particularly during the cool-down.

Do not allow sharing of drink bottles as this could assist with spreading illnesses throughout the team.

Encourage players to avoid alcohol and caffeinated drinks (ie – coke or energy drinks) before, during and after training and games.

NUTRITION
– Kai tōtika

Restoration of muscle energy stores is important after exercise. The body readily absorbs energy in the first one to two hours after activity. If a player is to play another game that day (ie – in a tournament situation) the first 30 minutes are vital for restoration or energy levels.

The recovery food should consist of:

- Carbohydrate for muscle energy stores
- Protein to aid tissue repair.

Encourage the players to have food for straight after the game/training.

The ability to eat food straight after physical activity needs to be trained, as does the ability to drink fluid during physical activity. Practise this at training.

Good food to eat immediately after the game includes:

- Chewy lollies (ie – jet planes or jubes)
- Carbohydrate drink (ie – Powerade/Replace)
- Banana
- Muesli bar.

Good food to eat 20 minutes after the game includes:

- Plain bread roll, banana and flavoured milk
- Ham or chicken filled roll (this contains protein and carbohydrate)
- Muffin and yoghurt.

For more information on nutrition, go to **www.netballsmart.co.nz**

Section Eight:

INJURY REPORTING

Pūronga whara

Injury reporting is all about gathering information to learn how and why injuries happen – and find ways to prevent them from happening again.

Coaches should get into the habit of recording injuries as they happen. This will help to identify injury trends for both individuals and the team. Having a good understanding of the injuries that are occurring enables appropriate injury prevention measures to be put in place.

To download a copy of an injury reporting form for netball go to **www.netballsmart.co.nz**

Section Nine:

ENVIRONMENT

Takiwā

A safe environment will reduce the potential for injury and allow greater enjoyment of the game. The environment includes not only the weather but also the facilities, court surfaces, equipment (ie – the netball and goal posts) and the 'safety culture' in the netball club or centre.

Coaches should ensure that the team is adequately prepared for the weather conditions they are playing in. Cold conditions may necessitate a longer warm-up and players wearing additional clothing (ie – thermal underlayers). In warmer weather conditions, players should increase their fluid intake to avoid dehydration.

Before the players take to the court, coaches must be satisfied that the environment is safe. Any potential hazards (ie – icy courts) must be addressed before play begins.

Section Ten:

INJURY MANAGEMENT

Whakahaere whara

It is important to treat all injuries. Effective treatment allows a more rapid return to netball and helps prevent the injury from recurring.

Have a first aid kit available at all games and trainings. Suggested first aid kit contents are:

- Cool pack (or have ice available)
- Surgical gloves
- Towel
- Antiseptic and saline solutions
- Scissors
- Sterile gauze.
- Band-aids
- Compression bandages
- Adhesive / strapping tape
- Eye wash
- Sling bandage

Follow the **R.I.C.E.D.** protocol for all soft tissue injuries – strains, sprains and bruises (for the first 48 hours):

REST – the injured area. This helps to prevent further injury.

ICE – the affected area. Apply an ice pack (or ice wrapped in a damp towel) for 20 minutes. Repeat every two hours for 48 – 72 hours, depending on severity.

COMPRESSION – of the injured area will help to prevent swelling. Keep compression on between icing by applying a bandage.

ELEVATION – of the injured area will help prevent increasing swelling.

DIAGNOSIS – correct diagnosis is important. Get professional medical help if the pain or swelling hasn't gone down in 48 hours.

If any of the following signs are present then the injured player should seek immediate medical advice from a physiotherapist or doctor:

- Inability to weight-bear
- Reddened area
- Lots of swelling
- Deformation or an odd angle.

Players should also avoid **H.A.R.M.**ful factors for the first three days: **HEAT, ALCOHOL, RUNNING** (or stressing affected part), **MASSAGE**.

If a player sustains an injury and is back training and playing symptom-free within a week, monitor the player to ensure they do not have any further problems.

If the injury does not recover sufficiently to train during the week but the injury has improved significantly, continue to monitor the improvement. If improvement stops, the player should seek professional advice.

If the injury does not make any, or minimal, improvement during the week, the player should seek professional advice.

It is also important to encourage players to seek professional advice if they are suffering from recurrent injuries.

GUIDELINES FOR RETURNING TO NETBALL AFTER AN INJURY

– Kaupapa arataki i te hunga ka hoki mai ki te purei poi tarawhiti i muri i te wharatanga

It can be difficult to know whether or not a player is ready to return to netball after an injury. The player (or even their parent) may say that they are fine to play, however as a coach, you need to be confident that the player is fully recovered and can safely return to the court.

Comparisons with player profiling undertaken pre-injury is a useful way of monitoring whether a player has made a full recovery.

A player should not return to netball until they:

- Have clearance from any medical professional that they may be seeing for treatment and rehabilitation
- Have gained full strength and movement in the injured area
- Can take part in full training with no problems
- Can pass a simple fitness test.

FITNESS TESTING AFTER INJURY

Below are some simple tests that can be used to evaluate recovery from injury.

Lower limb injury (ie low back, hip, knee, ankle, foot)

Check the player can do all of these confidently and without pain:

- Run the full length of the court x 4
- Run, jump and land on both feet x 10
- Jump and land on one foot x 10 (on the side of the injury)
- Run shuttles x 2 (eg run and turn quickly at four cones spread in a line, two metres apart).

Upper limb injury (ie neck, shoulder, elbow, hand, finger)

Check the player can do all of these confidently and without pain:

- Chest passes in pairs x 10
- Overhead passes in pair x 10
- Passing off each hand (if appropriate) x 10 each side
- Run and receive the ball on the run and pass back x 10.

Remember that players are much more likely to injure themselves if they have gone back to netball before recovering fully from an injury. They may then be 'out' for another six to eight weeks, rather than the one extra week of rehabilitation which they initially needed.

If, after the fitness test, you are still unsure if the player is ready to return to sport, get them to seek professional advice from a physiotherapist.

NOTES:

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