

PRINCIPLES OF CONDUCTING A SESSION

PLANNING A SESSION

Coaching sessions should always offer opportunities for both learning and enjoyment. Activities need to be varied and interesting to help maintain concentration and player interest.

The time allocated to a NetSetGO Net Tier session is approximately 30 minutes, and the duration of a NetSetGO Set Tier or netball session will vary depend on the age and stamina of the players, and on their ability to maintain concentration. Sessions of 60 minutes are usually adequate for NetSetGO Set Tier and netball.

Session structure may vary, but the basic components should remain the same.

SESSION MANAGEMENT

COMMUNICATION AND DEMONSTRATION

It is very important that everyone can hear you and feels included. One of the best ways of doing this is to arrange the group into a semi-circle so you are about the same distance from everyone.

Make sure the group:

- Looks away from the sun
- Is not distracted by another game or someone else

Instructions

- Keep things short and simple. Know what you are going to say before you say it.
- Try to combine an instruction with a demonstration.
"Tag like this" is much easier to understand than "You tag by holding the ball with two hands and lightly touching your partner"

GROUP MANAGEMENT

FORMING GROUPS

Being able to quickly organise small groups and get them into action provides more time to play. It also ensures players are not excluded due to unpopularity or lack of ability. Small groups maximise participant activity and reduce boredom. Consideration should be given to the ability and size of players when organising groups.

COMMANDS FOR SMALL GROUPS

Use clear and consistent commands to organise small groups quickly and easily.

Examples

- Get with a partner about the same size
- Each pair joins with another pair
- Two to a ball
- Three to a ball
- Four groups of three in each corner of the third

ACTIVITIES TO FORM GROUPS

1. NUMBERS

See Warm-up Section, (Games Without a Ball, No. 6)

2. BIRTHDAYS

Ask players to line up in order of birthdays:

- Date and month
- Date only
- Either of above but not talking – hand signals only

The coach can then group players by numbering off down the line and peeling off into groups of the required number. Alternatively, to form pairs ask one end of the line to walk around so it is opposite the other end, players then work with the person opposite them.

3. ALPHABET ORDER

Ask players to line up in alphabetical order by either their first name or surname. Make groups using the method in number two above.

4. GROUPS BY MONTHS

Split the groups into various numbers using the months of the year.

- Two groups – January to June and July to December.
- Three groups – January to April, May to August and September to December
- Four groups – January to March, April to June, July to September and October to December.

If groups are of unequal size break the larger ones up using splitting pairs (number six).

5. HABITS

Divide the group in half by calling out a habit and group players according to their habit. Possible habits are:

- Throw or kick with left or right leg
- Fold arms with left or right arm on top
- Get out of bed on the left or right side
- Home address is odd or even
- Walk under a ladder – yes or no
- Stand on one leg – left or right
- Wink with left or right eye
- First sock put on is the left or right
- When jumping in the air and doing a half turn go to the left or right

6. SPLITTING PAIRS

If in pairs, form two new groups by calling out an action (e.g. reach under your knee and join hands while standing on one leg). The first person to perform the action goes to group one and the second goes to group two. If four groups are required, repeat the splitting pairs for each of the two groups, which can then split in half.

SESSION STRUCTURE

Please note that the time allocations for each section are estimates and should be used as a general guideline.

1. GROUP ORGANISATION (5-MINUTES)

Use this time to bring the players together. Talk to them about the session and your expectations. It allows for greater communication and gives late-comers time to settle before beginning the planned tasks.

2. WARM-UP ACTIVITIES (10-MINUTES)

The purpose of the warm-up is to prepare the muscles for dynamic activity and get the blood flowing to the appropriate areas. It is also important for the prevention of injuries and for setting the mood for the session. Therefore the warm-up should be as active as possible; eliminating the use of static stretches and stationary activities.

The amount of time and the nature of the warm-up will depend upon the age of the players.

THE WARM-UP SHOULD INCLUDE:

A physical warm-up

Establish a routine of dynamic muscle stretching, slow jogging or an appropriate game, ensuring the activity is stretching the major muscles of the body.

A skills warm-up

This is to prepare the participants for the skill development phase of the coaching session. It is important to positively reinforce skill techniques and highlight key points as the skills are being executed.

3. SKILL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES (20-MINUTES)

This is the main body of the session where skills are introduced, practised and progressed towards a realistic game situation.

The following skill areas are considered to be the basic techniques of netball and practice should be given in all areas.

- Movement
- Footwork
- Catching
- Throwing
- Defending
- Attacking

Gradually move the activity from individual practice, to activities with a ball, to partners/small group practices. Gradually increase the demands of the practise by:

- Increasing the speed and/or accuracy of the task
- Working with passive opposition
- Working with active opposition
- Training in game-like situations

4. MINOR GAMES OR MODIFIED MATCH PLAY (15-MINUTES)

Games are a means to practice all the skills previously learnt. The competitiveness of the game situation gives purpose to building patterns of skills, which become the basis of team play.

Minor games are very useful for this. Gradually increase the number of skills involved in the games by changing the rules or changing the game, and emphasise use of space and co-operative fun to ensure enjoyment of the session.

5. COOL-DOWN ACTIVITIES

The main emphasis of a cool-down session is to relax the muscles and promote waste removal; thus helping to gradually return the players' physiological responses to resting levels, prevent post-exercise soreness and reduce the risk of injury.

The cool-down session should take roughly the same amount of time as the warm-up and should include:

- Gentle activity such as a slow jog leading to a walking pace
- Stretching of major muscle groups used during activity
- Reviewing what has been taught, highlighting important aspects of the session and providing positive feedback to all of the participants

QUICK CHECK LIST FOR GOOD COACHING

1. PLAN

- ✓ Have a purpose
- ✓ Plan for maximum activity
- ✓ Prepare ample equipment before beginning the session
- ✓ Ensure the activities are appropriate to the age and standard of the participants
- ✓ Create a positive environment
- ✓ Ensure the facility and equipment are safe

2. DEMONSTRATE

- ✓ Be concise
- ✓ Highlight key points
- ✓ Be sure all participants can see
- ✓ Repeat several times

3. PRACTICE

- ✓ Progress from simple to complex
- ✓ Allow time for repetition
- ✓ Provide opportunity to practise in a game situation
- ✓ Provide a variety of activities

4. OBSERVE

- ✓ Position yourself so that you can see all participants

5. COACH/FEEDBACK

- ✓ Be positive and supportive
- ✓ Be specific
- ✓ Emphasise key points
- ✓ Re-demonstrate skill if necessary