

FUN GAMES TO FINISH WARM-UP

Look Out

Put half players in centre third, half players in goal third. Give both teams equal numbers of balls, but four or six balls needed altogether. The two teams have to throw the balls into their opponents' third, and also try to catch the balls coming from their opponents' third. Passes should not be bounce passes or ones that go over the back line. You can award points when a ball hits the ground in one third.

Coaching points – quick return of ball, quick change from passing to moving, teamwork.

Frisbee

Get a frisbee. Divide teams into two, play frisbee netball, same rules, except frisbee has to touch the goal post – and you may wish to play half court.

Coaching points – teamwork, moving into space.

Cones in the middle

Can be played with anything in the middle – balls, tops, make sure there are about eight. Divide players into four equal numbered teams, one team at each corner of a centre, with cones in the middle. On Go, a player races in from each corner and picks up a cone, returning it to the space in front of her team and tagging another team member, who can then run to the middle and pick up a cone or whatever. When all of the cones are gone from the middle, players may steal them from other corners. Winning team is the one with the most cones.

Hunting tag

Divide group into two teams, both play in one (or two) thirds of court. One team is hunting the members of the other team. The hunting team have the ball and must tag the prey with the ball. The ball must be held by a hunter when the prey is tagged (i.e. hunters cannot throw the ball at the prey, although they can pass between themselves). Normal netball rules apply, i.e. no stepping, bouncing etc. When prey get tagged they are out.

Chase the tail

Three players form a line, holding onto each other's waists, in a snake like formation. Another player tries to tag the last player in the line. The other two in the line try to protect their team member by moving around.

Coaching points – defence protection of space and player, teamwork

Hunting – Group

All players run around in one or two thirds. One player is 'it', she has to tag one of the other players, who then holds her hand, they have to try to tag another player, who then holds hands with them, and so on until the last player is cornered.

Bob

Two teams, in parallel lines, with front player holding ball. One Passer for each team, far enough away to force a long pass. On Go, passer passes to front player who returns ball then bobs down, so player behind can catch and

return ball to Passer. When last player in the line receives the ball she runs, with the ball, to where the Passer is and the Passer runs to the front of the line (the rest of the team stand up again). When the player who was first Passer runs back to her original space then the team all bob down and call out "Finished".

Riverdance

Two players stand facing and close to each other, they can hold t-shirts or arms. On a call they try to tag the other's feet with their feet. Coaching points – quick feet.

Netball, but..

Two teams, playing within either one third or two thirds. There are restrictions on their play, and if they break the restriction the other team gets the ball. Restrictions can be: only chest passes, only bounce passes, wait three seconds before passing, wait 1 second, 2 seconds before passing, all passes to be caught by player in the air, one handed passes etc.

Another variation of this is playing full court netball, starting with one team practising it without defence, but having the restriction that the ball must be caught a certain number of times in each third, e.g. once, twice, three times, or that it must be caught once in the defence third, twice in the middle and three times in the third, or any combination of these.

INDIVIDUAL EXERCISES

Turns

Players stand on court in their own space facing coach. No balls. Coach calls quarter, half, three-quarter, full. Players turn as per instructed. The turns can start with a pivot, keeping one foot grounded, or can be aerial with players jumping and turning. Encourage players to move head first, body should follow, landing should be soft. Coaching points – control of turn, extension of turning ability, balance

Passing – to yourself

Throw the ball from one hand to the other across the body, now try above the head.

Throw and catch the ball to yourself. Use two hands, then one hand. Throw above your head and behind your back so you have to turn to catch it, to your right side, to your left side. Now clap before you catch it.

With feet astride, place ball between your knees, with one hand to the back of the ball and the other hand to the front. Change hands without allowing the ball to fall to the ground.

Around the Cones

Activity 1

Formation – triangle of cones three metres apart. (Note: can be chalk marks)

Start from one corner and work around the outside of the cones

Sprint 10 sec, jog 30 sec.

Slide (side step) – 10 sec, jog 30 sec.

Coaching points – eyes up, quick changes of movement at cones, push hard with legs as you change direction

Variation – sprint and/or slide step around the cones in a figure of eight

Variation – Introduce changes of direction moving to any cone in the triangle

Coaching points – Body balance, keep knees bent, back straight, eyes up, small quick steps.

Activity 2

Square pattern of cones three metres apart. Start in the middle of square. Design a pattern of movement which incorporates short sharp movements to each of cones in turn, always recovering to the centre of the square, e.g. sprint to left forward cone and back to start, sprint to cone behind and right. Use high intensity movement for 10 secs, jog 30 secs. Use Pivot to change direction.

Coaching points – keep movements sharp, body low stance, head up and focus eyes on a central point.

Introduce ball throwing. A partner throws a ball to the moving partner, at various times during the activity.

PAIRS/SMALL GROUP EXERCISES

Movement Reaction Practice

Players face each other about 2 metres apart. Player A works at various foot movements, e.g. hop one leg, jump up and down, side step left and right a few steps, various jumps using various foot patterns and pivots etc. Player B tries to quickly copy partner's movement. Exchange the lead. Coaching points: focus eyes on each other. React quickly without dropping focus to feet level.

Signal Reaction practice

Player A stands still facing player B, 3 metres apart. Player B sprints around partner without contacting and responds to the call of Player A, for example, side step, change direction, sprint, turn left etc. Work high intensity 10 secs, jog 30 secs. Repeat several times, then change places. Coaching points: body positioning, speed changes and focus.

See Saw

One ball, three players

Two players place themselves at the horizontal points of an imaginary capital T. The passer is at the bottom of the T. The passer passes to the middle of the T, and one of the players drives in for the ball, passes back, then drives back to her spot. Immediately the other player drives to the middle to receive another pass, and so on. Variations – change sides, side slip out and run back in, as player moves out jump over a line. Coaching points – balance, quick feet, change of direction, passing.

Quick feet, touch, return

A stands with outstretched arms, B stands about 2-3 metres away.

B, using quick feet (little, quick, light steps), runs towards A, touches her arm, turns and runs back to her spot, runs forward touches other arm, etc. B keeps watching A at all times. A lets her know if she is dropping her eyes. B tries to ensure that when running backwards she is not shuffling, but using angles, and that she is keeping a straight body and using quick feet.

Quick, Slow

Two players running down court, passing between them. First time they run quickly, but pass slowly.

The second time they run slowly, but pass quickly.

Mirror

Two players face each other. One initiates movement down court, the other player tries to match her (e.g. side slip, back angle drive, dodge, quick changes of direction).

Reaction Hands

One player passes quick short passes to another who is standing facing the passer with her hands relaxed and at her sides. The receiver must bring hands up quickly to catch the ball, pass in back to the passer and immediately

return her hands to her sides. The passer varies the height of the pass, but passes must always be in reach of the receiver.

Variation – same as before, but receiver must touch her hips between each pass.

Coaching points – relaxed ready position, i.e. hands and arms not stiff, quick reactions.

Reach

One player passes (not quick) to another who is not allowed to move either foot, but must stretch with her upper body and hands to gather in the pass. Passer varies the height and side of the pass.

Left and Right

One player stands with back to (and about two metres away from) another player who has the ball. Player with the ball calls left, right or middle. The receiver must turn in the direction of the call to receive the pass (middle being a 180 degree turn).

Variations: - call low left or low right – ball along the ground, call high left, high right for high pass. Start without a ball the first time this is done.

Coaching Points – reaction, timing of pass, body balance when turning.

Pass and Cut

Two (or 3) players pass and cut (pass then drive to a new space) between them, for half a minute, then have 20 seconds rest, and so on. Encourage players to be inventive, trying turns, rolls, dodges and pivots to improve their pass and cut.

Coaching points – understanding between players

Pass into space

In threes, players take the shape of a square, missing one corner. The player with the ball faces the empty space and the player on the other side of the empty space moves into it to receive a pass, turns and passes into the empty space she has just vacated where the next player is moving into and so on. Once players are confident, one player can call change, to change direction.

Target Ball

Draw chalk crosses on the ground at varying distances from a wall, or with another player (the catcher) behind the last line. Passer has to try to either bounce pass, hitting the crosses, or at some distance back put a high pass which lands on the cross.

Target Spaces Draw a chalk four square, numbered (each square about 2m squared).

a) Three players pass to each other (vary the passes), moving into a square to receive a pass, then out again once passed.

b) One defence, one attacker, one passer. All three players well outside of four square. Passer names a square that attacker has to receive pass in. Defender tries various types of marking - side, front, cutting, to stop attacker from reaching the square or intercept the pass. Passer decides who 'wins' (e.g. if attacker is forced to stop or change direction more than three times, defender wins the point). You could start with a more passive defender, standing as a post.

TEAM EXERCISES

Four Corners

A very useful exercise that can be repeated in various forms. It helps players work on timing, passing and receiving on the run, changing direction, calling, court balance. A common problem is players moving too soon to take the pass, and players not passing into space. Encourage receivers to hold before moving, and encourage passers to let the ball go into the space. Initially encourage players to be in the air when they receive the ball and to land with their feet directly below their waist, in order to control their stepping.

Team forms a square with roughly equal numbers of players at each corner. The ball is passed around the square, with players moving into the space between their corner and the next corner to take the pass.

Variations: On a call, the ball changes direction. Try to ensure that the player who has just previously passed the ball is not the person who then receives the change of direction pass.

- Players alternately receive the pass middle or side. For middle the player drives in towards the middle of the square, calling middle. The next receiver drives the side of the square, calling side, and so on.

- Make every second pass a bounce pass.

Pass and React

Another very useful exercise for encouraging players to react as soon as they have passed, and also to change quickly from attack to defence to attack. Also shows up those players needing to work on their transition between attack and defence, their reaction speed and their ability to create and see space.

Two teams of three, both teams numbered 1-2-3. One attacking team, one defence. Attacking players have to pass to each other in numerical order (i.e. three passes to one, one to two and so on). Defence have to try to intercept. If defence intercept they immediately become the attacking team. The limit of three players per team mean that as soon as a player has passed the ball she needs to react to look for or make space to move into for the next pass.

This is a tiring exercise. 5 minutes on, 2 minutes rest.

Number Netball

Two teams of 4, playing within one third. Each member in each team has a sequential number, i.e. 1,2,3,4. The ball must be passed in that order 1,2,3,4,1,2,3,4 etc. Defenders have to try to get the ball back, and then become attacking team. Coach can call an option of which number is allowed to shoot. General rules of netball apply.

Diagonal Pass and Drive

Players form two groups on diagonal corners of a court third. Player A starts just out from her corner, with the ball (after passing it she will drop to the back of her corner group). B and C drive outwards and forward from either side of the opposite corner. A passes to either B or C. If C does not receive the ball from A she continues driving to receive a forward pass from B. C then passes it on to one of two players, D or E, driving out from the opposite corner where A is. C carries on running to the end of the corner she is heading towards, whereas B drops back to her own line, and the whole process continues.

Coaching points – excellent for speed and quick thinking, timing and passing/receiving on the run. Good for more experienced teams.

Pass 1,2,3,4

Four players form a square, one player at each corner, each taking a number, 1, 2, 3, 4. Start without defence inside the square, just one attacker. Outside the square is the coach or another player who calls. The attacking player has a ball. On the call of a number, the attacking player passes to that corner and receives a pass back from that corner (IMPT NOTE : SHE DOES NOT HAVE TO DRIVE TOWARDS THAT CORNER TO RECEIVE OR TO PASS – having variety in using space makes players think more about space on court)

Add one defender, then another. Coaching points – quick thinking, using space.

Pass Every Corner

Four players form a square, one player at each corner, and one attacking player stands in the middle with a ball. The attacking player has to drive, cut and use space around the square until she has passed and received from each corner player twice. She must not pass and receive to the same player twice in a row. Strongly encourage players not to drive towards the corner that they have just passed to in order to receive the return pass – they should try to create space through quick movements, pulling defenders into one space then driving out into clear space. Add one defender, then two.

Pass and Cut Team

Players stand in a line perpendicular to the back line of the court. Passer A stands in the centre circle. B and C are the first and second people in the line, they drive out left and right. A chooses to pass to one of them (she then runs to the back of the line). Let us say she passes to B. C, who does not receive that pass, cuts hard back to the front of the line where she receives a pass from B. She then returns the pass to B who has driven to where A was originally standing. C goes to the back of the line. B is the passer. D and E drive out and so on.

Coaching Points – a very good exercise for improving quick thinking, turning and passing.

Top and Bottom

One line of players. Standing at driving and ball-passing distance from the line are two passers, one on each side. The two front players in the line drive out, one towards each passer, taking a pass. Either one of the drivers calls "Top" or "Bottom". "Top" means that she will be driving across in front of the other driver to get a pass from the other passer, and telling the other driver to go behind her. "Bottom" obviously means she will go behind the other driver. Each player takes a pass from the other passer then they repeat the action (calling "top or "bottom") once more to get a pass from their original passer. Lastly they get a small high lob from their own passer, and they then take over as passers. The two passers go to the back of the line, and two more drive out from the front.

Dizzy passing

Players stand in a circle with one passer (A) in the middle, and two balls, one on the outside (with B) and one with A. A passes to the player right of B and at the same time receives a ball from B. She keeps on passing one ball forward and receiving another until she has done two complete turns of the circle. Another then takes her place. Quick reaction and vision.

Pass One Way, Move the Other

Players form a triangle, with equal numbers at each point. The player with the ball passes in one direction then runs in the opposite direction to the back of the line. The receiver can pass back to the player at the front of either line, but must always then drive in the other direction.

Coaching Points – good for thinking and moving away from the direct play.

Down the Line

Team lines up down the court, evenly spaced, stationary. One player runs parallel to the line receiving passes in space from players, passing onto the next passer, until she reaches the last passer who then repeats the proceeds in the opposite direction. Runner tries not to jump as she receives the ball.

Variation: Stagger the passers, i.e. two lines on either side of the passer who must change direction slightly without stepping or losing control.

Coaching points – passing into space, timing, body control.

This can also be done as a team game, with two teams, each player with a number. Coach stands at one end with two balls on the ground in front. She calls out a number, e.g. 4. Both No. 4 players race to pick up a ball, then go down the line passing it, then returning it to the coach.

Forward

Two lines parallel to each other. Front player in one line has ball, throws it high and diagonal in front of other line. Front player in other line drives out, leaps, turns, lands facing her own team, passes back to second player in her line who then passes diagonally for the first player in the other line to take a pass, and so on.

Variation: Vary the type of pass, e.g. flat, bounce, lob.

ATTACKING, DEFENDING

For Shooters

Improve speed and footwork with some of the following:

- jogging with plenty of changes of direction
- jumping, turning and jogging around the goal circles
- jog backwards, forwards and sideways working in the goal
- circle area with focus on the goal post
- stretch with plenty of arm mobility exercises
- sprint speed work, plenty of six step pace work, goal line to top of circle, across circle etc.

A Sequenced Drill for Shooters

Place marker cones in goal circle about 1 metre apart

Facing down court and using quick feet, running step, the shooter makes figures of 8, working around the cones

- *Add other shooter, emphasising the need to keep a balanced circle.*
- *Add a pass from a stationary feeder*
- *Take the cones away, try to keep the figure of 8 pattern going as much as possible.*
- *Use chest and bounce passes, varying the distance, height and strength.*
- Stress the need for forward or diagonal backward movement to take a pass.
- *Add one player as a defender.*
- The ball starts in the circle, passes out to the moving feeder, who passes to the free player, who shoots for goal with normal defending and rebounding taking place.
- Stress the need for eye or ball faking by the feeder before the ball is passed.
- *Add another feeder*
- The ball travels from the centre with the pass going to the WA. Both shooters are in the circle moving in a figure of 8 pattern with one defender marking the players.
- The ball is passed in and out of the circle three times before a shot is attempted.
- Stress cooperative play between the players with good body language and eye contact.

- *The GA stands out of the circle and could receive the centre pass.*

As a variation require the ball to be passed to the GA before it enters the shooting circle.

Again nominate the number of times the ball must be passed between the players before a shot is attempted. Add defenders and build up into a centre pass strategy with options of pass, in and around the circle.

DEFENCE

Defenders should:

- ask themselves "where's my player" and "where's the ball"
- aim to intercept the ball
- restrict their opponent's movement
- keep the ball away from their opponent
- restrict the options available to throwers
- watch the wrist action of shooter for direction of pass
- when changing defence from left to right side (or vice versa) of an opponent, defenders should do that in front of that player.

Triangle Drill – need 4 players and 1 ball.

Three players in a triangle 3-4 metres apart, one with ball (thrower). The fourth player (defender) stands opposite thrower, between and a little in front of the other two players (receivers). Thrower then makes chest pass to either receiver, defender must try to intercept. After five clean interceptions, players rotate.

Coaching points:

- Adjust distances according to size/skill of defender to ensure realistic chance
- Ensure good fast chest passes only, no overheads
- Defender should react to ball, not thrower's eyes
- Defender should use correct technique to come around attacker (outside arm)
- Ensure defender does not 'creep up' on thrower.

Progression - make defender stand back on or behind the line between the receivers, widen gap between receivers