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Level 2 Certificate in Coaching Badminton

Coach Handbook

Welcome

to the United Kingdom Coaching Certificate (UKCC)
Level 2 Coaching Handbook for Badminton.

The United Kingdom Coaching Certificate initiative is Government led and seeks to improve
the consistency and quality of coaching in Britain. The set of coaching awards consists of 5
levels, with each level creating coaches capable of fulfilling the roles listed below:

- **Level 1:** assist more qualified coaches delivering aspects of coaching sessions,
  normally under direct supervision.

- **Level 2:** Prepare for, deliver and review coaching sessions.

- **Level 3:** Plan, implement and revise annual coaching programmes.

- **Level 4:** Design, implement and evaluate the process and outcome of
  long-term specialist coaching programmes.

- **Level 5:** Generate, direct and manage the implementation of cutting edge
  coaching solutions and programmes.

This handbook supports candidates working towards the UKCC Level 2 Certificate in
Coaching Badminton. The content is the result of extensive collaboration between
BADMINTONscotland, BADMINTONEngland, the Welsh Badminton Union and sportscoachUK.
Contact details for these National Governing Bodies can be found at the back of this
handbook in Appendix 1. Thank you also to Alan Spink of Action Photography for his
assistance in the making of this handbook.

The handbook is also a valuable resource for any badminton coach wishing to improve
their coaching, or a player wishing to improve their technique and tactics. It is split into
3 distinct sections:

- '**How to Coach**' skills, including Good Coaching Practice, Planning Sessions,
  Doing Sessions and Reviewing Sessions.

- An '**additional knowledge**' section, consisting of useful underpinning knowledge
  for the coach that does not fit into the two other sections.

- '**What to Coach**', including techniques and tactics for novice/intermediate
  level players.

We hope you enjoy the content of this handbook and are able to utilise its contents
to enhance your coaching practice.

UKCC National Source Group for Badminton

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Contents

How to Coach

Introduction: the 'How to Coach' Model

The "How to Coach" model is a keyhole shape, with 4 stages within that shape.

1 Good Coaching Practice

Good coaching practice underpins all planning, doing and reviewing of sessions. Note also that the model is cyclical in nature, with the results of planning, doing and reviewing feeding back into good coaching practice.

2 Planning

Having established the roles and responsibilities associated with good coaching practice the coach then begins to think about **planning** a specific activity. Assessing a group or individual's needs and motivations is a large part of the planning process, as it allows you to set appropriate goals and plan sessions that meet their needs.

3 Doing

Actually **doing** the session successfully requires a whole host of skills, including for example employing excellent communication and group management skills. An understanding of coaching styles and the way people learn skills is also necessary for the coach to develop player skills effectively.

4 Reviewing

Reviewing a session completes the "How to Coach" model. Reflecting on the delivery of a session heightens awareness of your own coaching practice and supports progressive development of coaching skills.

Do
- Communication skills
- Questioning
- Feedback
- Coaching/learning style
- Stages of learning
- Skill Development
- Designing practices
- Managing the group

Plan
- Registration
- PAR-Q
- Register
- Safety
- Player needs
- Set goals
- Session plan

Review
- Self reflection
- Player feedback
- Review template

Good Coaching Practice
- Rights
- Roles
- Responsibilities
- Relationships
- Safety
- Child Protection

Good Coaching Practice

Roles, rights, relationships and responsibilities

The issues raised in this section are dealt with in far more detail in the sportscoachUK publication "What is Sports Coaching?" and this book should be read in conjunction with this section.

Your Level 1 training should have established that part of good coaching practice is to gain a good understanding of:

- The roles you may need to fulfil as a coach.
- How your coaching respects the rights of the people you coach.
- The relationships you need to build with players and others who may influence those players.
- The personal and professional responsibilities you should display.

A Level 2 coach must display all the same characteristics of a Level 1 coach, but has to take on the following additional responsibilities:

- Level 2 Coaches are responsible for the planning of a short series of sessions.
- Level 2 coaches should actively encourage the development of Level 1 Assistant Coaches, who can usefully be used to support small groups of players developing basic skills.

Safety

Safety is obviously a major concern at all levels of coaching. Level 2 coaches should continue to:

- Use the following forms in preparation for sessions:
  - Course registration forms.
  - Physical Activity Readiness Questionnaires (PAR-Q).
  - Registers.
  - Facility Safety Checklists.
  - Activity Safety Checklists.
- Adopt the safe practices outlined in Level 1 during and after sessions.

You may use Assistant Coaches to assist you in safety aspects but should make sure they refer back to you on aspects they are uncertain about. In this case, some basic knowledge of risk assessment is important. Please note the information below is based on Health and Safety Executive Guidelines, freely available at www.hse.gov.uk

Definitions

Hazards are basically "anything that can cause harm". Examples in badminton could be:

- Stray shuttles on the court (commonly known as "ankle breakers").
- Lack of space/large groups.
- Slippery floors.

Risk "is the chance, high or low, that somebody could be harmed by a hazard".

5 steps to Risk Assessment

- Look for hazards.
- Decide who may be harmed and how.
- Evaluate the risks and decide whether existing precautions are adequate or more should be done.
- Record your findings.
- Review your assessment and revise it if necessary.

Note that provided you use both the Facility Safety Checklist (when in a new facility) and the Activity Safety Checklist (every time) then you can be reasonably assured you are assessing risks effectively.

Protection of Children and Vulnerable adults

Who is responsible for child protection?

It is unfortunate that abuse of children and vulnerable adults takes place, however it does and this places a responsibility on everyone to place the welfare of young and vulnerable people first and take action if there are concerns. There is often a fine line between poor practice and abuse, however it is your moral duty to report a concern.

What forms can abuse take?

- **Neglect** – failing to meet a child/vulnerable adult's basic needs e.g. for food, warmth, clothing or emotional support.

- **Physical Abuse** – physically hitting, shaking or hurting or injuring a child/vulnerable adult, or failing to prevent injuries from happening.

- **Sexual Abuse** – any form of sexual behaviour with a child (by an adult or another child) e.g. sexually explicit language, inappropriate touching, intimate relationships or exposure to pornographic material.

- **Emotional Abuse** – which can often take place alongside other abuse or bullying (by other young people or adults) e.g. threatening, taunting or sarcastic behaviour, withholding of affection. Emotional abuse can include racist or sexist behaviour.

- **Bullying and Harassment** – a form of physical, verbal and emotional abuse. Sometimes occurs between young people or can be by an adult e.g. taunting or shouting at young players.

What might lead you to suspect that abuse may be taking place?

- **Physical signs** such as:
  - unusual bruising and injuries.
  - continual untreated medical problems or poor health.
  - significant weight loss.
  - inadequate hygiene.

- **Behavioural signs** such as:
  - not wanting to go to school.
  - not wanting to go to training.
  - avoiding the company of specific people.
  - major changes in behaviour and attitude.

It is important to recognise that any of these signs can occur in isolation for different reasons, however a cluster of signs over a period of time may cause you concern and make you decide that you need to act.

Adopting Best Practice

Best practice benefits everyone involved in badminton (eg. coaches, officials, parents/carers and players). It not only helps ensure the welfare of young and vulnerable players, but can also protect you against wrongful allegations. The following guidelines are useful:

- Conduct all interactions with children in an open place and with parental consent. Try to avoid situations where you are alone with a child or vulnerable adult.

- Challenge inappropriate behaviours that could upset others, such as bullying.

- Maintain appropriate relationships with children/vulnerable adults, treat all players equally and do not allow intimate relationships to develop with young people in your charge.

- Respect all young players and allow them to take responsibility for their own development and decision making.

- Avoid unnecessary physical contact that may be intrusive or disturbing to the player. If there is a need for contact to correct a position, always ask the player's permission first.

- Strive to stay up to date on all coaching issues, especially those surrounding child protection/ vulnerable adults.

Remember that child abuse is not just something that takes place within the sporting environment. We also have a responsibility to report our concerns if we suspect that a child is being mistreated at home or school.

What should you do if you have a child protection concern?

Concerns should be reported to your nearest welfare officer (Club, County or National officer). Full procedures for reporting your concerns can be found in the Child Protection Policy and Procedures for each Home Country Badminton Association (copies are available on the Home Country Websites). If it is an urgent matter and a child is at immediate risk call the police or social services and then inform a welfare officer of your actions.

What should you do if a child confides in you?

Stay calm and reassure the child that they were right to tell, but do not promise not to tell anyone else. If you are concerned about the child's safety or well-being or the child is in danger, then act immediately by calling social services, the police or the NSPCC. If medical treatment is needed, seek assistance from qualified first aiders or call an ambulance. If there is no immediate danger, report your concerns to your nearest welfare officer (Club, County or National Officer).

Remember

It is not up to you to decide if abuse is taking place, or what needs to be done, but it is your responsibility to report your concerns to an appropriate person. Advice can then be sought from appropriate professionals and action taken if necessary. The Home Country Badminton Associations can deal with poor practice in the sport, however the police and social services will deal with abuse.

Planning the session

Introduction

The importance of planning is best summed up by the following phrase:
"Failing to plan is planning to fail".

The planning process is similar to that outlined in the Level 1 guidance, although the extent of the planning is greater for the Level 2 Coach. It is the additional aspects that will be focussed on in this section.

1. Player completes a Registration Document and Physical Activity Readiness Questionnaire. Note this information is confidential and should only be made available to the player themselves, their parents (if under 18), coaches and, depending upon circumstances, the emergency services.

2. Relevant information is transferred to the register which is completed at the start of each session.

3. Choose methods by which you intend to evaluate the player(s).

4. Assess needs and motivations (social, psychological etc) of the players.

5. Evaluate the players (technically, tactically, physically, psychologically).

6. Sets goals that meet the needs identified in the evaluation.

7. Plan a series of sessions (using a coaching plan) that aim to support the player in achieving the goals set.

8. Involve the Assistant Coach in the planning, in particular highlighting their areas of responsibility when delivering the session.

PLAYER REGISTRATION

PLAYER REGISTRATION FORM

Personal details (please print clearly and use biro)

Surname	First name	Title	M/F	Date of birth

Home address (including postcode)	Telephone:
	Email:

I would describe my ethnic origin as (please tick box)

◯ Bangladeshi	◯ Chinese	◯ Asian - other
◯ Black African	◯ Indian	◯ Other
◯ Black Caribbean	◯ Pakistani	◯ Prefer not to say
◯ Black - other	◯ White	

Emergency contact

Name	Relationship with player

Address (if different from above)	Telephone:

I have completed the information above and the medical questionnaire overleaf.

Signature	Name	Date

In the event of being U-16, please ensure that a parent or guardian countersigns here:

Signature	Name	Date

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY READINESS QUESTIONNAIRE (PAR-Q)

If you are planning to take part in physical activity or an exercise class and you are new to exercise, start by answering the questions below. If you are between the ages of 9 and 65 the questionnaire will tell you if you should check with your doctor before you start. If you are over 65 years of age, and you are not used to being very active, check with your doctor.

YOUR COACH WILL TREAT ALL INFORMATION CONFIDENTIALLY

1. Has your doctor ever said that you have a heart condition and that you should only do physical activity recommended by a doctor?	Yes	No
2. Do you ever feel pain in your chest when you do physical activity?	Yes	No
3. Have you ever had chest pain when you are not doing physical activity?	Yes	No
4. Do you ever feel faint or have spells of dizziness?	Yes	No
5. Do you have a joint problem that could be made worse by exercise?	Yes	No
6. Have you ever been told that you have high blood pressure?	Yes	No
7. Are you currently taking any medication that your coach should be made aware of? If so, what?	Yes	No
8. Are you pregnant or have you had a baby in the last 6 months?	Yes	No
9. Is there any other reason why you should not participate in physical activity? If so what?	Yes	No

IF YOU HAVE ANSWERED YES TO ONE OR MORE QUESTIONS

Talk to your doctor by phone or in person before you start becoming more physically active and before you have a fitness assessment. Tell your doctor about the questionnaire and which question you answered YES to.

You may be able to do any activity you want as long as you build up slowly and gradually, or you may need to restrict your activities to those that are safe for you. Talk with your doctor about the kinds of activity you wish to pursue and follow his/her advice.

IF YOU HAVE ANSWERED NO TO ALL QUESTIONS

You can be reasonably sure that you can start to become more physically active and take part in a suitable exercise programme. Remember to begin slowly and build up gradually.

PLEASE NOTE

If your health changes so that subsequently you answer YES to any of the above questions, inform your Coach or health professional immediately. If you feel unwell because of a temporary illness such as a cold or flu, delay becoming more active and wait until you are better.

I HAVE READ, UNDERSTOOD AND COMPLETED THIS QUESTIONNAIRE

Name: _____ Date of birth: _____

Address: _____

_____

Phone no: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Emergency contact name & phone no: _____

REGISTER

The register is necessary from a health and safety perspective, for example in the event of fire, when it may be necessary to retake the register in order to check that all players have left the building.

Course/Group	
Name(s) of coaches	
Venue	
Facilities Manager (plus contact no.)	

Name of Player	Medical issues	Attendance dates															

Note the spare column (labelled "medical issues") where a tick or asterix can be used to indicate a medical issue raised on an individual's Physical Activity Readiness Questionnaire form. This can be a useful reminder, particularly for a new coach taking over a group "mid-stream".

Methods of Evaluation

Understanding and meeting the needs of people is a vital part of coaching, since it is by meeting a person's needs that you:

• Increase the chances of retaining them in the sport.

• Improve their playing ability optimally.

One decision you have to reach is selecting the methods you will use to assess needs. Below is a list of evaluation methods you may choose to use, with advantages and disadvantages where appropriate.

EVALUATION METHODS	ADVANTAGE	DISADVANTAGE
Questionnaire	Easy to administer, especially if multiple choice	Can limit responses if you are only allowed to answer the specific questions set
Verbal questioning	Players able to express their own opinions about their game	Players may be shy
Observation: Predictable feed/rally	You can plan the evaluation so you get to see everything you need	Not game-like: will they do the same thing under pressure in the randomness of a game
Observation: Matchplay	Very natural	You may not see everything you want to see, or only see something once which may not give a true impression of what they usually do
Video	Re-playable and can be slowed down so you see more	More difficult to organise, child protection issues
Player self analysis (ask the players to identify their own strengths/weaknesses)	Gives players some ownership of the evaluation	Players may not be the best judge of their strengths/weaknesses
Parents	They know their children better than anyone	They have limited badminton knowledge or not able to comment objectively
Other coaches	Very useful to contrast opinions	Only works with "open" coaches
Prior knowledge (you have worked with player before)	Probably have a greater insight into the player over a longer period	May be baised: i.e. you have specific aspects you always look for and ignore other aspects

EVALUATING UNDERPINNING MOTIVATIONS

The form below was introduced at level 1, but we have adapted it to categorise some of the needs being expressed. Those in blue are intrinsic needs. People scoring high on this are motivated simply by the in-built benefits of being on court. Those needs shaded green would be scored high by people who are extrinsically motivated. Those needs in yellow are frequently expressed but don't fit neatly into either category. Most of the needs expressed below can be described as sociological, psychological or a combination of the two.

Name:	Age:	Standard (please circle):
		Beginner Intermediate Advanced

Player needs/motivations

Why I play badminton (tick the relevant circle)	not important ← → important									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Enjoyment	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Mastering new skills	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Keeping fit	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Rising to a challenge	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Feeling good about myself	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Competition	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Pleasing parents	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Pleasing coaches	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Winning	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Earning money	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Achieving a dream	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Making new friends	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Being with existing friends	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Others (please state)

Playing evaluation

My strengths	The areas I'd like to improve

EVALUATION BY OBSERVATION

Although there are a number of sources of information you can use to evaluate a player, possibly the most important is observation. Observing systematically to identify areas where you could help a player is a major coaching skill. Having a system to follow when you observe is advisable as it means you are more systematic in your analysis and less likely to miss things.

Technical observations could be made under the following headings:

	START	PREPARE	HIT	RECOVER
Racket carriage Focus on the racket arm and grip	How is racket carried as opponent strikes shuttle?	What grip is established and how is racket prepared for stroke?	What hitting action/racket pathway is used?	How is the racket carried in recovery?

	START	PREPARE	HIT	RECOVER
Body skill Focus on segments of the body, such as trunk, non-racket arm, non-racket leg	How are segments of the body orientated as opponent strikes shuttle?	How do body segments interact?	What actions do segments of the body perform that enhance/are detrimental to the stroke?	How are the body segments used to aid/inhibit recovery?

	START	PREPARE	HIT	RECOVER
Travelling Focus on the whole body travelling across the court and footwork patterns employed	Is split-step in evidence and how is it aligned (i.e.which foot if any leads?)	What methods of travel are used and how efficiently are they employed?	What large movements are in evidence during the hitting phase (eg. jumps, lunges) and how are they performed?	What methods of travel are used and how efficiently are they employed?

As well as what you focus your observations upon (eg. racket carriage, body skill or travelling) you also need to consider your positioning in order to make good observations. You may need to consider viewing from different parts of the court for different strokes.

Observing tactics

Tactical observations are ideally made from one corner of the court and if possible an elevated position. This gives a better impression of depth, width and height. Making notes under the headings of personal, spatial, opponent and partner awareness can also be useful.

The following table can be used to help summarise your evaluation of a player.

Player name:	Date:	PRIORITIES
Grips and grip changes	Panhandle grip rather than basic grip, doesn't change grip.	✓
Forehand overhead hitting	Hits dominated by wrist rather than rotation. Needs better use of rear legs and pushing hip through before the throw/hit. Impact point far too far in front on overhead, too much wrist, not enough rotation, hits from a square on position.	
Forecourt hitting: lifting	A long swing from the shoulder on forehand. No thumb grip on bh, very much hit from shoulder.	✓
Serving	Forehand high serve needs more pronounced "L" shape phase.	✓
Forecourt hitting: net shots	No use of thumb grip on backhand net shot. Accurate on forehand side.	
Backhand overhead hitting	No real structure to this.	
Midcourt hitting	No thumb grip on bh, very much hit from shoulder.	
Movement (eg. split-step, methods of approach/recovery, lunging, jumping, movement flow, posture)	No use of split step to link movements. Chassés everywhere in travelling and recovery!! Knee and foot not aligned on lunge, doesn't extend leg fully on lunge. Needs to keep trunk more upright. Lands narrow after kick through in rearcourt. Doesn't use non-racket hand to gain height.	✓
Tactics (spatial, personal, opponent and partner awareness)	Hits to spaces but rarely forces opponent to change direction. Hits clears with too much height missing opportunities to exert pressure. Lifts predictably cross-court all the time when under pressure.	✓
Attitude	Excellent attitude to practice and playing. Very competitive.	
Physical attributes	A strong, quick and potentially agile athlete.	

Goal setting

Once you have evaluated a player or group of players you then need to:

- Decide on the areas to prioritise

  This is more difficult when working with a group compared to an individual, since the group decision will always tend to something of a compromise. The main question to ask when prioritising is:

  What are the main areas I need to work on in order to bring about the maximum improvement of this player/group of players?

- Set goals to work on these priority areas

  These goals should as closely as possible follow the "**SMARTER**" principles which are explained in the table below.

Goals can short, medium or long term. For our purposes we will define these as follows:

Short term goals:
set for a specific activity or session

Medium term goals:
set for a series of session (eg. 6)

Long term goals:
set for a season/year or longer

A Level 2 coach is expected to utilise short and medium term goal setting in an effective manner. Referring to the player analysis on the previous page, the goals set might be:

- Establishing the basic grip as the predominant grip for forehand overhead and underarm strokes.
- Introducing then consolidating the use of forearm rotation on forehand overhead strokes.
- Reducing the length of swing on underarm strokes.
- Correcting lunging technique with improved foot/knee alignment.

GOAL CHARACTERISTIC	DESCRIPTION	EXAMPLE
Specific	Set precise goals so that you and the player know exactly what you are working towards.	Improve use of basic grip and forearm rotation on forehand overhead strokes.
Measurable	Set goals that can be quantified so that you can measure the success of the activity.	Hit 20 forehand overhead strokes from a hand feed using the basic grip and forearm rotation.
Agreed	Common goals that are agreed between the coach and the players are generally more motivating than those imposed by the coach. If you have completed a needs analysis, including the player's and coach's opinions of potential areas to develop, then to a certain extent you can justify that the goals have been arrived at by consensus.	Player and coach identify placement of dropshot in doubles as an area on which they could work.
Realistic	It is important to set a goal where some success can be achieved but at the same time it is challenging.	Setting a target to hit on the court: the better the player, the smaller the target.
Timed	Goals can be short, medium or long term. By setting a deadline focus is improved.	Integrate use of split-step into court movement so it is consistently used in game play in 6 months.
Exciting	Goals should be appealing and not boring! The inventiveness and sheer enthusiasm of the coach can have a major effect here.	Practise backhand low serve in competition against others in the group: who hits the targets most times out of 10?
Recorded	The goal should be written down and a recorded evaluation of progress made against this goal should also be noted in order to help future planning and assess coaching effectiveness.	"Players really enjoyed doubles practice and identified the dropshot, placed between the two players as the main dropshot they would use in doubles. Reinforce next week in matchplay".

OUTLINE COACHING PLAN

The intention of an outline coaching plan is to give an indication of skills areas being covered in each session and how you plan to progress them over a period of time. Note the plan is only intended to be an outline of each session, but the goals within the plan should at the very least be specific (not vague).

Player name:	Coach name:	Date:

Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4
Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:
Section 1 Prepare to play: include practice of lunge in alignment.	Section 1 Prepare to play: include practice of lunge landing almost straight-legged.	Section 1 Prepare to play: reinforce lunge alignment and straight-legged.	Section 1 Prepare to play: lunge and upper body posture – shuttle balance on head.
Section 2 Establish basic grip and forearm rotation on overhead: hand/racket feed.	Section 2	Section 2	Section 2
Section 3 Reinforce basic grip and short action on forehand lift.	Section 3	Section 3	Section 3
Section 4 Half court singles: Rally beginning with serve, forehand lift and clear then play rally out (PRO).	Section 4	Section 4	Section 4
Section 5 Cooldown: jog and static stretch – coach led.	Section 5 Cooldown: jog and static stretch – players lead some stretches.	Section 5 Cooldown: jog and static stretch – players lead most stretches.	Section 5 Cooldown: jog and static stretch – player led.

SESSION PLAN

There are many varieties of session planner that can be used and formats can vary according to personal taste. Good planners all have certain characteristics in place however, such as information about the player/group, details of date/venue, a safety check, goals, timings and content of the session.

Date	Venue	Numbers
Start time	**Duration**	**Ages**

Ability (please circle) Beginner Intermediate Advanced	**Needs of the group** (eg. fun, enjoyment, competition, improved technique, being with friends, etc).

Equipment required

Action points (from previous sessions)

							Time:
Prepare to play (circle elements to be included)	**Activity**	**Stretch**	**Stability**	**Speed**	**Shadow**	**Knock-up**	
Goal for activity 1	Practise 1 content						
Goal for activity 2	Practise 2 content						
Goal for activity 3	Practise 3 content						
Goal for activity 4	Practise 4 content						
Cooldown	**Jog**		**Static stretch**				
Summary (use questioning)							

Doing the session

Introduction

The skills you will need to employ in order to run effective activities include:

- Adopting an effective coaching style.

- Applying teaching techniques that match the learning styles of all members of the group.

- Time management.

- Excellent communication.

- Effective questioning.

- Delivering and receiving feedback.

- Managing a group effectively.

- Meeting the needs of learners at different stages of learning.

- Understanding closed and open skills.

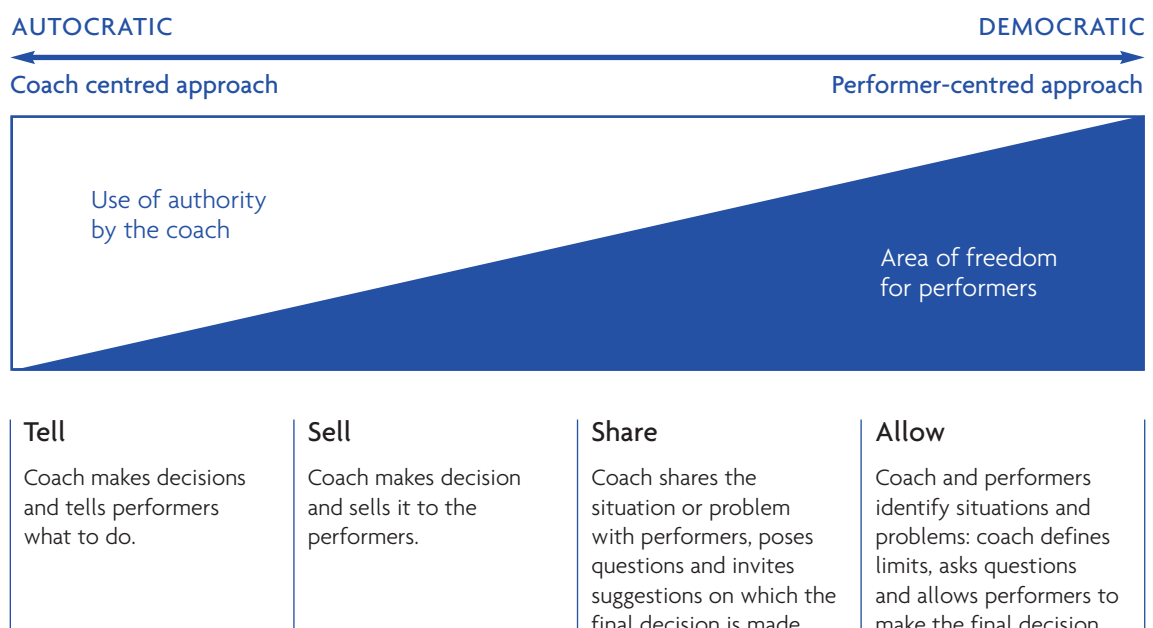- Employing appropriate practices for different skill levels.

Coaching styles

Level 1 has already introduced you to 2 coaching styles:

The democratic coach, emphasising empowerment of players and actively involving them in decisions regarding session/activity content.

The autocratic coach, where decisions are made solely by the coach and enforced upon the player.

Depending on the situation and the group being coached, they may be required to demonstrate characteristics leaning towards either the autocratic or democratic styles. These two opposed styles can be further subdivided into categories known as "tell, sell, share and allow". These categories are explained in detail in the sportcoachUK book "The Successful Coach: guidelines for coaching practice" and are represented in the diagram below:

AUTOCRATIC   **DEMOCRATIC**

Coach centred approach   Performer-centred approach

Use of authority by the coach

Area of freedom for performers

Tell	**Sell**	**Share**	**Allow**
Coach makes decisions and tells performers what to do.	Coach makes decision and sells it to the performers.	Coach shares the situation or problem with performers, poses questions and invites suggestions on which the final decision is made.	Coach and performers identify situations and problems: coach defines limits, asks questions and allows performers to make the final decision.

The best coaches are able to adapt their style depending on the needs of the individual or group with which they are working. Very young children, or beginners who have little concept of what they need to do, may prefer a more autocratic, coach-centred approach, whereas more experienced performers are more likely to appreciate a democratic, performer-centred approach.

Learning styles

Learners can broadly be divided into 3 types:

Visual learners, who learn best by watching others perform skills and who try to visualise actions.

Kinaesthetic learners, who are "hands on" learners who learn best by exploration and practising.

Auditory learners, who learn best by listening to explanation and talking things though.

It is generally accepted that seeing and doing are more effective ways of learning than listening, the implications for coaching being that:

Accurate demonstrations are vital to effective learning.

Lots of activity is also important for effective learning.

Talking/explanation should play a part but should form a supporting, rather than dominating, part of the coaching method.

An alternative approach to categorising learning styles involves dividing learners into 4 categories:

- Activists – 'here and now', sociable, seek challenge and immediate experience, open-minded, bored with implementation.

- Reflectors – 'stand back', gather data, consider and analyse, delay reaching conclusions, listen before speaking, thoughtful.

- Theorists – think things through in logical steps, put together seemingly unconnected facts into reasoned theories, are objective, eliminate subjectivity and flippancy.

- Pragmatists – actively search for and try out new ideas, practical, down-to-earth, enjoy solving problems and quick decision-making, become easily bored with long discussions.

Coaches with a heightened awareness of these types of learners will be able to coach more effectively by tailoring the coaching experience. For example, a player appearing uncomfortable when suddenly questioned may well know the answer, but has a reflective learning style that does not go well with being placed "on the spot".

Time management

Level 1 has already stressed the importance of effective time management, including:

- Arriving for sessions and finishing sessions on time.
- Allowing most of the time within a session to be taken up with doing activities.
- Being time aware, so activities within a session integrate effectively.

The Level 2 coach has a responsibility to organise whole sessions and has a responsibility to divide the time in an optimal manner that effectively meets the needs of the learners. There is considerable debate about how long practices should last for optimal learning and you should consider the following when designing a session:

- Fatigue.
- The reaction of the group.
- The age of the group.

As you become more experienced your session timings will become more flexible, with the main trigger for moving on being that effective learning is no longer taking place. The basic plan below represents a reasonable starting point.

SECTION	CONTENT	TIME
Prepare to play	To include as a minimum: activity to raise body temperature and dynamic stretching. Careful thought may allow for the integration of activities that can have beneficial effect on other activities later in the session, for example lunging in dynamic stretches to assist in net shot practices.	10m
Skill activity 1	An activity based on the assessed needs of the individual/group. The activity is often technically based.	15m
Skill activity 2	An activity based on the assessed needs of the individual/group. The activity is often tactically based.	15m
Skill activity 3	An activity based on the assessed needs of the individual/group. The activity is often game based.	15m
Cooldown	Gradually decreasing activity (eg, jog to walk), with static stretches. Upper body stretches performed whilst walking may increase the time efficiency of this section.	5m

Note that a plan is just that and in reality it is rare that timings will follow exactly what is planned. For example, consider the following situations:

1) The practice is more fatiguing than first envisaged, meaning the quality has dropped, forcing you to shorten the practice or intersperse it with a less demanding practice.

2) The body language of the players suggests they are really enjoying the practice and making significant improvements, meaning you may decide to keep the practice going for longer.

3) For whatever reason the practice is not working and you decide to move on to something else.

When reviewing a session some reference to the actual timings of activities in relation to what was planned is useful, as this allows you to plan timings more accurately in future sessions.

Communication skills

The aim of this section is to give Level 2 coaches a better understanding of communication skills and how they can be used to improve coaching effectiveness.

Communications can be divided into:

Verbal
- Giving information
- Giving instructions
- Asking questions
- Giving feedback

Non-Verbal
- Eye contact
- Facial Expressions
- Gestures
- Posture

Paraverbal
- Tone of voice
- Quickly/slowly
- With enthusiasm

Listening Skills
- Give your full attention
- Focus your mind on what is being said
- Let them finish talking
- Listen for the main points being made
- Finish listening before you speak

It is generally recognised that non-verbal and paraverbal messages are far stronger communicators than verbal messages.

Verbal communication

Verbal communication should be used in coaching, but explanations should be short, since other methods of communication are more effective. Feedback and questioning are vital aspects of verbal communication. To reflect their importance they are dealt with in more detail later in this section.

Non-verbal communication

Demonstration should give an accurate reflection of what you want to see in the players, since the picture they see will communicate a very strong message and largely override any accompanying explanation. Various gestures, eg. folding arms, can convey a number of negative or positive messages.

Paraverbal

Changing the tone of voice is invaluable, e.g. to generate enthusiasm, display caring or to assert discipline. Lack of inflection of voice can quickly help to bore players.

Active Listening

Listening is an active process involving:
Hearing, which means simply getting the main idea of what the player is saying.
Understanding, involving interpreting what you have heard in your own way.
Judging, involving deciding whether what you have heard makes sense to you.

Questioning

Questioning is an extremely important tool in coaching as it can:

- Help to check understanding.
- Reinforce learning.
- Be used to clarify potential areas of misunderstanding.
- Invite opinions.
- Stimulate discussion.

There are many types of questions that can be used for different purposes. These include:

	DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE	EXAMPLE
Open Questions	I tend to get longer answers and often begin with "what, why, how ….". I'm trying to draw out knowledge, opinions and feelings from the person answering.	What are the advantages and disadvantages of a crosscourt and straight lift in singles?
Closed Questions	I tend to get single word or very short, factual answers. I can be good for testing understanding, concluding a discussion and making a decision.	So you'd use a thumb grip for that stroke?
Funnel Questions	I start generally, home in on a point on each answer, gradually asking more and more detail at each level.	This is more a series of questions than just one on it's own.
Probing Questions	I am good for gaining clarification to ensure we get the whole story and understand it thoroughly, or for drawing information out of people who are trying to avoid telling us something.	So who exactly hit me on the back of the head with that shuttle?
Leading Questions	I'm good at getting the answer I want but leaving the other person feeling that they have had a choice. I have to be careful that I don't appear too manipulative.	"So why is a dropshot to the middle more effective in that situation?"
Rhetorical Questions	I'm not really a question, because in actual fact I don't expect an answer at all. I'm trying to engage the listener, drawing them in to agreeing with me rather than being told.	Isn't that a great way to hit a backhand clear?

Effective questioning is an invaluable coaching tool and you should seek to develop this skill to support your coaching.

Feedback

Feedback can be defined as "information received in response to something done". Learning cannot take place without feedback so it is very important for coaches to understand how to use it effectively. Note that feedback is not a one-way process from the coach to the player. The model below represents a 360° feedback model, reflecting the fact that feedback can be gained from the lead coach, the assistant coach or the player.

Player → Assistant Coach → Lead Coach → Player

Internal feedback

Even if the coach was not there, players would still receive their own internal feedback, divided into two and known as knowledge of performance and knowledge of results.

- Knowledge of performance is concerned with the shape, feel or pattern of the movement. The player will receive feedback from sensors in the muscles, joints and inner ear (balance). For example, a player may feel the thumb pushing on the back of the racket handle during the execution of a backhand net shot.

- Knowledge of results is more concerned with the outcome, for example where the net shot lands, how close to the net tape it is etc.

  It is important that the coach allows time for the player to learn from their own internal feedback as this is actually a very powerful and valuable learning tool. Once the activity begins, do not immediately intervene but allow some time for players to work things out for themselves. Look at what is occurring on court and only begin to intervene if you can see continual errors with no sign of improvement.

External feedback

This is feedback given to the player by the coach. In this situation feedback is most effective if it has the following characteristics:

The feedback is short and precise. "Good relaxed grip" is more useful than "good" on its own because it is positive and it tells the player exactly what is good without overcomplicating it.

Feedback intended to correct faults should be phrased in a positive manner. "Hitting along the line will make your straight lift very accurate" is far more positively phrased than "You need to stop hitting your lifts across the line because it always goes cross-court".

Delivery of feedback

Feedback intended to correct faults can be "enclosed" within two positives to form a "praise burger" to make the development area appear in a more positive context. For example:

Praise:	Your arm comes through very quickly on your smash and gives you lots of power.
Development:	If you prepare more side-on you will get even more power.
Praise:	This will make your smash an even more effective stroke.

Initially emphasise knowledge of performance rather than knowledge of results. This is because coaches should reinforce good technique first. With good technique ultimately successful outcomes will follow.

Avoid incessant feedback that can distract the player and interfere with them providing their own internal feedback. Continual cries of "good" after every shot can appear insincere, become boring and desensitise the player to any potential benefits of that external feedback.

Summary

- Let candidates use their own feedback initially.
- Intervene only where errors are continual and there is no sign of improvement.
- Use short, precise feedback.
- Phrase corrective feedback in a positive manner.
- Use the praiseburger approach.
- Use feedback to reinforce performance first, results second.

Managing a group

- Set the ground rules down at the start so players know what is acceptable and non-acceptable behaviour.

- Be prepared - a well planned session, with a variety of activities, is a major factor in controlling a group of players.

- Safety is a priority. The "STOP" command needs to be acted upon immediately in the interests of safety. Explain and demonstrate this to players.

- Promote co-operation amongst the group. Vary practice partners.

- Use a consistent area where group coaching will take place - ask players to come to this area quickly when they hear a particular command (eg. "coaching").

- Reduce potential distractions by facing the group away from other activities.

- Place yourself relative to the group so you can see and be seen, can hear and be heard. In particular, think about placing the student on the racket side during demonstrations.

- Give equal attention to all members of the group.

- Consider the needs of individuals within the group - does the practice need to be made easier or harder for individuals within the group?

- Think carefully about the matching of individuals within the group.

- Don't bring the group back in together unnecessarily: only when there is a common error being made by many members of the group.

- Rotate responsibility within the group, allowing different people to lead.

This section gives some very basic ideas on how to control larger groups on court. Note that if there are suitable alternatives, avoid queuing practices because they can restrict individuals' practice opportunities.

KEY

Feeder – player or coach
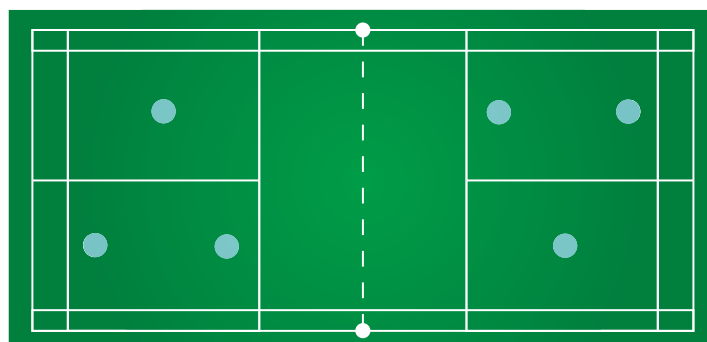
Player(s)

Direction of movement
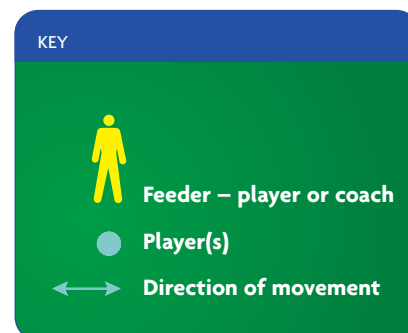
Queueing
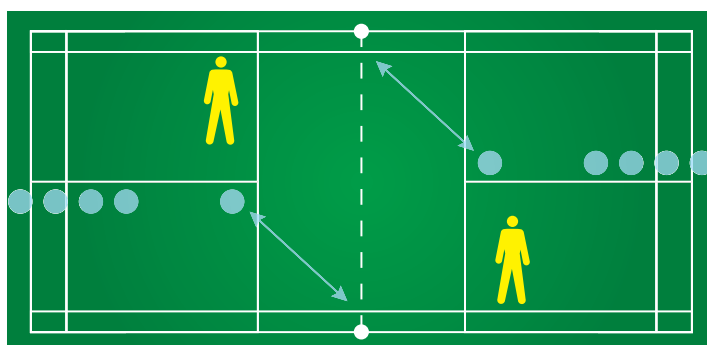
Assuming right handed players, this could be used to introduce forehand net shots and forehand lifts. Net kills would require the Feeder to stand in a safer position. Both groups change sides for backhand shots.
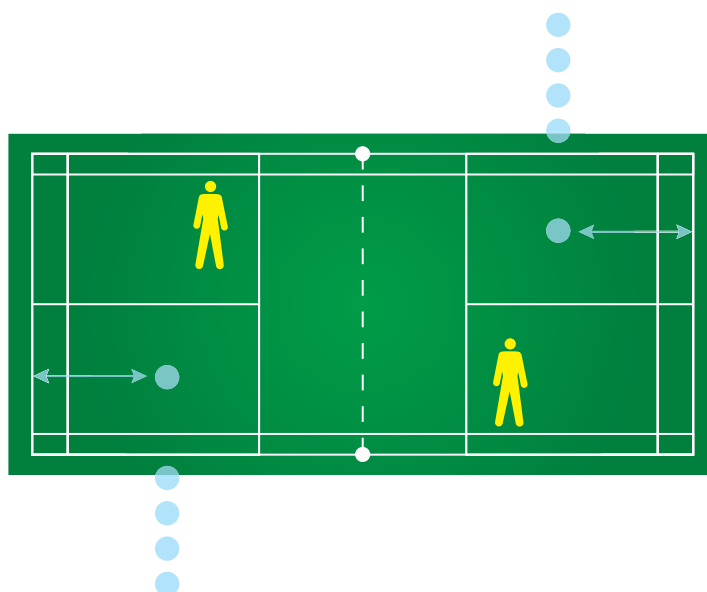

Assuming right handed players, this could be used to introduce forehand clears, dropshots and smashes. Note the queueing position allows for backward movement into the shot and forward movement after the shots.
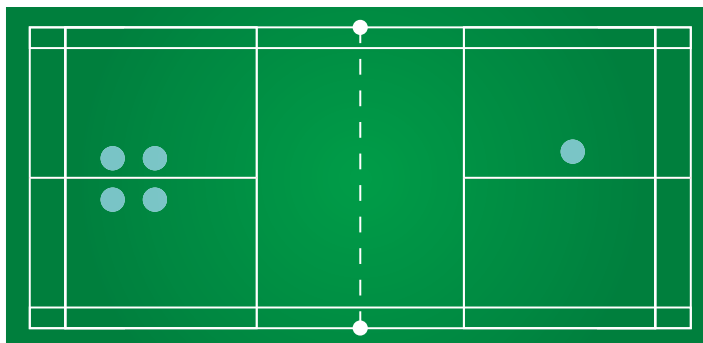
Two against one (half court)

Two against one on half a court. The player on their own cannot smash, but many other combinations of shots could be allowed.
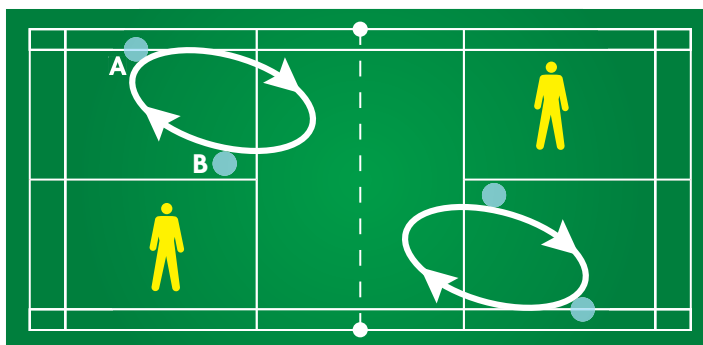
Using space effectively
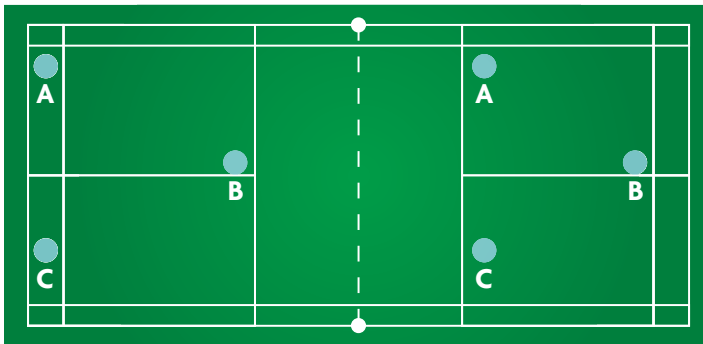
Players work in pairs (A to A, B to B, C to C) practising lifts and dropshots. Note how players are 'offset' to increase safety.
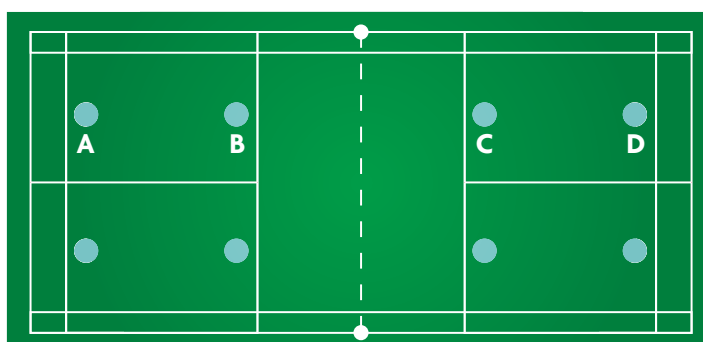
Four against one

Players in the four encouraged to cover one corner.

Rotation

Feeder lifts to wide midcourt, Player A smashes and moves forwards to block the shuttle at the net. The shuttle is then lifted. Player B moves from net position to replace Player A and practice continues.
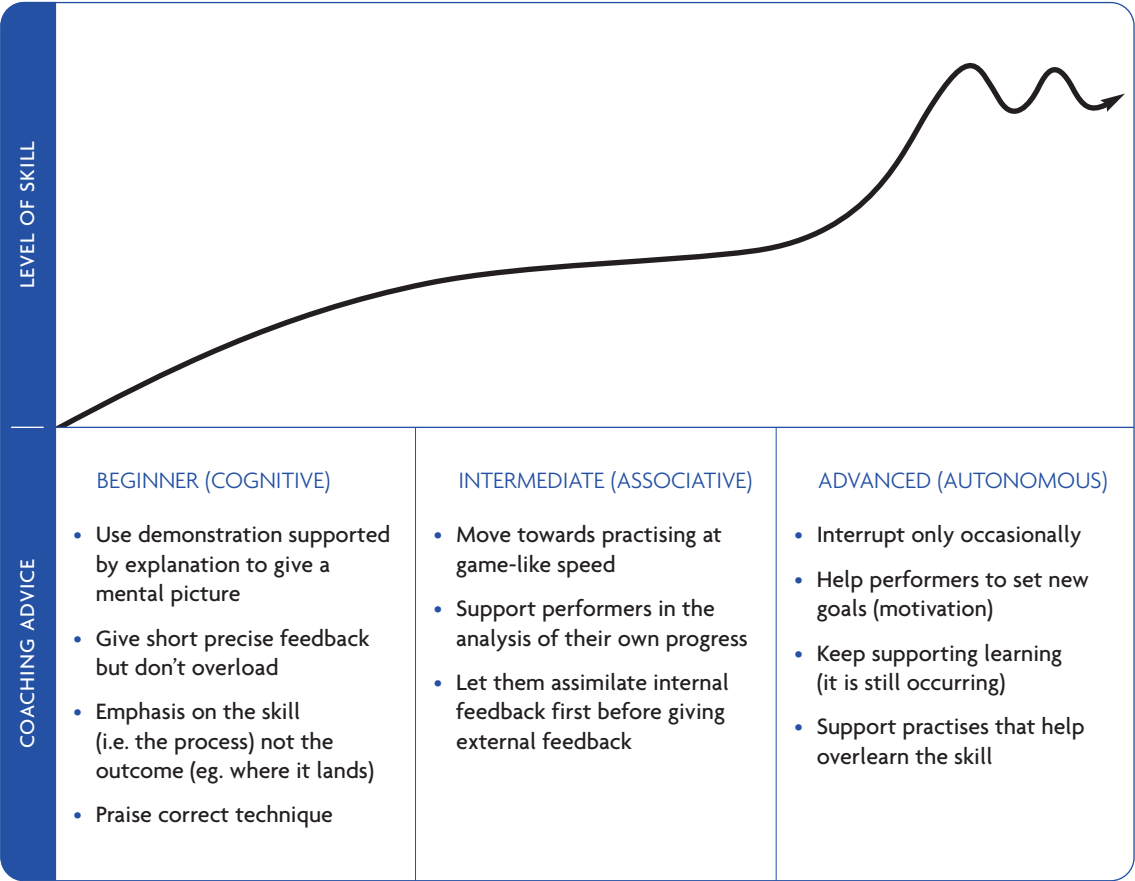
Eight on a court

A clears, D drops, B plays net shot, C lifts: change the roles around so each player uses a different shot.

Stages of learning

The stage of learning a new skill can be divided into beginner (cognitive), intermediate (associative) and advanced (autonomous). For a player to go through this stages of learning efficiently the coach needs to make sure they provide appropriate coaching techniques and supporting practices.

LEVEL OF SKILL

COACHING ADVICE

BEGINNER (COGNITIVE)	INTERMEDIATE (ASSOCIATIVE)	ADVANCED (AUTONOMOUS)
• Use demonstration supported by explanation to give a mental picture • Give short precise feedback but don't overload • Emphasis on the skill (i.e. the process) not the outcome (eg. where it lands) • Praise correct technique	• Move towards practising at game-like speed • Support performers in the analysis of their own progress • Let them assimilate internal feedback first before giving external feedback	• Interrupt only occasionally • Help performers to set new goals (motivation) • Keep supporting learning (it is still occurring) • Support practises that help overlearn the skill

How fast the progression occurs is controlled by the player's speed of learning, supported by the skill of the coach. The following continuums are useful for coaches to think about when designing practices to support skill development. Note that during skill development moving along these continuum's from left to right is the desired path, although it may be necessary to backtrack if the skill breaks down at a certain level of practise.

1. Develop skills from simple to complex

Simple   Complex

An example would be focussing on the hitting phase of the stroke, gradually increasing the movement into and out of the stroke.

2. Develop skills from slow to quick

Slow   Quick

Gradually increasing the speed of the feed is a useful supporting tool.

3. Develop skills from a closed to an open environment

Closed   Open

Closed skills are skills performed in an predictable environment that allows individuals to plan their movements in advance.

Open skills are skills performed in an unpredictable environment, requiring players to adapt their movements in response to the changing circumstances.

Starting with predictable practises and then gradually building in levels of unpredictability helps the player move to a situation where they can implement the skill in a game-like environment.

Designing practices

The choice and effectiveness of practices is governed by the coaches ability to apply the skills and knowledge previously outlined in the "How to Coach" section. The following bullet points should help reinforce the link between these "How to Coach" skills and the practices selected.

• Assess the needs of the player and keep this at the forefront of your mind when selecting a practice

• Assess what coaching style is most appropriate for these players

• Match the intended coaching delivery so it covers different learning styles

• Plan the timings in the practice (eg. change role in practice every 10 shots)

• Plan how the group is to be managed during the practice (eg. safety, varying practice partners etc)

• Select a range of possible practices to cater for differing standards in the group

• Utilise effective communication methods, including use of questioning and feedback to reinforce learning

1. Shadowing

Having Introduced, Demonstrated and Explained the stroke a short period of shadowing may be used.
The section should not be long, since the main motivation of the players will be ultimately to hit the shuttle.
A progression for shadowing would be:

Copy the shadow of the coach

Perform the shadow without the coach to copy

Perform the shadow with eyes closed

> **Advantage**
> Players can create a picture of the shape of the stroke without the stress of timing the hit. Performing the shadow without the coach is an indicator of whether a mental picture is forming. Performing shadow with eyes closed allows kinaesthetic feel to develop.
>
> **Disadvantage**
> Players will become bored quickly if not allowed to strike the shuttle. The timing element of hitting the shuttle is not present.

2. Single shot – predictable feed

Here the focus is very much on developing the closed skill i.e. players concentrating on technique.

1. Introduce the shot	Backhand net shot.	

2. Demonstrate Initially silent so players can absorb the visual picture. May be demonstrated by a competent player within the group or by the coach.

3. Explain the shot Played from your forecourt to your opponent's forecourt, moving them from their base and creating space in other areas of the court, often with the intention of trying to create a weak lift. (This basically places the shot in a tactical context). 1-2 key points highlighted, a potential example being a relaxed thumb grip and racket head below hand.

4. Activity Shadow the shot.
Play shot from underarm hand feed or underarm racket feed.
Play shot from overhead hand feed or overhead racket feed.
This can be worked on individually or maybe queueing in a group.
Feeding can be from the coach or from other members of the group.

5. Summarise Summarise, often with questioning.

Advantage
Allows players to focus specifically on the process i.e. how the skill should be performed.
Allows skill to build steadily, with focus being on either the start, prepare, hitting or recovery phases.

Disadvantage
Needs a great deal of encouragement from coach as players can soon become bored. There is no consequence to the stroke (eg. a winner) so practice is not game-like.

3. Predictable but restricted rally

Players are instructed that each rally should follow a set pattern, for a set number of shots. For example, the sequence for a player practicing the backhand net shot could be:

High serve – dropshot – block to net (on backhand side) – backhand net shot – stop

Advantage
Begins to bring in another shot, so it tests the player to see how well he has learnt the skill by giving them more to think about. Allows the player to flow into the shot so it becomes more like a rally.

Disadvantage
Still a closed situation requiring no attention to the position of the opponent. Requires a certain ability level for the players to place the shuttle with sufficient accuracy.

4. Predictable continuous rally

A sequence of shots is followed, including the focus shot, but the rally carries on after the focus shot. Examples could be:

Dropshot – net shot (to backhand) – backhand net shot – lift

or **Dropshot – net shot (to backhand) – backhand net shot – lift – repeat the sequence**

or **Clear – dropshot – net shot (to backhand) – backhand net shot – lift – repeat the sequence**

Advantage
Begins to bring in another shot, so it tests the player to see how well he has learnt the skill by giving them more to think about. Allows the player to flow into the shot so it becomes more like a rally.

Disadvantage
Predictability can lead to bad habits, for example retreating too far and too quickly when a good net shot has been played or running though base rather than using split-step.

5. Adding element(s) of doubt

In this practice the player is less certain when the feed for the focus shot is going to be delivered. Examples would be:

Feeder can hit as many lifts as he likes from the net, but only one net shot at a time. Player hits dropshots but must concentrate on recovering back into the court ready for the Feeder playing a net shot. Player then moves in and plays a backhand net shot. Feeder then lifts and practice starts again.

Feeder hits as many clears as he likes, but only one dropshot at a time. Player hits clears back but must concentrate on recovering back into the court ready for the Feeder playing a dropshot. Player then moves in and plays a backhand net shot. Feeder then lifts and the practice starts again.

Advantage
Becoming more open with more doubt being introduced. Player must recover positively but under control in order to be successful. Importance of split-step is reinforced.

Disadvantage
Feeder needs to be skilful to gradually increase pressure on playing of backhand net shot. May reinforce bad habit if retreating from the net too quickly or playing a net shot under pressure where there is not space at the net to exploit (lift would be a better choice).

6. Random rally with a focus shot

Feeder(s) rally randomly with the player but there is a "focus shot" for the player to use. Feeders move the player around but they play a high percentage of shots to backhand forecourt so players can use backhand net shot.

Advantage
Makes the practice more open, with players having to move into the shot from random positions on the court.

Disadvantage
Feeder needs to be skilful to gradually increase pressure on playing of backhand net shot. May reinforce a bad habit if playing a net shot under pressure where there is not space at the net to exploit (lift would be a better choice).

Increasing the openness of practices further involves giving the players more choice of shot and developing awareness of their own and their opponent's position. This leads to a bias towards more tactical practices. This will be dealt with in more detail in the tactical section.

Meeting learners' needs

Different people learn in different ways. The more methods of coaching you develop the more likely you are to be able to find a method that meets the learning needs of your players.

Demonstration (live)

Advantages
An accurate live demonstration is an extremely effective coaching tool – "a picture tells a thousand words".

Disadvantages
The demonstration must contain the key coaching points that are about to be learnt. If it does not then players will copy what they see, which could be the bad habit of a coach.

Demonstration (video/dvd)

Advantages
Allows coaches to show a good quality demo that has been selected to highlight the key coaching points. Can be extremely motivating if the technique is demonstrated by a known "role model" who the players are inspired by. Useful if the coach is not able to give a quality demonstration themselves. May be able to be played in slow motion.

Disadvantages
Access to the right equipment in the hall can be problematic. Film tends to lose a "3-dimensional" aspect which a live demonstration has.

Explanation

Advantages
Useful to highlight key coaching points.

Disadvantages
If explanation is too long-winded then players lose interest. Can also reduce the effectiveness of demonstration by splitting a player's attention between listening and looking.

Manual guidance

Advantages
The coach can physically move a player into the correct position (e.g. manipulating the hand on the racket to establish a particular grip, turning the player to a more sideways stance).

Disadvantages
Child protection issues arise. The general advice would be to avoid touching players if at all possible. If it is necessary gain the permission of the player. It also does not allow players to really get the feel of a particular grip/body position since they are not in control of establishing that position.

Mechanical guidance

Taping the hand to the racket might be an example. In this case the player is assisted to adopt the correct grip for a particular shot. Although not exactly the same, standing a player with their back to a physical barrier (e.g. the net) and then getting them to hit shuttles can be a useful way in which to get him hitting the shuttle out in front of his body. Suspending a shuttle for players to hit or hitting with a cover over the strings of racket to increase power are other examples.

Advantages
Can help to overcome specific problems.

Disadvantages
Once the mechanical aid is removed, will the player not simply return to their normal approach?

Shaping

Players get to see a whole shot and try to copy it. Key points are highlighted and worked on but always in the context of the whole movement.

Advantages

Allows players to focus on a key point without losing flow. Particularly effective when the elements of a technique are highly inter-related as in the backswing and follow-through of the forehand overhead.

Disadvantages

Players may not be able to focus on training the key point since it is "lost" in the rest of the movement.

Whole-part-whole

Players are shown a whole technique, a particular part of that technique is isolated and practiced, then the whole technique is put back together again. An example could be movement to the forehand forecourt (split-step/chassé/lunge) where whole technique is seen and practiced, the chassé is then practiced in isolation, then the whole technique is practised as a whole again.

Advantages

Allows players to focus on a key element of a technique.

Disadvantages

Can be ineffective if the elements of a technique are highly inter-related (highly organised) as in forehand overhead shot. For example, just to isolate the backswing as a part could easily result in a lack of flow and power on a forehand overhead.

Blocked and random practice

Practicing the right things helps you to improve, but if the time block of practice on a particular skill is extended too long then players become bored and they are likely to concentrate less and less. Random practices, with a greater variation in the skills, may yield better learning results because when revisiting a skill the player has to make a thinking effort to remember and implement the motor program worked on earlier. The exact time limits for random practice are open to debate. The length of time a group or individual can concentrate effectively on a skill will vary enormously and is often related to the skill and enthusiasm of the coach.

Kinaesthetics

Kinaesthetics is all about the feel of a particular movement. Coaches that use a kinaesthetic approach make great use of words/phrases such as "push", "tap", "rebound", "feel", "flow", "explode", "slice" etc. Closing the eyes whilst performing a technique (e.g. lunge) can heighten kinaesthetic awareness.

Advantages

Can be simpler and less technical as a method of coaching. The eyes closed practices can be good fun but bear safety in mind. Can be useful to help correct faults.

Disadvantages

Not all words/phrases mean the same to everyone. Can be misleading if linked too closely to biomechanics. Some shots don't fit exactly into a kinaesthetic category. May limit creativity (different players play different shots in different ways).

Positive transfer

Coaches can arrange certain practices close together that appear different but contain similar elements. Positive transfer occurs if the similar element practiced first then helps the player to achieve greater success on the next practice. An example would be practicing the sideways stance for a clear, followed by a dropshot practice where the sideways stance could be practiced again, even though it may not be the thrust of the second practice.

Advantages

Players get specific elements reinforced over a longer period of time but don't get bored because "on the surface' the practice has changed e.g. forearm rotation on backhand drive and backhand overhead.

Disadvantages

Take care to make sure that the session is well organised with elements that truly have related components. "We always finish with a game of football (U-14's) because it helps their badminton movement" is a particularly good example of positive transfer theory where there is a tenuous link at best!

Feedback

Feedback can be:

- Internal (with the player learning about their own performance of a skill or result of performance of a skill).

- External (given by the coach or peers).

Feedback can be player to player, coach to player, coach to coach, player to coach and the coach reflecting on his own performance. Constructive feedback for error correction is best delivered in the "praiseburger" format (praise – development area – praise).

Advantages

Lets players know how they are progressing during a session. Especially effective if the feedback is concise and specific e.g. "good lunge position". The coach is often the fiercest critic of his own performance, which can be healthy. Feedback from peers can exert a very strong influence.

Disadvantages

The message is easily lost if feedback is long-winded and not specific. Over-using external feedback can interfere with players' internal feedback. Feedback from players to coach or from player to player is not valuable if players do not treat the task in a mature fashion. It requires time commitment at end of the session to record feedback/coach reflections.

Points of reference

Giving children points of reference can help their learning. An example would be suspending a shuttle in the net at shoulder height and then practicing net shots, encouraging the player to hit the approaching shuttle at approximately the same height as the shuttle in the net.

Another example is focusing on the net tape and trying to keep "level" when moving backwards (e.g. chasséing) in order to encourage "skimming' rather than "bouncing" across the floor.

Paint along a racket handle can help children establish a correct grip.

Advantages

Is simple, improves focus of children on a specific aspect.

Disadvantages

Less effective if attention on the reference point causes a deterioration in another aspect of the skill.

Discovery learning

This involves setting a problem for the players and seeing if they can come up with an answer.

Advantages

Gives the players "ownership" of the problem and can therefore increase their motivation. Can be a lot of fun.

Disadvantages

More difficult learning style for the coach to manage. Players may come up with solutions that actually don't work well in a game. More appropriate for players with some experience of the game.

Shadowing

Players shadow a movement without hitting a shuttle. The movement can be court coverage, a hit or a combination of both.

Advantages

Allows players to focus on specific aspects without the "distraction" of the shuttle.

Disadvantages

The shuttle being hit (which controls the initiation and timing of the movement) is missing.

Questioning

The type of questioning is important. Closed questions that invite a "yes" or "no" answer involve little thinking from the player, and very often the answer that the coach wants is obvious to the player. Open questioning that involves players thinking of an answer from many possible responses is more effective as a learning tool.

Advantages

Effective questioning can help with learning as it encourages players to think. It is also another way in which coaches can test if learning is taking place.

Disadvantages

Whilst players may respond correctly to questions, this does not mean they necessarily believe in or actually perform the skill correctly.

Analogies

Using explanation or demonstration of something with partial similarity to improve learning. Asking players to look at their watch to help get pronation on backhand shots or using goalkeeping to explain coverage of width during a basic space game are examples of analogies.

Advantages
Can be very effective if kept simple and they draw parallels with situations and movements that the players have experience in.

Disadvantages
Can be confusing if too complex or draw parallels with situations and movements that the players have no experience in. An example would be asking players to perform a clear with a throwing action without them knowing what a good overhead throwing action consists of.

Still pictures

Advantages
Pictures can be very motivating, especially if of role models/heroes performing a particular skill.

Disadvantages
Can give a false impression of the technique involved as it gives no indication of the flow leading to or following this particular "snapshot".

Flipcharts/overheads

Advantages
May be an off-court alternative if players are having particular difficulty with a particular aspect – possibly more useful for tactics.

Disadvantages
May put off players if used too much and for too long as they prefer to be active.

Visualisation

Having seen a demonstration of a particular technique (live or by video) players are asked to try and imagine themselves using the same technique/playing the same shot.
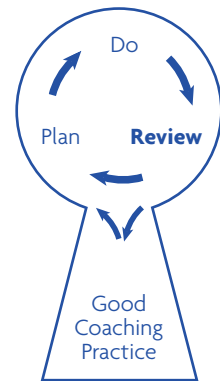
Advantages
May help to establish a motor program in the Central Nervous System.

Disadvantages
Not all players may be able to use their imagination in this way.

Reviewing the session

Do

Plan **Review**

Good
Coaching
Practice

"The main difference between this review document and the one used for the level 1 is that this refers to the sessions rather than activities, reflecting the increased responsibility of the Level 2 coach"

SAFETY	Was the facility left in an appropriate state for future sessions? (if no, what needed to be put right?)	
PLANNING	Comment on the effectiveness of the organisation of the session (planning, equipment etc).	
NEEDS AND GOALS	To what extent did the session meet the group's needs?	
	To what extent did the session achieve the stated goals (were the group able implement the guidance given in your coaching)?	
CONTENT	Comment on the appropriateness of the session content. What changes were made to the content during the session and why?	
COACHING PRACTICE	Comment on the effectiveness of your coaching practice during the session (coaching style, communication skills, questioning, group management, time management).	
FUTURE PRACTICE	If you were to coach this session again, what would you change?	

Additional coaching information

Further reading

For candidates interested in additional reading, the following book is recommended:

Physiology and Performance.
Sports Coach UK
(www.1st4sport.com)

Physical

This section is not intended to represent a comprehensive anatomy and physiology course. It aims to give you the basic knowledge of the human body and progresses quickly to practical applications that can be of great value to your coaching.

In no way should the information qualify the coach to act as physiotherapist or doctor. In the case of injury/illness the coach should refer the player to qualified medical assistance as soon as possible.

The skeleton

The mature skeleton is made up of 206 bones. From a sporting perspective, the main functions of the skeleton are:

Protection

(of internal organs, such as the spine, ribcage and skull).

Movement

(providing anchor points for muscles to pull on to create movement).

Skull

Clavicle
(collar bone)

Scapula
(shoulder blade)

Humerus
(only bone in
upper arm)

Radius
(goes down to
base of thumb)

Ulna

Pelvic
girdle

Tibia

Fibula
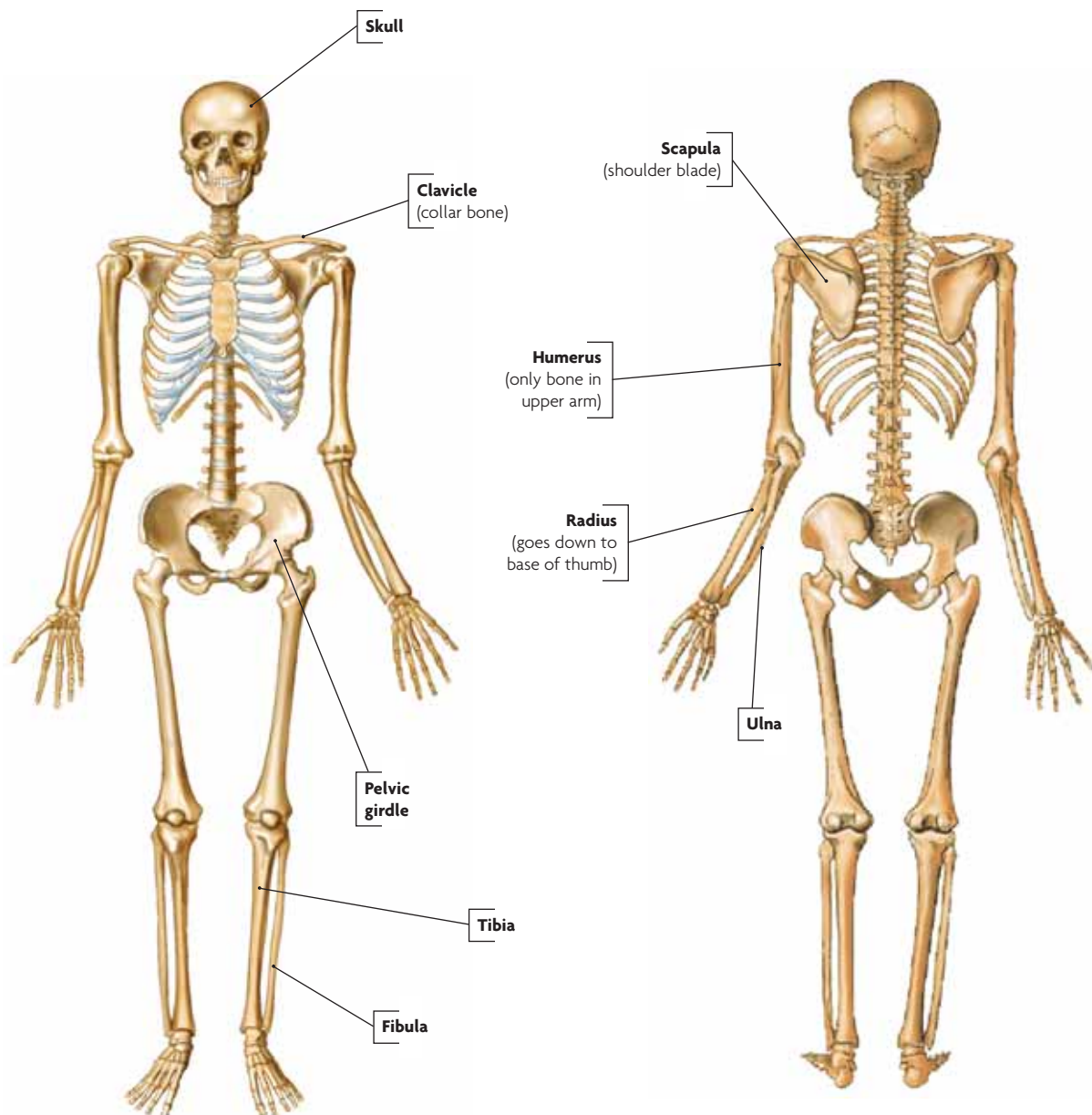
Skeletal development

In its formative stages the skeleton is made up of cartilage, which is a softer material than bone. Your ears and the end of your nose are examples of cartilage that remains soft through adulthood.

In primary and early secondary school years, growth of bones is relatively steady and there is a gradual hardening as the cartilage changes to fully formed bone tissue.

During the growth spurt, the growth end plates of cartilage (see diagram below) located close to the ends of bones are the key areas from which further bone development is controlled. The contrast in bone tissue between harder bone tissue and softer, cartilage-based growth plates in this phase leaves athletes potentially vulnerable to injury through overload and overuse.

It is not until early adulthood that the growth plates finally convert fully from cartilage to harder bone tissue.

The coaching implications are:

- Children should exercise, but keep loads light and vary the exercises regularly.
- Increases in loads should be planned and progressive.
- During the growth spurt, appreciate that movement can appear clumsy and unco-ordinated.
- Knowledge of a child's total involvement in sport can help the coach to support the child effectively through the growth spurt.

Specific areas where growth spurt injuries can often occur are:

- knee cap, with pain at the front of the knee
- just below the knee
- the heel
- low back

Please note that coaches should avoid diagnosing injuries or recommending treatment. Injured players should be referred to either a doctor, physiotherapist etc.

Ribcage

Femur
(only bone
in the thigh)

Patella
(knee cap)
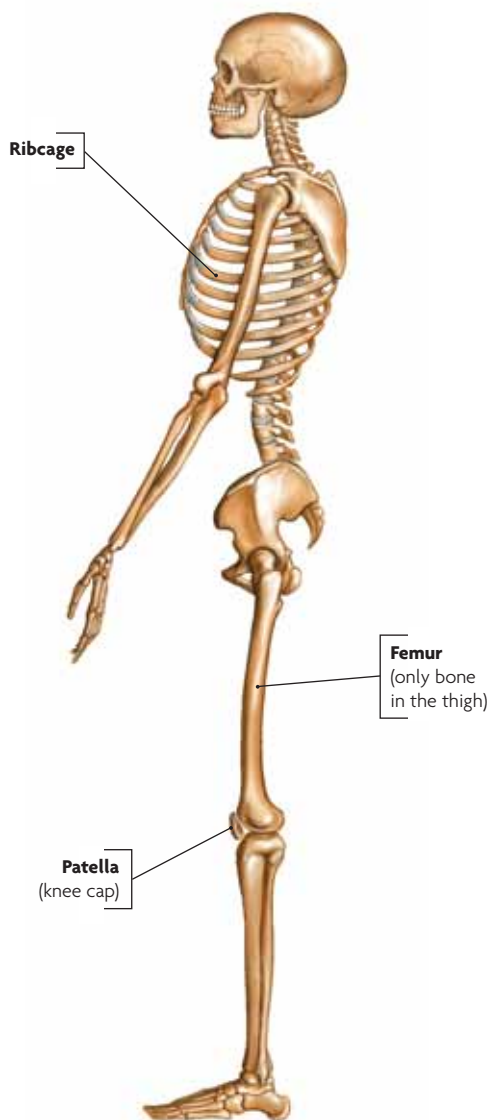
**Growth
end plate**

Joints

The bones of the skeleton are joined by ligaments to create joints. The main joints of the body that we need to consider for badminton are listed below.

JOINT	MAIN TYPE OF MOVEMENT
Shoulder (ball & socket)	Can bend and straighten, bend away from/towards the body

JOINT	MAIN TYPE OF MOVEMENT
Radio-ulnar (pivot joint)	Rotating

JOINT	MAIN TYPE OF MOVEMENT
Elbow (hinge joint)	Bending and straightening

JOINT	MAIN TYPE OF MOVEMENT
Wrist	Can bend and straighten, bend away from/towards the body

| JOINT	MAIN TYPE OF MOVEMENT
Hip (ball & socket)	Can bend, straighten, move limb towards/away from the body and can rotate

JOINT	MAIN TYPE OF MOVEMENT
Knee (hinge joint)	Bending and straightening

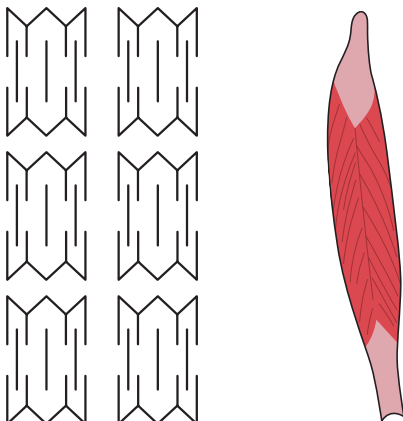| JOINT	MAIN TYPE OF MOVEMENT
Ankle	Can bend and straighten
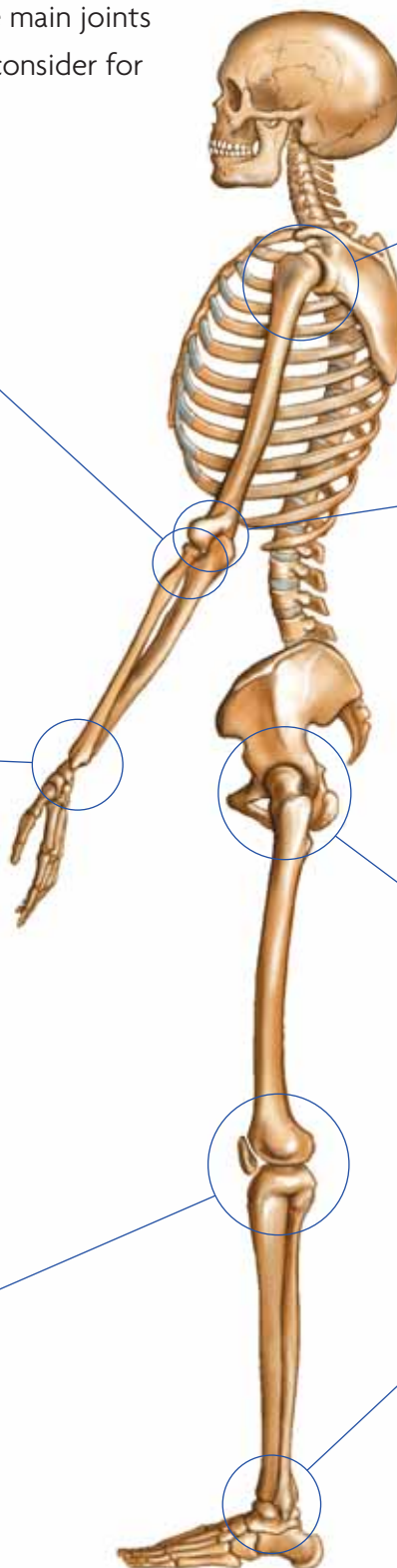
Muscles

Muscles consist of bundles of fibres attached to bones at each end by tendons. The end of the muscle closest to the centre of the body is known as the origin, the end of the muscle furthest from the centre of the body being the insertion.
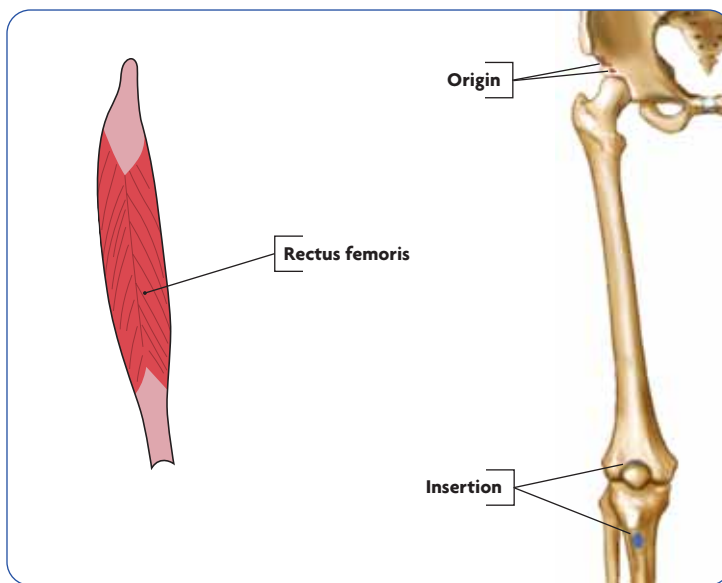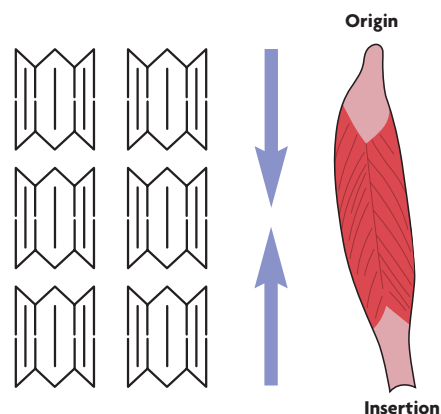

A muscle contracts as a result of receiving messages from the brain and spinal cord that travel to the muscle via nerves. At a microscopic level, small fibres known as fibrils react to the impulse by going from a slightly overlapped state to a more overlapped state. The more fibrils that contract, the greater the muscle as a whole will contract, with the origin and insertion moving closer together. The contracting muscle pulls on the skeleton, which creates movement.
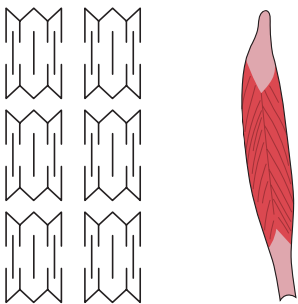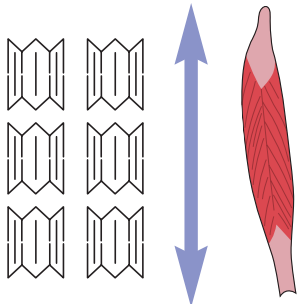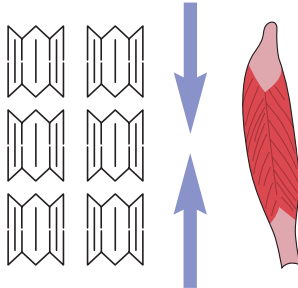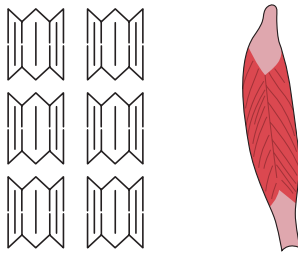
Relaxed

Contracted

Muscle contraction

DESCRIPTION	IN THE MUSCLE	BADMINTON APPLICATION
Relaxation The fibrils within the muscles are receiving relatively few nerve impulses and many of the fibrils are in their relaxed, slightly overlapping state.		
Eccentric contraction The muscle is lengthening, with the origin and insertion going further apart. If this is happening rapidly, then the nerve impulses are sent automatically to prevent the muscle "over-stretching" and groups of fibrils start to contract to slow the stretching down. The picture shows a player dropping into the split-step. The left quadriceps are lengthening (it has to go round the bent knee) but to control the lengthening fibrils in the muscle begin to contract (a 'braking' effect).		
Concentric contraction Here the muscle is shortening, with the origin and insertion coming closer together. The fibrils within the muscle are contracting. The picture shows a player pushing out of the split-step. The left leg is straightening, the origin and insertion are moving closer together as a result of many fibrils contracting. **A key point is that the force of this contraction is increased if preceded by an eccentric contraction.**		
Isometric contraction In this type of contraction, movement is not involved. The origin and insertion of the muscle are staying the same distance apart but some fibrils are contracting to help maintain the muscle in this fixed position.		

Quick muscles

Since muscle contraction depends on receiving messages from the nervous system, it is important that the brain is focused in the correct way. If you are training for speed, then being positive in the brain ("a go for it" attitude) is vital.

Stretch-shortening cycle

As explained in the previous section, an eccentric contraction followed by a concentric contraction produces more power. This is known as the stretch-shortening cycle. Landing and pushing off quickly, or backswings followed immediately by forward swings, make effective use of the stretch-shortening cycle.

Warm muscles

Active muscles produce heat and work more efficiently than cold muscles. The start of Preparing to Play involves "Activity" to get the muscles of the body warmer. As children have smaller muscle masses than adults they heat up more quickly, so the "Activity" phase for children does not have to be as long as for adults.

Fibre types

Muscle fibres can be separated into two broad types: slow twitch fibres and fast twitch fibres. The amount a person has of each is broadly determined at birth. Fast twitch fibres contract quickly and generate large amounts of force but fatigue more quickly. Slow twitch fibres contract more slowly and generate a little less force but do not fatigue so quickly.

Stabilising muscles

Not all muscles are there to produce large limb movements. Some have a role in keeping things stable, thereby protecting joints and giving a solid "base" on which more movement-orientated muscles can pull. The best example would be the abdominals that give stability to the trunk. Stabilising muscles tend to have higher percentages of slow twitch fibres as they are normally required to work at lower intensities but for long periods of time. Working slowly and under control targets these muscles.

Respiratory system

Basic structure

The respiratory system consists of the nose, bronchial tubes and lungs. The left lung is a slightly different shape to accommodate the heart.

Typical maximal lung volumes for a young adult would be 5.9 litres for a male, 4.4 litres for a female, with 10-15 breaths per minute being a normal range. A typical breath would be 500ml (a small bottle of coke).

Lung volumes depend on age, gender and height.
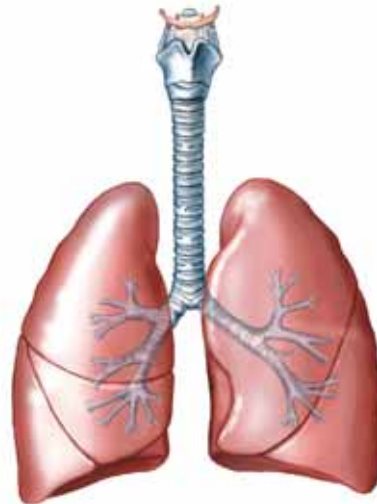
Basic Function

- Lungs bring air into the body and drop off oxygen to the blood.

- Lungs remove carbon dioxide from the blood and breathe it out.

Short term exercise considerations

Both rate and depth of breathing increase with exercise.

During maximal exercise, it is possible to breathe out as much as 150 litres of air in 1 minute.

Long term exercise considerations

With training, muscles responsible for the breathing mechanism become more efficient.

Training does not increase lung size, apart from possibly in swimmers.

The lungs provide more than enough oxygen for the working muscles. It is the oxygen-carrying and delivery capacity of the cardiovascular system that tends to limit stamina, not the respiratory system.

Cardiovascular system
Heart structure & function

Heart Structure

The heart is about the size of a clenched fist and is made up predominantly of a specialised type of muscle tissue called "cardiac muscle".

Chambers 1 and 2 are blood receiving chambers know as the right and left atria (singular is atrium).

Chambers 3 and 4 are blood pumping chambers known as the left and right ventricles.
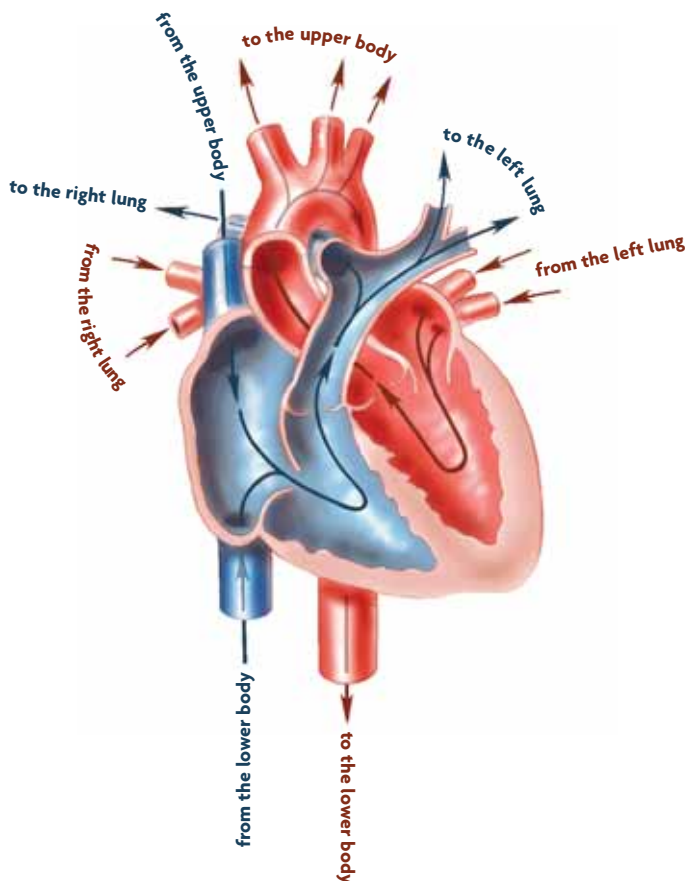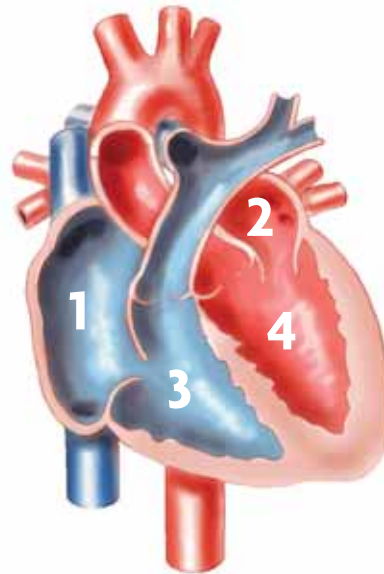
Heart Function

The right hand side of the heart receives deoxygenated blood from the body and pumps it on to the lungs.

The left hand side of the heart receives oxygenated blood from the lungs and pumps it to the body.

Typical values for a resting adult heart would be:

• 70 beats per minute

• 70ml of blood expelled per beat

• ≈5 litres of blood expelled per minute

Cardiovascular system
Circulation structure and function

Arteries are blood vessels with thick muscular walls that carry blood away from the heart. They have to be thick and strong to withstand the high pressures of blood being pumped out from the heart.

Veins carry de-oxygenated blood back to the heart. They are thinner-walled than arteries as they do not have to withstand such high blood pressures. They do contain valves that assist in the flow of 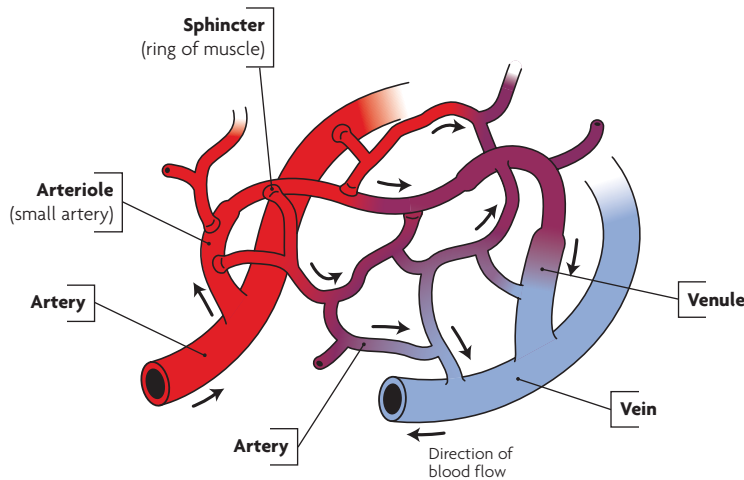blood back to the heart. Blood in the venous system is pushed back to the heart not by the pressure of the heart, but by pressure changes in the chest due to breathing and by the contraction/relaxation of skeletal muscles.

Capillaries are very small blood vessels with very thin walls. They have to be thin-walled because oxygen and nutrients have to pass through their walls in order to enter muscles. Small rings of muscle called sphincters control the flow of blood into the capillaries.
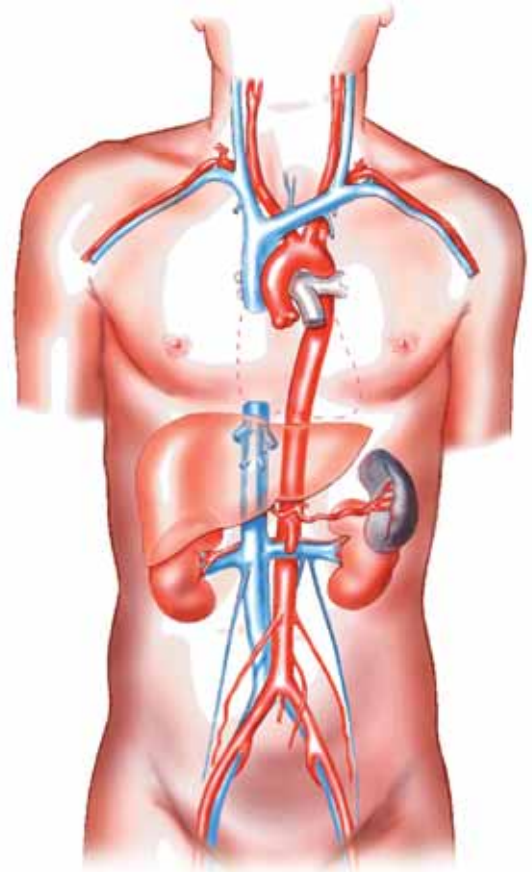
Important

At the end of strenuous exercise the heart rate begins to reduce but there is still a lengthy period when the heart rate is well above resting level. During this period it is important that the player keeps moving (e.g. gentle jogging/walking), the contraction/relaxation of skeletal muscles helping to pump blood back to the heart. If mild exercise is not continued then the supply of blood back to the heart is reduced, blood pressure drops and players can faint.

Cardiovascular system
The blood

Blood Structure

The blood consists of:

- Plasma, a straw coloured fluid.

- Blood cells:
  - Red blood cells.
  - White blood cells, responsible for fighting infection.
  - Platelets, responsible for blood clotting.

Blood Function

Blood has many different functions, but the main functions in terms of exercise are to:

- Transport nutrients (blood glucose and fatty acids) and waste products. This occurs in blood plasma.

- Transport oxygen to the muscles and carbon dioxide away from the muscles.

Red blood cells

White blood cells

Platelets

Cardiovascular system
Effects of exercise

Short-term changes to the cardiovascular system when exercising:

- During exercise the body's muscles require more oxygen and nutrients.

- Increased demand is addressed by an increase in blood flow to muscles.

- Increased blood flow to muscles is achieved by:
  - Pumping more blood out on each beat (up to moderate levels of exercise).
  - The heart beating more often.
  - More sphincters "opening up" to allow oxygen and nutrients to enter the muscles via the capillaries.

- Relative blood flow to other systems of the body (e.g. digestive system) is reduced – this is known as "blood shunting" – shunting the blood to where it is most required.

Long-term changes to the cardiovascular system when exercising:

- A trained heart will be capable of pumping out more blood on each beat.

- Players with a well trained cardiovascular system tend to have lower resting heart rates.

- The hearts of players with a well trained cardiovascular system tend to beat less often for a given workload.

Important

Your body prioritises blood flow sending it to where it is required. After a meal, blood flows more to the intestines. During exercise, it flows more to muscles. To avoid a conflict do not eat large meals too close to exercise (2 hours minimum), and if players have to eat during a tournament, make it little and often.

Training recommendations

The duration and frequency of training is dependent upon fitness levels. However, training such as running, swimming, cycling for 15+ minutes, 2+ times a week over a sustained period of time (weeks/months) makes the heart bigger and stronger.

Aerobic training is beneficial for both health and sporting reasons at any age but the heart responds extremely well to aerobic training during the growth spurt. Therefore aerobic training, or participation in sports that have an aerobic benefit, should be emphasised during this stage of a player's development.

Nutrition

Nutrition refers to everything that a person eats or drinks. Food and drink provides the energy and chemicals for movement and growth as well as the body's everyday functions. The body's nutritional requirements are dependant on age, gender, body type, level of physical activity and general state of health.

As a coach you can help your players and their parents to understand which foods are better choices and which to choose less often. By learning more about the composition of foods, you can ensure their diet provides the right types of fuel for their training and competition.

The components of effective nutrition

Carbohydrate is the most important energy provider for athletes because it is the main fuel for the working muscles. Nutritious carbohydrate that comes from foods such as potatoes, rice, corn, pasta, beans and fruit should be chosen most often as they are less likely to cause excessive weight gain and are often good sources of vitamins, minerals and fibre. Concentrated or refined carbohydrate such as white sugar, fizzy drinks and chocolate bars still provide carbohydrate but are high in energy, not very filling and low in vitamins and minerals. For the "skinny" player that finds it hard to eat enough including some refined carbohydrate on top of the more nutritious sources can help them meet their fuel needs. For most players however these less nutritious refined carbohydrates should be eaten less often. How much carbohydrate an athlete needs is dependant on how much training they complete. Obviously a player who hits a couple of times per week will have much lower needs than one who is training every day.

Fat is also an energy provider but the body prefers to use it for less intense exercise so it is not interchangeable with carbohydrate and is therefore not such a good source for athletes. It is found in foods such as butter, margarine, fried food, crisps, chocolate, fatty meat, oils, ice cream, cream, cheese, burgers and chips. While everyone needs some fat in their diet, most people eat too much fat. Tips for reducing fat in diet include:

* using lower fat cooking methods, such as grilling, boiling, poaching and steam and steaming.

* selecting lower fat milk, cheese, yoghurt or butter substitutes.

* choosing starchy snacks or fruit rather than crisps or high fat snacks.

* eating leaner cuts of meat and removing the skin from poultry and chicken.

Protein is needed by the body to manufacture tissues in the body, forms hormones (chemical messengers) and enzymes (which control chemical reactions). Although it can provide energy, it is not primarily used as a fuel for exercise. Animal protein is found in foods such as meat, fish, poultry, eggs, cheese, milk and yoghurt. Vegetable protein is found in some cereals, legumes, pulses (beans, lentils and peas), quorn, nuts, tofu and soya. Most players will get enough protein in their diet without the need for any additional supplementation.

Vitamins play an important part in many chemical processes that take place in the body. They are needed daily but only in tiny amounts. There are two types of vitamin: fat soluble and water soluble. Fat soluble vitamins, such as vitamin A and D, are stored in the body ready for use. Water soluble vitamins, such as the B and C vitamins, cannot be stored and so must be in the daily food intake. Any water soluble vitamins not used by the body are passed out of the body whereas fat soluble vitamins levels can build up in the body if too much is consumed (eg. through overuse of vitamin supplements). A balanced diet with enough of the right kinds of food will supply the vitamins needed for good health although fussy eaters may miss out and should be referred on to a sports nutritionist or doctor for further advice.

Minerals, like vitamins, are also needed in small daily amounts. They include chemicals such as calcium, iron, sodium, potassium, phosphorous and magnesium. These are required in minute amounts for the healthy functioning of the body. If your players eat a balanced diet appropriate to the demands of their training and competitions, their vitamin and mineral intake should be adequate. Fussy eaters are the most likely to miss out on minerals and should be referred on to a sports nutritionist or doctor for further advice.

Hydration is vital to ensure your athletes can perform at their peak. Get them into the habit of drinking before, during and after training and playing matches. If they become dehydrated, it will adversely affect their performance, and in extreme cases could damage their health. Players should be aiming to match fluid intake with losses i.e. drink more in hot conditions, during long or intense training sessions. Players can be taught to monitor themselves for hydration by looking at their urine colour; producing a small amount of darkly coloured urine is a sign of poor hydration whereas producing a larger amount of lighter coloured urine suggests better hydration. Weight can also be used as a guide to fluid needs eg. a player that loses 1kg during a training session will need to drink about 1.5 litres to rehydrate. In extreme cases it is possible to overdrink and coaches should be aware of this risk.

Sport Medicine Australia (1997) suggests the following broad recommendations for fluid intake in children involved in sports events:

FLUID INTAKE GUIDE		
AGE	TIME	VOLUME
Approximately 10 years old	45 mins before sport	150-200ml
	Every 20 mins during sport	75-100ml
	After sport	500+ ml
Approximately 15 years old	45 mins before sport	300-400ml
	Every 20 mins during sport	150-200ml
	After sport	1000+ ml

Note that hot and humid conditions could increase these volumes.

Balanced diet

Eating and drinking a good balance of the right foods at the right time contributes to the overall health and well being of the player. Appropriate nutrition and hydration can help your players perform better during both training and competition through improving concentration, co-ordination and energy levels. It can also improve recovery between sessions and help with the development of the right physical condition for badminton. To achieve this, athletes need to pay attention to their eating and drinking habits throughout the year – not just on those days prior to or following a match.

Tips for healthy eating

- Always eat breakfast so energy levels are increased at the start of the day. Good options include porridge, fruit and fibre type breakfast cereals, yoghurt and fruit or toast.

- Eat within 60 minutes of finishing every training session and competition to help optimum refueling. This can be a snack if there is some time before the next meal or a full meal if appropriate.

- Eat 5 portions of fruit and vegetables a day. This will help with overall health as well as avoiding illness and recovery from training.

- Match their food intake with their energy needs - more energy is required for growth and to fuel the training they do.

- Eat foods rich in calcium (low fat dairy products, yoghurt and cheese) and iron (lean red meat is the best source).

- Eat carbohydrate rich foods with each meal eg. bread or cereal at breakfast and a starchy vegetable, bread, rice or pasta with the midday and evening meal. Healthy carbohydrate rich snacks include fruit, yoghurt and some fruit and grain bars.

Energy systems

In addition to the systems already looked at, the body also has systems responsible for producing energy. Although there are links with systems already presented (muscular, cardiovascular, respiratory) the key to understanding these systems is to think about small chemicals breaking up to create energy.

| | ANAEROBIC – WITHOUT OXYGEN | | AEROBIC – WITH OXYGEN |
	ALACTIC	LACTIC	
Application to badminton	Vital energy source for flat-out, high intensity but short rallies.	Vital energy source for prolonged rallies (10-60 sec) of a high intensity.	Vital for recovery from intense rallies, to last long games and help recovery between matches and between training sessions.
Depends on	Small molecules breaking up to release energy without help from oxygen.	Small molecules breaking up/reforming/breaking up again to provide energy. Supported by carbohydrates in muscle partly breaking down without oxygen.	Small molecules breaking up/reforming/breaking up again to provide energy. Supported by breakdown of fats/carbohydrates in muscle and a good oxygen supply.
Location	In the muscle.	In the muscle.	In muscle, but needs support from CV/Resp system to provide oxygen and nutrients.
Advantage	Molecules "on site". Very quick to provide a powerful surge of energy. Doesn't need oxygen.	Molecules required are "on site". Quick source of energy, but not as quick as alactic system. Doesn't need oxygen.	Can provide energy over prolonged periods of time.
Disadvantage	Short-lived energy source (0-10 sec approx).	Only provides energy over a relatively short period of time (10-60 sec). By-products eventually slow down energy production.	Slower energy production (lots of chemical reactions taking longer). Needs efficient CV/respiratory back up.
Training guidelines	Work/rest ratios of 1-6 (e.g. 8 sec and remainder of minute to recover), very high intensity (90-100%), mildly active recovery.	Work/rest ratios of 1-3 (e.g. 40 sec on, 2 minutes off) to learn to remove by products from muscle, 1-1 to learn to withstand build up of by-products. High intensity work (80-90%), active recovery.	Continuous 15+ minutes or longer intervals (e.g. 3 min on, 3 min off). Lower exercise intensities (60-80%) of maximum.
Training type	Short sprints, fast feet, ladder (tramline) work.	Longer sprints, shadowing.	Rowing, swimming, cycling, running.

Components of fitness

Fitness can be defined as "the capacity to perform a variety of physical tasks".

FITNESS COMPONENT	FITNESS COMPONENT DESCRIPTIONS	TRAINING EXAMPLES
Stamina	The capacity of the body to sustain low level aerobic work for a long period of time.	Long duration exercise (15+ min) – swimming, cycling, rowing, running.
Speed	The capacity to move the whole body or limbs quickly.	Fast feet, short sprints, ladder work, tramline work (fast shadowing, fast multifeed for experienced performers only).
Strength (maximum)	The capacity to exert maximal forces.	Lifting heavy weights at close to maximal loads – 0 to 6 reps.
Flexibility (suppleness)	The range of movement around a joint or the amount of resistance to a movement.	Static stretches held for 15+ seconds. Dynamic stretches involving controlled movement.
Agility	The capacity to change direction rapidly.	Shadowing, fast multifeed.
Balance	The ability to get to or maintain a state where forces acting on the body are distributed evenly.	Balancing on one leg, hopping and stopping, exercises with eyes closed.
Strength endurance	The capacity of certain muscles or muscle-groups to withstand fatigue.	Weight training/circuit training with lighter loads but increases repetitions, weighted rackets.
Co-ordination	The capability to move body parts in the correct sequence.	Any skilled movements, but throwing exercises are invaluable.
Posture	The capacity of certain core muscles to maintain an efficient body alignment.	Trunk curls (straight and twisting), abdominal planks, swiss ball exercises.
Power	The capacity to generate large amounts of force in short periods of time (strength x speed).	Weighted racket, jumps, circuits (low reps, high explosive content).
Plyometrics (elastic strength)	The capacity to increase muscular forces using the stretch-shortening cycle.	Fast feet, hurdles, depth jumping, weighted racket.

Physical demands of badminton

Stamina

Badminton players need to be able to recover quickly from rallies and sustain effort through long matches and tournaments. This is helped by having good levels of stamina.

Speed

Being able to take the shuttle early is vital to playing at a good level, since it enables you to retrieve shuttles when under pressure but also allows you to take the shuttle earlier and exert more pressure on your opponent. Speed of hands allows you to move your racket quickly around the body.

Strength

Pure strength, as in weight lifting to maximum is not a demand of the sport of badminton, however strength training should form a part of training in that it forms part of the basis upon which power is built.

Flexibility

Dynamic flexibility is vital for performance in badminton as it allows you to stretch for and recover from extremes of movement range. Static flexibility exercise should also be incorporated in a training schedule to supplement dynamic flexibility work.

Agility

Badminton is played on a relatively small court which enforces the player to make many rapid, random and successive changes of direction. Agility is consequently a very important component of fitness for the sport.

Balance

Dynamic balance involves being put off balance then recovering balance quickly. It is important to badminton as you are often made to do this by your opponent's strokes.

Strength Endurance

Muscles are loaded/unloaded continually in badminton to support and manipulate the body over extended periods of time.

Co-ordination

Complex movements involving co-ordinating of limbs to bring about the best in technique (eg. use of arms on jumping, using big to little muscles in hitting), are highly developed in good badminton players.

Posture

Maintaining control of the upper body is of benefit to badminton players in that it assists in recovery from extreme positions (eg. lunging). A strong core means a player will be less vulnerable to injury as muscles are contracting from more stable anchors.

Power

Power is required for badminton to hit hard, jump high, recover from lunges.

Plyometrics

This is closely related to power. Plyometric ability is vital to badminton as it helps you to generate power via using elastic, "rebounding" qualities of muscles. Combining backswings and forward swings effectively to produce power and pushing of the ground rapidly after a split-step are examples of plyometrics used effectively in badminton.

Principles of training

Training will be more effective if it follows certain principles and these are outlined below:

Generality

An underpinning core of general fitness is necessary for badminton players. Good basic levels of strength, speed, suppleness and stamina are necessary if more sports specific components of fitness are to be successfully built upon.

Specificity

At some stage training has to become more specific to the requirements of the sport, including sports specific agility, power and plyometric training. Physical training will also be more effective if it is designed to specifically to target one component of fitness.

Individuality

Training should take into consideration that each person has their own individual characteristics and needs.

Planning

Planned training is more likely to succeed than unplanned training as it will have clear goals.

Progression/ Overload

For training to bring about significant improvements there should be progression or overload, where training loads (Frequency, Intensity, Time and Type) are gradually increased.

Rest

Players need recovery time between sets, between sessions and at certain times of the year in order to make training effective.

LTAD/LTPD overview

The Long Term Athlete Development model (Long Term Player Development model in Scotland) is a sports development framework that is athlete centred and built on the basis of human growth and development. All young people follow the same pattern of growth from infancy through adolescence, but there are significant individual differences in both the timing and magnitude of the changes that take place. The LTAD model stresses the need for an individualised approach to developing young people and this is determined by biological maturation. This allows coaches to maximise an athlete's 'critical periods' of development (or windows of trainability).

The six stages are:

FUNdamentals
Learning to Play
Training to Train
Training to Compete
Training to Win
Peak Performance

Each stage aims to lead an athlete from simple to more complex skills and from general to badminton-related skills. Important skills learned in a previous stage will be built upon during the next stage, providing a more complex skill base.

Establishing a core set of motor skills will allow all children to gain a sense of achievement, giving those athletes that may not reach elite levels a direction for their involvement in sport. The acquisition of transferable skills will allow children to become proficient in a number of different sports and therefore increase the chances of lifelong participation in physical activity.

BADMINTONscotland, the Welsh Badminton Union and BADMINTONEngland have extensive documents that support their LTAD/LTPD models. Coaches should familiarise themselves with the contents of these documents as it will allow them to make more informed choices about the frequency, intensity, duration and type of training undertaken at various times in an athlete's development.

What to Coach

Technique

The Stroke Cycle

The Stroke Cycle is a model that breaks any stroke down
into 4 components, illustrated below:

The cycle repeats every time
a stroke is played in a game
of badminton.

START

PREPARE

HIT

RECOVER

**THE STROKE
CYCLE**

Each phase of the stroke cycle could be used to analyse a player's racket carriage (including what the racket
does during hitting) and a player's movement. Movement can be further sub-divided into body skill (how the
player controls segments of the body, such as the non-racket arm) and travelling (how the whole body is
moved across the court).

Movement principles

Centre of gravity

An imaginary central point where the mass of a body is located (close to belly button). Low centres of gravity assist in balance.

BADMINTON APPLICATION
Establishing a lowered centre of gravity on base helps players move off in a more balanced manner.

Width of stance

Wide stances can assist in balance, narrow stances can reduce balance.

BADMINTON APPLICATION
Establishing a wider base by increasing the distance between the feet (i.e. on landing from kick-through).

Posture

Correct, balanced posture involves bent knees and slightly bent hips.

BADMINTON APPLICATION
On base, slightly bent hips brings weight more onto balls of the feet – aids quicker initial movement.

Counter movements

Effective movement in one direction needs an initial counter movement in the other direction.

BADMINTON APPLICATION
Moving to the left involves an initial drive off the right foot. Moving to the right means an initial drive off the left foot (see photos for example).

Pushing off effectively

To move across the court effectively means the legs must drive into the ground at an angle, not directly downwards.

BADMINTON APPLICATION
Landing in the rearcourt with a wide stance allows the rear leg to lever against the floor and push the player back into court.

Change of pace

Change of pace allows players to both generate, then control, momentum.

BADMINTON APPLICATION
Move fast after a hit, slower as hit is about to take place (ideally!). This is true when both you or your opponent is hitting.

Segmental recruitment

Effective force generation needs sequential forces to add together, from large/central segments to smaller segments/ends of limbs.

BADMINTON APPLICATION
An ideal clear action involves transferring force in the following sequence – leg, hip, trunk, upper arm, lower arm. Flow is important.

Stretch-shortening cycle

Muscles generate more power when stretched rapidly prior to contracting, provided there is no pause between stretch and contraction.

BADMINTON APPLICATION
Fast contact times with the ground as a result of the split-step can be translated into quick movement off base. Promote continuity between backswing and forward swings.

Movement components

There are no precise answers to the question 'what are the best movement patterns in badminton". However, by applying the principles dealt with on the previous page it is possible to come up with certain patterns of movement that are appropriate for different areas of the court.

1. Start phase: the split-step

Players approach the base and initiate the split just prior to the opponent's hit. Landing occurs on a widened base, with knees bent, slightly bent hips and weight on the balls of the feet. Landing is after the hit. Short contact times with the ground should be promoted for speed. The split can be square on, racket foot leading or non-racket foot leading depending on many situational factors. One leg is usually favoured slightly depending on the direction of movement. The idea is not to stop dead still as this destroys flow – it is also slower and more energy consuming.

2. Preparation phases

These can be running steps, chassé, crossing behind, hop steps or pivoting steps. Short ground contact times are desirable for speed.

Running steps

Chassé

Crossing behind

Pivot–hop

3. Hitting phases

Where the preparation phase ends and the hitting phase starts is often difficult to distinguish. Movements in this category can be lunges and many types of jump, (two of which are illustrated) including:

• Two feet to two feet.
• One foot to two feet.
• One foot to same foot (hop).
• One foot to other foot.
• Two feet to one foot.

Any of the above jumps can be performed whilst spinning in the air.

Two feet to two feet
Take off | Landing

One foot to two feet
One foot | Two feet

4. Recovery

Where the hitting phase finishes and the recovery phase starts is difficult to define exactly. Recovery is usually running steps or chassé only, or a combination of both.

Movement skills can be vastly improved by performing elements in relative isolation (e.g. lunge). Once on the court, these elements can be put together, much like the pieces of a jigsaw puzzle, to create effective movement patterns to each area of the court.

The coaching methods section contains a lot of ideas that can be usefully employed to help teach movement, including demonstration, explanation, kinaesthetics, shadowing etc.

Coaching Movement

Introduction

Coaching the movement patterns outlined in the following pages will be far easier if the component parts of the movement jigsaw are well established. Using the types of ideas/ practices introduced at level 1 to improve lunging technique, skimming chassés with short ground contact times, split-step timed with opponent's hit etc. is invaluable in making the patterns introduced at level 2 more effective.

Coaching movement for a whole stroke cycle

1) Players copy the coach shadowing the movement. Position left handed players facing the group so they can mirror the coach.

2) Coach encourages the group to keep practicing without that coach leading. Coach observes players who have worked out the pattern and moves those players to the front of the group so others can copy.

3) Coach encourages the group to work out the rhythm of the movement. More confident members of the group could be encouraged to sing along. This method can be great fun and rhythms can be worked out for many areas of the court.

4) Try to reproduce movement patterns with eyes closed. This really heightens concentration on the task and also allows the players to get more of a kinaesthetic feel for the movement.

Movement from more central positions

The movement patterns overleaf represent a good starting point for teaching movements. They do however focus on movements from more central positions.

Movement over longer distances

Movement along the full length of the court, either straight/diagonal or backwards/forwards involves all the same potential component movement parts already introduced. Different players will have different methods of covering these longer distances depending on the exact situation (eg. pressure they or their opponent is under). The following guidelines may be useful however:

- Continual successive chassés (eg. 2, 3, 4 in a row) should not be taught as a method of covering long distances on the court (eg. long diagonals) as it is both slow and unnatural. This is true when moving either forwards or backwards.

- From the rearcourt, a clear is usually followed by either one chassé or running steps, a split-step and then the player's movement of choice to the next shot.

- From the rearcourt, a dropshot is often followed immediately by a split step. It is likely that running steps will then be used to get into the net.

- From the rearcourt, a smash is often followed by running steps to the net when the opponent is under great pressure, or an immediate split-step when the player smashing is being more cautious.

- From the forecourt, after a net shot a chassé often follows immediately after the lunge. Movement backwards then consists of a combination of pivoting, running steps backwards or chasséing (but not too many!).

f/h forecourt movement

Split-step
Widen base and bend knees. Drive from legs rather than topple from the head. Short ground contact.
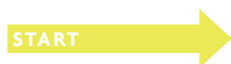
Running step
Good range of movement – good stride length.

Lunging technique
Good range of movement. Land heel first with front leg virtually straight. Knee and foot aligned. Keep trunk upright. Extend rear arm for balance. Rear foot turned out, heel slightly off ground, slide of rear foot.

Chassé/running step
If it is a net shot, how far should you retreat?

Split-step
Widen base and bend knees. Drive from legs rather than topple from the head. Short ground contact.

Chassé
Foot turned out. Short contact time on floor – make chassé "punchy". Concentrate on skimming across ground.

Lunging technique
Good range of movement. Land heel first with front leg virtually straight. Knee and foot aligned. Keep trunk upright. Extend rear arm for balance. Rear foot turned out, heel slightly off ground, slide of rear foot.

Chassé/running step
If it is a net shot, how far should you retreat?
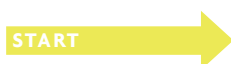
Split-step
Widen base and bend knees. Drive from legs rather than topple from the head. Short ground contact.

Cross Behind
Foot crosses behind. Short ground contact time and push off forcefully.

Lunging technique
Good range of movement. Land heel first with front leg virtually straight. Knee and foot aligned. Keep trunk upright. Extend rear arm for balance. Rear foot turned out, heel slightly off ground, slide of rear foot.

Chassé/running step
If it is a net shot, how far should you retreat?

b/h forecourt movement

START ▸ PREPARE ▸ HIT ▸ RECOVERY ▸

Split-step
Widen base and bend knees. Drive from legs rather than topple from the head. Short ground contact.

Running step
Good range of movement – good stride length.

Lunging technique
Good range of movement. Land heel first with front leg virtually straight. Knee and foot aligned. Keep trunk upright. Extend rear arm for balance. Rear foot turned out, heel slightly off ground, slide of rear foot.

Chassé/running step
If it's a net shot, how far should you retreat?

START ▸ PREPARE ▸ HIT ▸ RECOVERY ▸

Split-step
Widen base and bend knees. Drive from legs rather than topple from the head. Short ground contact.

Pivot
Pivot around non-racket foot. Rear foot has to adjust so toes points to sideline.

Lunging technique
Good range of movement. Land heel first with front leg virtually straight. Knee and foot aligned. Keep trunk upright. Extend rear arm for balance. Rear foot turned out, heel slightly off ground, slide of rear foot.

Chassé/running step
If it's a net shot, how far should you retreat?

START ▸ PREPARE ▸ HIT ▸ RECOVERY ▸

Split-step
Widen base and bend knees. Drive from legs rather than topple from the head. Short ground contact.

Pivot
Turn to direction of travel.

Chassé
Short ground contact.

Lunging technique
Good range of movement. Land heel first with front leg virtually straight. Knee and foot aligned. Keep trunk upright. Extend rear arm for balance. Rear foot turned out, heel slightly off ground, slide of rear foot.

Chassé/running step
If it's a net shot, how far should you retreat?

f/h rearcourt movement

START → PREPARE → HIT → RECOVERY →

Split-step
Short contact time. Establish wide stance and bend knees.

Arcing chassé
Helps to bring player in line with shuttle.

Establish wide base/kick through
Establish wide base. Get up off ground and kick through with racket leg.

Land on wide base/run or chassé
Land on wide base for balance. Land "rear foot – front foot" in quick succession. Run or chassé.

START → PREPARE → HIT → RECOVERY →

Split-step
Short contact time. Establish wide stance and bend knees.

Chassé
Foot turned out. Short contact time on floor – make chassé "punchy". Concentrate on skimming across ground.

Jump-out
Good use of non-racket arm.

Chassé/running step
The more off balance on landing the more likely player will put in a small adjustment step (small chassé).

START → PREPARE → HIT → RECOVERY →

Split-step
Short contact time. Establish wide stance and bend knees.

Cross behind/push hard off left leg
Work hard with non-racket leg.

Jump technique/focus on "up"
Be positive to move up to meet the shuttle where possible. Land with knee and foot in alignment. Rear foot pointing more to rearcourt the deeper the shuttle being taken.

Chassé/running step
The more off balance on landing the more likely player will put in a small adjustment step (small chassé).

b/h rearcourt movement

START → **PREPARE** → **HIT** → **RECOVERY**

Split-step
Short contact time. Establish wide stance and bend knees.

Pivot/hop on non-racket leg
Non-racket foot leaves ground to adjust position. Important to gain distance on hop/pivot phase.

Establish wide base/kick through
Encourage to get behind shuttle in preparation.

Chassé/running step
Land on wide base for balance. Land "rear foot – front foot" in quick succession. Run or chassé.

START → **PREPARE** → **HIT** → **RECOVERY**

Split-step
Short contact time. Establish wide stance and bend knees.

Chassé/Pivot on to backhand
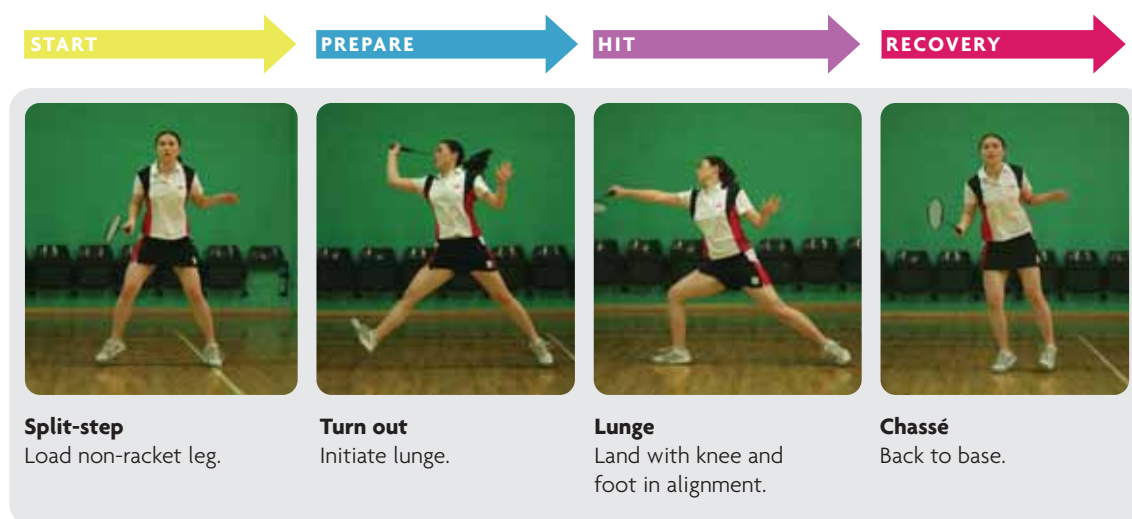Racket foot replaces non-racket foot, pivot on non-racket foot.
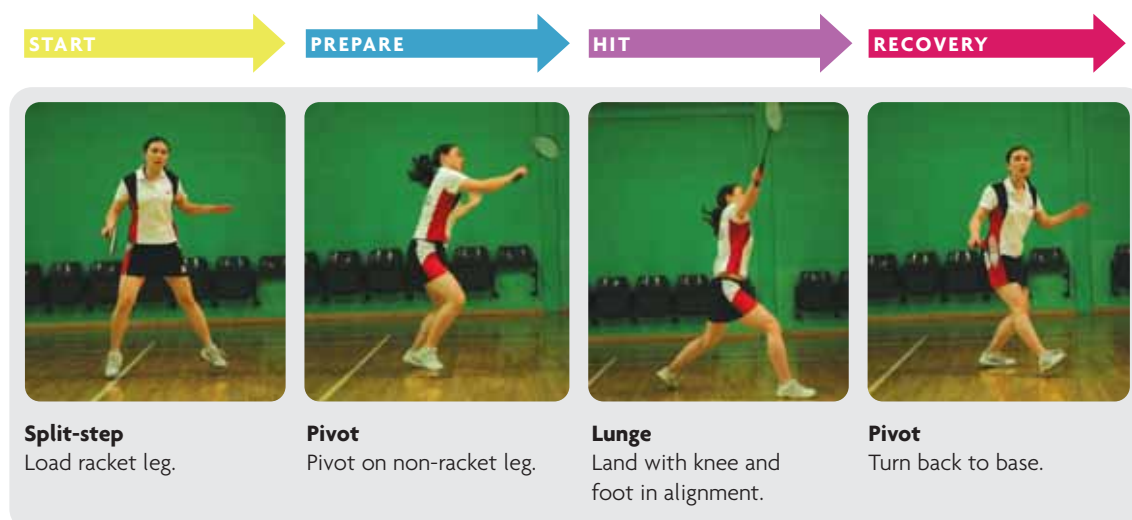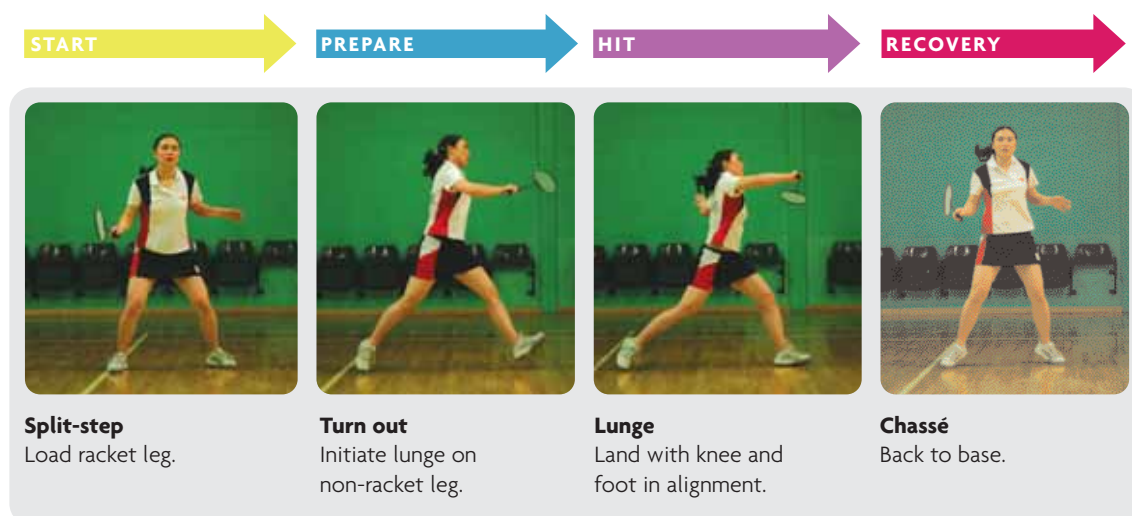
Half lunge
Knee and foot in alignment.

Pivot then chassé or running steps

f/h midcourt movement

START	PREPARE	HIT	RECOVERY

Split-step
Load non-racket leg.

Turn out
Initiate lunge.

Lunge
Land with knee and foot in alignment.

Chassé
Back to base.

b/h midcourt movement

START	PREPARE	HIT	RECOVERY

Split-step
Load racket leg.

Turn out
Initiate lunge on non-racket leg.

Lunge
Land with knee and foot in alignment.

Chassé
Back to base.

START	PREPARE	HIT	RECOVERY

Split-step
Load racket leg.

Pivot
Pivot on non-racket leg.

Lunge
Land with knee and foot in alignment.

Pivot
Turn back to base.

Relaxed grips

Key points for grips

1. Grips should be relaxed to allow the muscles of the forearm to work effectively.

2. A tightening of the hand on the racket should occur on impact, the tightening being greater on hard-hit shots (e.g. smash) than soft shots (e.g. net shots).

3. Grip adjustments often involve making sure the racket face finishes parallel to the net on impact for straight shots.

4. Sometimes the grip on the finish of a shot (e.g. after tightening) is different to the grip used at the start of the stroke.

Shuttle in front

On the backhand side: relaxed thumb grip

Side view – knuckles

Side view – palm

On the forehand side: panhandle

Shuttle at the side or overhead

On backhand side: basic or bevel

Basic grip but back of hand leads

Bevel grip – thumb along corner of racket handle

On forehand side: basic grip

Overall view

Close-up view

Shuttle behind

On backhand side: panhandle

Overall view

Close-up view

On forehand side

Close-up view

Overall view

Cross-court hitting

Early

Taking the shuttle in front makes it easier to play cross-court strokes as the natural swing of the racket can take the shuttle in that direction.

Forehand

Backhand

Adjusting the racket face by changing the grip

Forehand

Backhand

Using the wrist

Cocking the wrist can be very useful helping to change the racket face and enabling the player to hit cross-court, even when the shuttle is behind you.

Slicing the shuttle

Slicing the shuttle, either left to right or right to left (shown below) can be used to:

• hit a shuttle cross-court.

• hit a shuttle straight but making it look like a cross-court shot.

Forehand net kill

01 - Start of split-step.

02 - Split-step (legs loaded).
- Note drive off rear leg.

03 - Chassé/cross behind/running step.

04 - Supination/cock the wrist.
- Committed lunge.

05 - Tighten grip.
- Impact (panhandle established late in movement).
- Tap the shuttle.

06 - Impact well in front of body (take early).
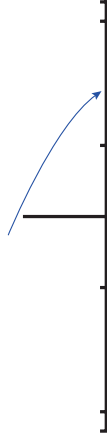

07 - Recoil racket.

08 - Recover.

Tactical context

What The forehand net kill.

Where From your forecourt into the mid/rearcourt of your opponent.

When The shuttle is above net height in your forecourt.

Why You want to:

- Attempt to win rally or force weak return.

Key points

- Panhandle grip to adjust racket face if the shuttle is well in front of the player.

- Short hitting action.

- Hit with combination of wrist and forearm rotation:
  - Close to net/in front more wrist.
  - Wider/off net greater use of rotation.

Tips/coaching practice

- Off the net encourage angle between forearm and racket in preparation

- Vary feed to contrast action:
  - close to net/well in front of player
  - wide of player and further back from the net

Common faults *(and potential corrections)*

- Grip too loose resulting in lack of control on hit.

  Encourage a relaxed grip. On a tightness scale 0 would be almost dropping the racket, 10 would be squeezing the racket as hard as possible. Let the players do this, then ask them to find a 3–4 level.

- Long swings.

  Use a hand feed tight to net that doesn't allow time for swing.

- Kill always cross-court.

  Often a consequence of a long swing so deal with this first, then set straight targets on court that players aim for or have a game where only straight net kills allowed.

Forehand drive

01 - Split-step.
- Drive off non-racket leg.

02 - Relaxed basic grip.
- Racket moving towards shuttle.

03 - Lunge out with correct alignment of knee/foot.
- Forearm supinated, upper arm externally rotated.

04 - Forearm supinates further so momentarily racket strings are parallel with ceiling.

05 - Forearm pronates.
- Impact taking shuttle as early as possible.

06 - Follow through with evidence of pronation.

07 - Stop racket, allowing natural recoil to occur.

08 - Chassé.

Tactical context

What Forehand drive.

Where From your midcourt to the mid/rearcourt of your opponent.

When You want to hit a flat shot.

Why
- You don't want to give away the attack by lifting.
- You may be hitting to spaces wide of your opponent.
- You may be hitting at your opponent to get a weak reply.

Key points

- Relaxed basic grip.
- Use of cocked wrist and forearm rotation to create angle between racket and forearm.
- Lunge with knee/foot in alignment.

Tips/coaching practice

- For safety purposes if using a hand feed this may need to be from off the court.
- "Show strings to the ceiling" is useful phrase for creating racket position on completion of backswing.
- Always try to meet the shuttle rather than letting it come to you.

Common faults *(and potential corrections)*

- Very big swing from shoulder

  Get players to hold a static racket position similar to pictures 3-4, then deliver feed.

- Non-use of non-racket arm for balance

  Explanation and demonstration are the key. Use simple balance exercises to demonstrate importance of extended arms to assist balance.

Forehand doubles long defence

01 - Relaxed racket carriage/neutral racket position.
- Wide stance with knees/hips bent.
  (leant slightly forwards).
- Relaxed basic grip.

02 - Split-step – load the legs.
- Slight angle between forearm and racket.

03 - Push racket hand forwards
- Forearm supinates.

04 - Straightening of legs and hips (large muscles).
- Hyperextended position of wrist established,
  helped by pushing hand forwards.
- Tightening of grip on racket handle.
- Hit through line of shuttle (for a straight shot).

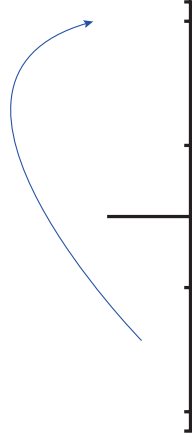**05** - Relaxed follow through.

06 - Return to relaxed stance.

Tactical context

What Forehand doubles long defence.

Where In your midcourt, aiming to hit to your opponent's rearcourt.

When The shuttle is being hit downwards to the forehand side of your body.

Why You want to:
- Gain time.
- Move opponent in rearcourt.

Key points

- Relaxed basic grip.
- Racket carried out in front of body but relaxed.
- Use legs to initiate power in the hit.
- Reach forwards and create a cocked wrist position.
- Strike shuttle in front of body.

Common faults *(and potential corrections)*

- Long swings, especially to the side of the body.

  Stand player with back to net and feed – they aim to hit shuttle without hitting net on the backswing.

  Power of feed – look for arm extended forwards and cocked wrist before delivery.

- Lack of use of legs.

  Use power of feed – no knee bend, no feed.

- Jumping backwards to hit.

  Stand player with back to net and feed.

Variations

- Blocking
  - Can help turn defence into attack.
  - Aim to take the shuttle out in front of you with a short hitting action.
  - Some opening of racket face may be desirable.
  - Use the pace of the oncoming shuttle and push/block it back.

- Driving
  - Forehand driving in doubles – see forehand drive section (pages 74-75).

Tips/coaching practice

- Feed to forehand side.
- Encourage use of legs – big muscles (of the legs) then little muscles (arms) = power.
- Consider combining forehand lift and forehand doubles long defence in same session for positive transfer of forearm rotation/wrist position.

Forehand singles blocked defence
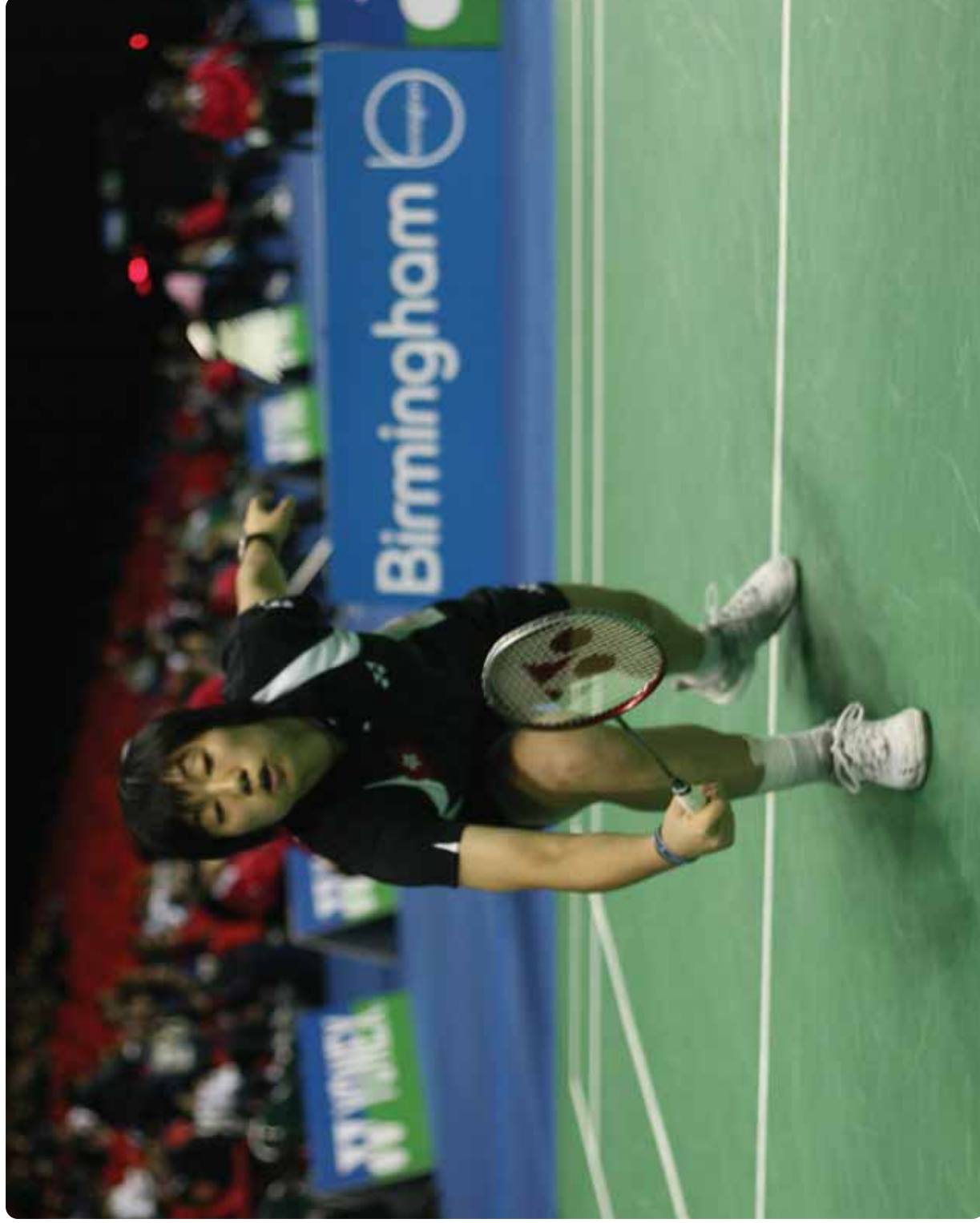
01 - Wide split/side lunge timed just after opponent's hit.
- Low body position.
- Racket foot pointing towards sideline.

02 - Reach for shuttle.
- Low hand position (hand below racket head).
- Slight backswing.
- Basic grip or slight adjustment to angle racket face up.

03 - Short, controlled forward swing.
- Racket head creates an arc.
- Push though with racket in desired direction
  (eg. straight or cross-court).

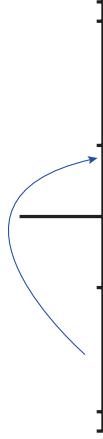**04** - Push back on racket leg to recover.

Tactical context

What Singles defence: forehand block – straight.

Where You are in the midcourt and want to bring your opponent into their forecourt. Note blocks travelling further into court can reduce tight net play opportunities for opponent.

When Being smashed at down the sides.

Why You want to:
- Move opponent into forecourt.
- Reduce attacking opportunity.
- Force lift.

Key points

- Wide and low (stable) stance established.
- Low hand position.
- Adjust racket face by changing grip or wrist position.
- Short action through/slightly under shuttle.

Tips/coaching practice

- Use dynamic stretch element of prepare to play to rehearse wide/low body positions.
- Place person in wide position and rehearse hitting action.

Common faults *(and potential corrections)*

- Not getting low.

  Walk in then shadow wide/low split. Players can place targets on floor indicating the width of split they should try to attain.

  Use first coaching tip from previous column.

- Chopping.

  Shadow shape, practice slowly, reduce movement into stroke so player focuses on this fine detail.

- Shuttle going into net.

  Move grip around slightly towards a thumb grip. Opens face of racket more.

Variations

- Lifting

  To lift the shuttle, the hand pushes further forwards ahead of the racket head. An angle is created between the racket and the arm of the player. Player hits forcibly by using forearm rotation. Impact is a combination of under and through the shuttle.

- Driving

  To drive the shuttle, use the same technique as for lifting, but aim to hit through rather than under the shuttle.

Backhand net kill

04 - Relaxed grip.
- Bend at the elbow.
- Pronation of forearm (backswing).
- Cock the wrist.

03 - Racket being lifted towards approaching shuttle.

02 - Chassé, cross-behind or run.
- Reach.

01 - Split-step/spin.
- Relaxed thumb grip (not loose).

06 - Chassé in recovery.

05 - Straighten the arm.
- Supination and tightening of hand on racket.
- Tap the shuttle.

Tactical context

What   Backhand net kill.

Where From your forecourt into the mid/rearcourt of your opponent.
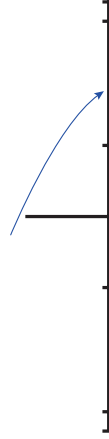
When The shuttle is above net height in your forecourt.

Why   You want to:
- Attempt to win rally or force weak return.

Key points

- Thumb grip to adjust racket face.
- Cock wrist and pronate on backswing.
- Short, tapping hitting action.
- When very close to the net, hit is dominated by wrist (ie. less forearm rotation).

Tips/coaching practice

- Off the net encourage angle between forearm and racket in preparation
- Vary feed to contrast action:
  - close to net/well in front of player
  - wide of player and further back from the net

Common faults *(and potential corrections)*

- Grip too loose resulting in lack of control on hit.

  Encourage a relaxed grip. On a tightness scale 0 would be almost dropping the racket, 10 would be squeezing the racket as hard as possible. Let the players do this, then ask them to find a 3–4 level. Tighten grip on impact.

- Grip too tight.

  Same correction as above but also encourage small gap between bottom of "V" (thumb and first finger) and the racket handle.

- Long swings.

  Use a hand feed tight to net that doesn't allow time for swing.

- Kill always cross-court.

  Often a consequence of a long swing so deal with this first, then set straight targets on court that players aim for or have a game where only straight net kills allowed.

Backhand drive

01 - Split-step.
- Initiate drive off right leg.
- Relaxed grip.

02 - Begin to establish relaxed thumb grip.
- Positive lunge.
- Lunge on non-racket leg, or racket leg if wider.

03 - Raise elbow.
- Wrist bent back (hyperextended).
- Internal rotation upper arm, pronation lower arm (strings to the ceiling).

04 - External rotation/supination of lower arm.
- Tightening of grip.
- Aim for impact in front of body.

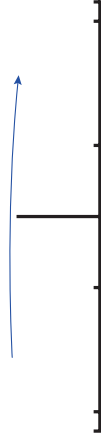**05** - Recoil racket.

06 - Re-establish base position.

07 - Ready.

Tactical context

What Backhand drive.

Where From your midcourt to the mid/rearcourt of your opponent.

When You want to hit a flat shot, often into gaps wide in your opponent's court.

Why
- You don't want to give away the attack by lifting.
- You may be hitting to spaces wide of your opponent.

Key points

- Relaxed thumb grip.
- Use of cocked wrist and forearm rotation to create angle between racket and forearm.
- Lunge with knee/foot in alignment.
- Lunge can be on either leg.

Tips/coaching practice

- For safety purposes if hand fed this may need to be from off the court.
- "Show strings to the ceiling" is useful phrase for creating racket position on completion of backswing.
- If possible always try to meet the shuttle rather than letting it come to you.

Common faults *(and potential corrections)*

- Very big swing from shoulder
  - *Get players to hold a static racket position similar to picture 3, then deliver feed.*
- Non-use of non-racket arm for balance
  - *Explanation and demonstration are the key. Use simple balance exercises to demonstrate importance of extended arms to assist balance.*

Backhand doubles long defence

01 - Relaxed racket carriage/neutral racket position.
- Wide stance with knees/hips bent (leant slightly forwards).
- Relaxed thumb grip.

**02** - Split-step: loading legs in anticipation of the hit.

03 - Relaxed thumb grip.
- Straightening of legs and hips (large muscles).
- Shoulders turn.
- Take shuttle out in front of body.
- Upper arm internally rotated/forearm pronated.

04 - Tighten grip.
- Upper arm externally rotates./lower arm supinates.
- Relaxed follow through.
- Note racket position on follow through (continued supination).
- Follow-through may be shortened if concerned about next stroke.

Tactical context

What Backhand doubles long defence.

Where In your midcourt, aiming to hit to your opponent's rearcourt.
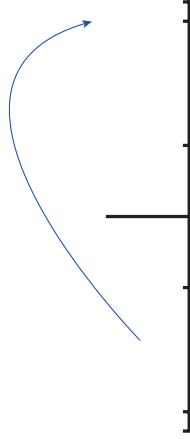
When The shuttle is being hit at your body or to your backhand side.

Why You want to:
- Gain time.
- Move opponent in rearcourt.

Key points

- Relaxed thumb grip.
- Racket carried out in front of body but relaxed.
- Use legs to initiate power in the hit.
- Use inward rotation of upper arm, pronation of forearm and cocked wrist to create angle between racket and forearm on backswing.
- Strike shuttle in front of body.

Tips/coaching practice

- Feed to inside/racket hip to simulate a frequent area of attack in doubles.
- Encourage use of legs – big muscles (of the legs) then little muscles (arms) = power.
- Consider combining backhand drive and backhand doubles long defence in same session for positive transfer of rotational skills.

Common faults *(and potential corrections)*

- Long swings, especially to the side of the body.

  Feed to inside hip.

  Stand player with back to net and feed – they aim to hit shuttle without hitting net on the backswing.

- Lack of use of legs.

  Use power of feed – no knee bend, no feed.

- Grip too tight restricting ability to manoeuvre racket face.

  Encourage a relaxed grip. On a tightness scale 0 would be almost dropping the racket, 10 would be squeezing the racket as hard as possible. Let the players do this, then ask them to find a 3-4 level. Also encourage small gap between bottom of "V" (thumb and first finger) and the racket handle.

- Jumping backwards to hit.

  Stand player with back to net and feed.

Variations

- Blocking
  - Can help turn defence into attack.
  - Aim to take the shuttle out in front of you with a short hitting action.
  - Use the pace of the oncoming shuttle and push/block it back.
  - Some opening of racket face may be desirable.

- Driving
  - Can help turn defence into attack.
  - Aim to take the shuttle out in front of you with a short hitting action.
  - Hit with rotation, wrist and fingers.

Backhand singles blocked defence

01 - Bevel grip or slight panhandle to open racket face.
- Wide split/side lunge timed just after opponent's hit.
- Low body position.
- Non-racket foot pointing towards sideline (racket foot can be used for wide smashes).

02 - Reach for shuttle.
- Low hand position (hand below racket head).
- Short backswing.

03 - Short, controlled forward swing.
- Push though with open-faced racket in desired direction (eg. straight or cross-court).

04 - Push back on lunging leg to recover.

Tactical context

What Singles defence: backhand block – straight.

Where You are in the midcourt and want to bring your opponent into their forecourt. Note blocks travelling further into court can reduce tight net play opportunities for opponent.
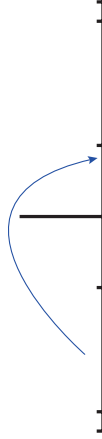
When Being smashed at down the sides.

Why You want to:

- Move opponent into forecourt.
- Reduce attacking opportunity.
- Force lift.

Key points

- Wide and low (stable) stance established.
- Grip that opens racket face.
- Low hand position.
- Arc through/slightly under shuttle.

Tips/coaching practice

- Use dynamic stretch element of prepare to play to rehearse wide/low body positions.
- Place person in wide position/low position and rehearse hitting action, then feed accurately, possibly overarm hand feed.

Common faults *(and potential corrections)*

- Not getting low

  Walk in then shadow wide/low split. Players can place targets on floor indicating the width of split they should try to attain.

  Use first coaching tip in from previous column.

- Chopping

  Shadow shape, practice slowly, reduce movement into stroke so player focuses on this fine detail.

- Shuttle going into net

  Move grip around slightly more towards a panhandle grip. Opens face of racket more.

Variations

- Lifting

  To lift the shuttle, the hand pushes further forwards ahead of the racket head. An angle is created between the racket and the arm of the player. Player hits forcibly by using forearm rotation. Impact is a combination of under and through the shuttle.

- Driving

  To drive the shuttle, use the same technique as for lifting, but aim to hit through rather than under the shuttle.

Tactics

Underpinning tactical definitions and concepts

Level 1 has already established the following definitions:

Tactics

- The strategy or plan designed before and implemented during a match.

- The decisions made during and between rallies.

- Tactics is concerned with what shot is played, why it is played, where it is played, when it is played and who plays it.

| **What** stroke should I play? | **Why** should I play it? | **When** should I play it? | **Who** should play it? | **Where** should I hit this? |

Awareness

Players can only make effective decisions if they have good awareness. Awareness can be split into 4 components.

Spatial awareness

This involves players being able to use height, width and depth effectively to outmanoeuvre their opponents. They also need to be able to cover space effectively by choosing an appropriate base after each shot. The "base" can be defined as "the ideal court position reached that gives the best opportunity to cope with opponent's probable replies". This definition reflects the fact that the base is a flexible position that depends on the situation in the rally.

Personal awareness

Examples of personal awareness would be awareness of your position on the court, how off- or on-balance you are, personal areas of weakness you may need to cover or areas of personal strength you can use to your advantage.

Opponent awareness

This could include awareness of your opponent's position, how they carry their racket, a particular weakness they have (eg. moving to a particular corner, changing direction), the tactics they are trying to adopt against you etc.

Partner awareness

Specific to doubles, awareness of your partner's strengths, weaknesses and how you move together in different situations is invaluable to forming an effective partnership.

Technical training in a tactical context

It is desirable for even the most basic technical practices to be placed in a tactical context. Players are more likely to be motivated to practice a technical skill if they are told or shown the reason why this technique is important and the reason why is more often than not tactical.

Examples of technical training in a tactical context would be:

- In the early stages of preparing for a stroke in the forecourt, approaching with the racket head slight above the hand increases the range of strokes you can play, which creates more problems for your opponent.

- Wherever possible, making your strokes look the same increases your deception, giving you an alternative method by which you might defeat an opponent.

- A relaxed preparation for a stroke (eg. forehand overhead) supports force production, enabling you to smash more effectively and increases your chances of winning rallies.

Over a period of time it is then desirable to slowly increase the tactical emphasis of a practice as learning progresses, although care should be taken that the change in emphasis does not cause the quality of the technique to deteriorate.

Tips for tactical coaching

- It is desirable for the players to be able to execute strokes with reasonable technical competence before the coaching moves to a more tactically based practice. Note that the change from technical to tactical emphasis involves the players changing their focus from a more internal focus (e.g. where is my thumb when I hit that shot?) to a more external focus (e.g. how far back have I pushed my opponent?). If the player cannot sustain the technical skill when the focus is changed, then it was questionable that they were ready to move on to a practice with a greater tactical emphasis.

- Questioning is a key coaching skill in being able to develop a player's tactical awareness and should be used extensively to support tactical coaching.

- Tactical coaching can involve closed practices where the player has few choices, however ultimately the player has to be allowed to make choices in order for this to develop into a true, game-like tactical practice.

- Beware the word "never" when coaching tactics. There are general tactical guidelines/frameworks that help a player's tactical ability but coaching tactics in an inflexible manner can reduce a player's imagination and make them predictable. For example, dropshots to the middle of the two players at doubles is desirable as an initial tactic, but being aware when opponents are getting used to this and varying the dropshot direction is equally as important.

Examples/ideas for tactical practices

There are numerous types of tactical practice. The aim of this section is to stimulate your thinking, giving you many examples of the types of tactical practices you can design. Think carefully about matching the level of tactical practice to the technical ability of your player. Games involving throwing of balls, bean bags or weighted shuttles can be useful for developing spatial, personal, opponent and partner awareness. They allow children to develop awareness of these factors without necessarily having the ability to strike a shuttle with accuracy. The level 1 manual provides you with a variety of practices of this nature.

Basic awareness practices

Spatial awareness – accuracy

The most basic tactical practices with a racket are accuracy practices. This is because they involve the player changing their focus from how to do something (e.g. using a basic grip) to the outcome (e.g. a clear landing close to the back line is making effective use of depth and will force the player right back). Note that players should be developed to a reasonable level of technical competence before this is introduced and coaches should make sure correct technique is sustained even though the focus of the practice has changed. The targets set should be challenging but offer a reasonable chance of success to remain motivating.

Examples

- Two rackets form a "box" in a corner of the court and players attempt to hit net shots off a feed into that area. An element of competition could be introduced with the practice partner (eg. how many can you get in out of 10).

- The shuttle is lifted short and players smash to a target (eg. a chair) just inside the singles sidelines.

Note that accuracy practices are essentially tactical practices because they enhance awareness of effective use of space (depth, width and height). A dropshot tight to the net makes good use of height, a clear landing close to/on the rear line makes good use of depth, smashes just inside the tramlines make good use of width.

Spatial awareness – depth and base position

Players are asked to identify a desirable base position they would hope to be able to reach after a clear. Arrival at that base should coincide with their opponent striking the shuttle. Play a short rally (4-6 clears) where the aim is for both players to arrive at their chosen base under control just as their opponent strikes the shuttle. Questioning should be concerned with justifying the choice of base, the advantages/disadvantages of clearing with height, the need to hit with effective depth.

Shuttles are fed to the net (backhand or forehand) and a player moves in to play a net shot. Players are told that having played the stroke they should retreat to what they consider to be a sensible base and that this may vary depending upon the tightness of the stroke played. The feeder should pause each time before feeding the next shuttle to allow the player using the net shot to consider where they have retreated to. Players are then questioned, with the desired conclusion being the tighter the net shot the less you retreat as it is very difficult for your opponent to get the shuttle to the back of your court and you may have an opportunity to kill at the net.

Spatial awareness – width and base position

Shuttles are hit straight along the singles sidelines between two players, mid-court to mid-court. Players asked to identify the base they would hope to achieve after each stroke, the importance of doing this and the implications of hitting with different pace on the shuttle. Answers should be concerned with the covering of the width of the court, with a position towards the centre line but remaining on the same side of the court as the shuttle.

One player continually lifts straight, the other player dropshots. The lifts are of sufficient height and depth to allow the player to retreat to a sensible base position. At a certain point the lift is directed cross-court and the players change positions accordingly, carrying on with straight drops and lifts. Through questioning the difference of base position when straight and cross-court lifting is discussed. The advantages and disadvantages of using height on lifts should also be discussed.

Spatial awareness – predictable rallies

Rallying with accuracy as the focus is more advanced. Keep it simple initially by making the rallies predictable.

Examples

- 2 players play a predictable sequence of lift-dropshot-block-block. After 10 dropshots the player using this stroke is given feedback by their playing partner who estimates how many of the dropshots, if they had been allowed to land, would have landed in front of the low service line. Alternatively the player returning the dropshot can count how many times they were forced to place their front foot on or in front of the low service line when returning a dropshot.

- 2 players play a predictable sequence of clear-dropshot-net shot-lift. After 5 clears the player using this stroke is given feedback by their playing partner who estimates how many of the clears, if they were allowed to land, would have landed in the rear tramlines. Alternatively another player could be used to assess the number of times the person being cleared to has put at least one foot in the rear court to return that clear. For weaker players an area bigger than the rear tramlines could be marked.

Both the above practices should be related to the effective use of depth to out-manoeuvre your opponent.

Personal awareness – shot selection

Rearcourt

Shuttles are fed to the front service line, returned with a net shot and then lifted. The practicing player then returns with a smash, clear or dropshot. After a number of strokes the practice is stopped and the player is questioned about their shot selections. Typical answers would involve being on or off balance, the depth of the shuttle being struck etc.

Forecourt

Shuttles are fed to the rearcourt, then a dropshot is played followed by a net shot. The dropshot player moves in and plays their choice of stroke (kill, net shot or lift). After a number of strokes the practice is stopped and the player is questioned about their shot selections. Typical answers would be concerned with being on or off balance, how early the stroke is being taken etc.

Opponent awareness – shot selection

A shuttle is continually lifted to the rearcourt, the reply being a dropshot. Each time the player lifting the shuttle should retreat to a reasonable base position. At a certain point this player begins to retreat less and less after the lift or begins to struggle to return the dropshot. This should trigger the dropshotting player to clear or smash the shuttle, at which point the rally ceases. After a number of repetitions the reason for the change of stroke can be justified via effective questioning.

Players clear to each other and aim to return to a reasonable base. One player then deliberately begins to recover less and this triggers the other player to play a dropshot, at which point the rally ceases. After a number of repetitions the reason for the change of stroke can be justified by effective questioning.

A shuttle is lifted short deliberately and immediately this is done the "server" moves to one side or the other to create space. Player receiving the short lift then smashes, displaying good awareness by smashing to the side where the space has been created.

Play Rally Out (PRO) practices

This type of practice is far more open and allows players to complete rallies in the same way as they would in a game. The advantages of this type of practice are as follows:

- PRO practices combine elements of spatial, personal and opponent awareness.

- There is a consequence to the stroke being played, with the player being able to evaluate the effect of their shot selection on the nature of the subsequent rally.

- Such practices are highly motivating as they are game-like and involve competition. PRO practices are fun!

Set plays then Play Rally Out (PRO)

Here players are given a simple set sequence to follow. At some stage a new stroke is introduced and this stroke acts as the "trigger" to Play the Rally Out (PRO).

Examples

- On half a court one player lifts and retreats to a sensible base, their opponent plays a dropshot. This continues until the lifting player decides to play a net shot. From then on the rally is played out as normal. Questioning could include "what makes you decide to play a net shot?", "what are you aiming to do when you play the net shot?" or "what can increase your chances of pressurising your opponent when you hit your net shot?"

- Players clear to each other until the designated player decides to play a dropshot. From then on the rally is played out as normal. Questioning could include "what makes you decide to play dropshot?", "what are you aiming to do when you play the dropshot?" or "what can increase your chances of pressurising your opponent when you hit your dropshot?"

Set play then a limited choice and Play Rally Out (PRO)

Here players are given a short sequence to follow and when the shuttle arrives at a certain part of the court one player is given a limited choice as to what they are allowed to do. From then on the rally is played out as normal.

Example

- Player 1 lifts to forehand corner and retreats to an appropriate base position. Player 2 plays a straight dropshot. Player 2 then replies with either a straight net shot or cross-court lift and the rally is played out. Questions could include "what are the advantages/disadvantages of the two strokes" or "what can increase your chances of pressurising your opponent when you hit your net shot or lift?"

There are numerous combinations of strokes you can put together to create practices of this nature.

Compare and contrast practices

Here a game is played as normal but players are told that they have a restriction on a certain stroke. For example, one player is only allowed to lift straight. This can be very useful if followed immediately with a second practice where an alternative restriction is imposed (eg. the same player can then only lift cross-court), allowing the player to compare the relative outcomes of the two strokes, their thinking supported by effective questioning from the coach.

At the end the opponent can also be asked to spot the restriction – this enhances their ability to spot and react to predictable patterns of play.

Compare and contrast practices can also be useful when a player has a stroke they overplay (eg cross net shots or cross lifts) as it forces them to play alternatives (eg. straight net, straight lifts) and heightens their awareness of other potentially effective strokes.

Depth game

Playing half court singles with the tramlines out, players can only win by either forcing an error or landing a shuttle in the rearcourt (back tramlines) or the forecourt (in front of low service line). Net kills are allowed into the midcourt but no smashes. Other than net kills, if a shuttle is left and it lands between the low service line and the rear doubles service line then this is out. This game can improve use of depth and height and also makes players more aware of when a shuttle is short in length.

Adaptation to this game could be:

• Play a normal game of half court singles but each player has a "tactical umpire" who counts the number of times that stroke that was intended to go into the forecourt (eg. net shot, dropshot) or or the rearcourt (eg. clear, lift) would not have landed there if left. Once 5 of these "inaccurate" strokes are made they are replaced by another player

• Use a whole court rather than a half court

Bonus points

A normal game is played but players are given bonus points if they win a rally with a stroke, or possibly with the next stroke after the feature stroke.

Example

• Two players play a normal game to 21 but if they win a rally with a smash, or with their next stroke following a smash (e.g. net kill), they get 5 points.

Win the match games

This involves a design of game where players can not only win points but they can also win complete matches by using a particular stroke/tactics. For example, players play half court singles but are rewarded for hitting clear winners that hit the ground in the forecourt and/or the rearcourt. Win the match games are highly motivating if you have an odd number of players, with one sitting off until a match is won. As the players improve tactically, the period of time sat off dramatically shortens.

Guess the tactic

Two players play singles, with one being given a specific tactic and the other has to guess it. Typical examples would be:

• Getting the opponent to cover long diagonals to create weak returns

• Making the opponent return to the same rearcourt corner

• Trying wherever possible to return net shots with net shots

• Moving the opponent away from a specific corner then exploiting that corner (eg. backhand rear court)

Coaching singles tactics

Singles tactics is effectively built on the concepts of planning, awareness and decision making established in the previous section. Indeed all of the practices mentioned before will be of benefit to a player competing at singles.

Singles serving

Players should be encouraged to try out different variations in serve during practice matchplay. The key instruction is for them to identify the type of serve that creates most difficulty for their opponents. Discussion as to the advantages/disadvantages of different serves should be encouraged via effective questioning from the coach. With serving however the same rule is true as for all tactics:

"Don't change a winning method"

High forehand serves

Singles serving at junior level tends to be a high deep forehand serve to centre of the rearcourt. The reasons for this are:

• Young junior players generally lack power from the rearcourt, meaning they struggle to penetrate when pushed right to the back.

• A steeply dropping shuttle is harder to hit cleanly (i.e. the first contact is with the feathers).

• By serving as close to the centre as possible this cuts down the angles. The server is able to cover each side of the court evenly by taking up an almost central position.

• The high serve creates a great deal of thinking time, often resulting in indecision and unforced errors.

Possible closed tactical practices for the high singles serve could be:

• A target "box" (eg. made using masking tape) in the rear tramlines of the diagonally opposite serve box, close to the centre line. The aim is to get as many high serves to land in this box as possible.

• Using the same marked box, play a game where high serves must be used all the time. Receivers must start from their normal position. If the serve is left and it lands outside the marked box, the server automatically lose the point. If the shuttle is likely to land in the box then the receiver returns it as normal and the rally carries on.

High serves out wide should not entirely be dismissed although they are a high risk strategy as they tend to open out the potential angles of reply, making it more difficult to cover. One potential use is that they could be used to draw a predictable reply from an opponent. Backhand high serves are not used due to the technical difficulty of producing such a stroke.

Low serves

Both backhand and forehand low serves are less prevalent in junior players as a basic tactic, being used mainly as an occasional variation. As players get stronger however there is increasing use of low serves, the main reason being to try and force the receiver to lift the shuttle. At elite boy's and men's singles levels the use of backhand low serves is becoming increasing prevalent. Low serves at singles tend to be flatter (the server is stood further back) and slightly longer to make it more difficult for the receiver to play tight to the net. Low serves to the centre (to cut down the angle of reply) and at the player (to create uncertainty as to a forehand/backhand reply) predominate.

Possible tactical practices for the low singles serve could be:

• A target "box" (e.g. made using masking tape) in the diagonally opposite service box close to the front service and centre lines. The aim is to get as many low serves into this box as possible

• Play a game where you can serve low either to the centre or at your opponent. Receiver's must start from their normal position and not move until serve is struck. Players can then compare and contrast the two types of serve.

Flick serves

Flick serves (both backhand and forehand) are less prevalent in junior play as a basic tactic, being more used as an occasional variation. As players become stronger flick serves are used more. This is linked to the increasing use of low serves in singles at elite level, the flick being a deceptive variation. At elite levels (men and boys), backhand low and flick serves are used in combination more often than forehand low and flick serves. In women's singles, forehand flicks and low serves are used more often in combination. Flicks are used to:

• Vary the speed at which players have to react when receiving serve.

• Potentially throw players off balance.

• Tempt a predictable return.

• Reduce pressure on low serve.

Flicks can be to the centre to reduce the angle of reply or wide to draw potentially predictable replies.

Possible tactical practices for the flick singles serve could be:

• A target "box" (eg. made using masking tape) in the rear tramlines of the diagonally opposite serve box, close to the centre line. The aim is to get as many flick serves to land in this box as possible.

• Games where only flick and low serves are allowed.

Singles return of serve

The type of return of serve played in singles depends on a number of variables, including:

• The type of serve you are returning (low, flick or high).

• The quality of the serve being returned.

• The game plan.

• Your strengths and weaknesses.

• Your opponent's strengths and weaknesses.

Because of these variables it is not desirable to set too many hard and fast rules about returning serve however the following guidelines are useful:

• Aim to take the shuttle as early as possible to give your opponent less time, increase the range of possible strokes and also their effectiveness.

• Note which returns create the most difficulty for your opponent and creates the less difficulty for yourself.

• Be decisive.

• Consider playing returns with a margin for error on the sidelines.

Common faults in Singles with possible solutions

Lack of use of the depth of the court

Sometimes player appear to have less time simply because they are not:

• clearing or lifting with sufficient depth.

• playing dropshots and net shots close enough to the net.

Effectively this means they are trying to compete against an opponent but not using the whole of their opponent's court. Having first checked and corrected what technical deficiencies may be contributing to this, games that encourage use of depth and that rewards strokes that land in the rear tramlines or close to the net are useful to address this tactical shortcoming.

Overplaying a stroke

Many player "fall in love" with a particular stroke and this can become ineffective and predictable after a while. Explanation is often used by coaches to try to alleviate this problem, however this is much less effective than setting up practices where players are allowed to experience the consequences of a particular stroke and investigate possible alternative. "Compare and contrast" practices are particularly useful, where players are restricted to playing a certain stroke (eg. when lifting at singles the direction of lift can be straight only) and are then allowed to play the opposite (eg. cross-court lifts). Players are then asked to compare and contrast the relative merits of each stroke.

Patience

Under pressure, young players often panic on service return and try even harder to put the shuttle on the floor on every shot. Dropshots, nets shot and smashes predominate as these are the strokes perceived as a "Route 1" to putting the shuttle on the floor. The consequence of this is that their opponent's rearcourt is used infrequently. The player is, in effect trying to win the match by using only 2/3rds of their opponent's court. Practices that compare and contrast the relative advantages and disadvantages of certain returns of serve can be useful, as can depth practices that illustrate the use of the rearcourt to help create space in other areas.

Changing a winning game

Some players change a winning game without realising it and this can lead to losing from a winning position. Asking players to watch a video of themselves and spot potential examples of when they do this is useful. Pre-, during and post-match briefings can be useful.

Creating pressure/relieving pressure

Some players exert pressure and then rather than force home the advantage, the pressure is relieved with the next stroke. This is also sometimes described as "overplaying". Asking players to watch a video of themselves and spot potential examples of when they do this is useful.

Over-use of height

Unnecessarily high clears and lifts gain time for the player of the stroke but this has to be balanced against the additional time given to your opponent. Many attacking and counter-attacking opportunities can be lost by using excessive height on lifts and clears. Games where the emphasis is placed on playing clears and lifts to the rearcourt that just clear the opponent's racket are useful. Possible differences in height when the shuttle is hit straight or cross-court can be discussed, as can the desired trajectory of strokes played to the rearcourt when an opponent is under pressure in the forecourt.

Additional Aspects of Tactical Coaching

Watching

- The importance of vision in learning has been stressed in both the communication and learning styles sections of this handbook. Allowing children to watch high level play, both on video and live can be invaluable in both their technical and tactical development. In addition, watching and reporting their findings can also have massive benefits when in their normal training environment, provided the following guidelines are followed:

- Be clear to the players about how careful observation can help their tactical development: i.e. the "watching" has a purpose.

- When watching each other, stress the need to give honest opinions of what is seen and to respect opinions given. A good knowledge of the group you are working with is necessary here, because feedback from peers, correctly delivered and received, can be a powerful influencing factors over behaviour.

- In a group, balance short periods of watching with extended periods of doing. The players are there, after all, predominantly to participate.

- Focus players in on a particular aspect of tactics to study. Examples could involve recording:

  - the number of cross court and straight lifts played in 10 minutes of singles. Comment on how effective each type of stroke was in the match. Point out any differences lifting when you are under pressure (taking shuttle late and off balance) compared to not under pressure (early and on balance).

  - the number of dropshots played by your player and how effective they were. Was the player more successful with straight or crosscourt dropshots?

  - the total number of strokes played to the rearcourt (lifts and clears) and how many, if they had been left would have landed clearly in the back tramlines. Explain the importance of your findings.

  - the number of times a player is made to return back to the same corner. Comment on the reasons why you might use this tactic (eg. what type of opponent?).

- Be a "tactical umpire". Players compete normally but are asked to use dropshots that will land in front of the low service line. The umpire not only scores the game, but also faults players when dropshots are played that would land beyond the low service line, a point being awarded to the opponent in this case. You may wish to not fault players who hit outright winners with longer, faster dropshots.

Match analysis

Getting players to complete a match analysis can heighten their awareness of where winners and errors are occurring. This can be done in "real time" during a match with the form overleaf. At the end of each rally use the following process which allows you to work down the form:

- Identify the player responsible for the finish of the rally.

- Select backhand or forehand.

- Select straight or cross-court.

- Select the court area and stroke.

- Enter in the relevant box a tick (✔) when winners have occurred. Indicate with a cross (✗) where errors have occurred.

Note that the match analysis is only useful if the underlying reasons why winners or errors are occurring. These reasons could be technical (eg. incorrect grip on a backhand singles block), tactical (scored heavily against with a cross-court round the head smash because depth of stroke is poor), physical (errors at net due to being unable to hold the lunge) or psychological (nerves). In the event of using this tool to give advice during a match, note the advice given later in this section.

Player A:

| Court area | Shot type | Serve | | | Forecourt | | | Midcourt | | | Rearcourt | | | Round the head | | | Notes |
		Flick	High	Low	Net kill	Net lift	Net shot	Block	Drive	Lift	Clear	Dropshot	Smash	Clear	Dropshot	Smash	
Backhand	S																
Backhand	CC																
Forehand	S																
Forehand	CC																

Player B:

| Court area | Shot type | Serve | | | Forecourt | | | Midcourt | | | Rearcourt | | | Round the head | | | Notes |
		Flick	High	Low	Net kill	Net lift	Net shot	Block	Drive	Lift	Clear	Dropshot	Smash	Clear	Dropshot	Smash	
Forehand	S																
Forehand	CC																
Backhand	S																
Backhand	CC																

Player B:

Court area / Shot type	Serve			Forecourt			Midcourt			Rearcourt			Round the head		
	Flick	High	Low	Net kill	Net lift	Net shot	Block	Drive	Lift	Clear	Dropshot	Smash	Clear	Dropshot	Smash
Forehand CC		X			✓						X	✓ ✓	X	X	
Forehand S					✓ X	X	X X				X		✓ ✓	X X	X X
Backhand CC															
Backhand S				✓ X		X	X								

Player A:

Court area / Shot type	Serve			Forecourt			Midcourt			Rearcourt			Round the head		
	Flick	High	Low	Net kill	Net lift	Net shot	Block	Drive	Lift	Clear	Dropshot	Smash	Clear	Dropshot	Smash
Forehand CC										✓		✓	X X		✓
Forehand S					X ✓	X				X	✓ X	✓			
Backhand CC					X										✓ X
Backhand S						✓									

Notes (Player B): Vulnerable RTH, especially dropshotting. Fast front to back but turns slowly so vulnerable when hit across body. Hurts opponent with smashes and clears. Stick to high serving.

Notes (Player A): Vulnerable when forced deep in rearcourt; use this to create space in forecourt or weak returns that can be smashed to midcourt. Would hurt opponent by making them turn.

Pre-, during and post-match advice

General guidelines for giving advice

• Individualise your approach to the needs of the player you are working with. For example, do they need to be calmed down or "fired up".

• Promote players thinking for themselves as well as simply giving advice.

• Keep the advice simple and concise: 2-3 points only.

• Use questioning.

• Where possible conduct conversations away from distractions.

• Keep advice general unless you have knowledge of the opponent. Even then, consider the age and experience of the player involved before becoming too specific.

• Pay particular attention to your own body language and tone of voice. These are very powerful communicators and can be either detrimental or a boost to a player's performance. Be a "CAD" – calm, assured and decisive.

• Do not give technical advice as the players cannot make technical adjustments in the middle of a tournament.

• Only give advice the players can implement.

Pre-match

• Aim to conduct pre-match talks well before the event so the details can be absorbed. Before players do their physical preparation is ideal.

• Depending on their experience, either:
  • consider asking players to give 2-3 general points which they are going to focus on.

    or:
  • give the players 2-3 crucial aspects to focus on.

    or:
  • combine the above two approaches.

Use questioning to clarify that the points made are understood (e.g. "so what are the 2-3 aspects you are going to concentrate on?").

During play

During play coaches are entitled to coach from the rear of the court between rallies provided it does not delay the flow of the match. However, you should consider:

• What does the player you are working with prefer?

• Will an incessant barrage of advice have a positive or negative effect on the player? Be selective.

• That your body language and tone of voice should reflect calmness, assurance and decisiveness.

• Can the opponent and the opponent's coach also hear and understand your advice?

• Make notes or conduct an analysis as necessary.

• Nearing the approach to an interval or the end of a game, decide on the 2-3 points you wish to make.

During intervals

Once one player reaches 11, or at the end of a game, coaches can go on-court to talk to the player they are coaching. The intervals are 60 seconds (at 11 points) and 120 seconds (at the end of a game). Note however that coaches are expected to leave the court 20 seconds before the end of the interval, so in reality the intervals are 40 seconds and 100 seconds.

• Note the player may need a few seconds to compose themselves before they are ready to listen.

• Eye contact is important as it indicates you have the player's attention.

• If possible face players away from distractions.

• Keep advice to 2-3 points.

• Do not give advice that the player cannot implement (eg. a shot they cannot play).

• If you have time, ask questions to clarify understanding. This may only be possible in the longer interval between games.

• The most important tactic advice is often psychological (motivating, deep breathing to promote relaxation, maintaining positive body language etc.).

• Consider if it is absolutely necessary to go on – could you do more harm than good? If it ain't bust, don't fix it!

Post-match feedback

• Allow time between the end of a match before conducting a post-match feedback session.

• Strive to make it a positive experience irrespective of the match outcome.

• Consider the position of the player in the tournament as this can influence the tone/content of delivery.

• Technical issues are best left until the next practice session.

• Balance positive feedback with constructive criticisms.

• Allow the players to identify their own strengths and development areas.

Level doubles tactics

All the previous tactical concepts discussed are relevant to doubles tactics (eg. spatial awareness, opponent awareness, personal awareness) with partner awareness now becoming an additional factor. The aim of this section is to provide more examples of potential practices in a doubles context.

Basic doubles formations

Doubles formations can be broken down simply into front and back, which is attacking and side by side, which is defending. Taking up these positions should happen as a reaction to the likely height and position of the shuttle when being struck. For example, a shuttle likely to be struck well above net height should cause the receivers of that stroke to adopt a more defensive, side by side formation.

1 – Side by side (defensive)

It's useful to introduce this to children as setting up a defensive wall. This formation is taken up when the shuttle is high in the air on the opponents' side of the net. When the shuttle is positioned centrally, then the two players are literally side by side (see diagram A).
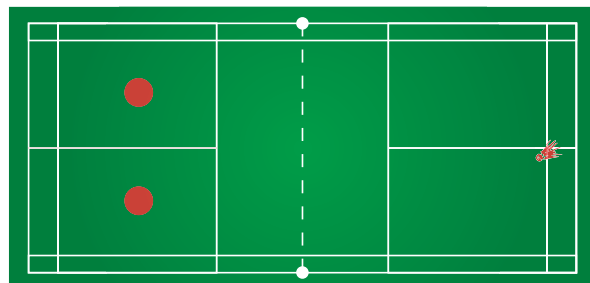
If the shuttle is wide, then the side by side formation adjusts slightly with the cross-court player being able to stand slightly further forwards as the shuttle would take longer to reach them because they are on the diagonal (see diagrams B and C).
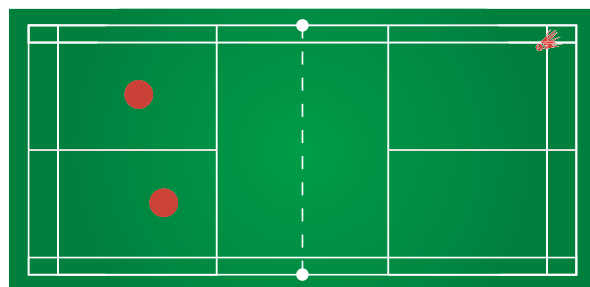
Diagram A
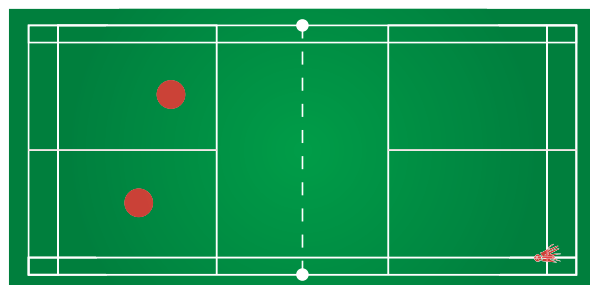
Diagram B

Diagram C

2 – Front and back

The basic front and back formation that should be taught is shown in the diagram below:
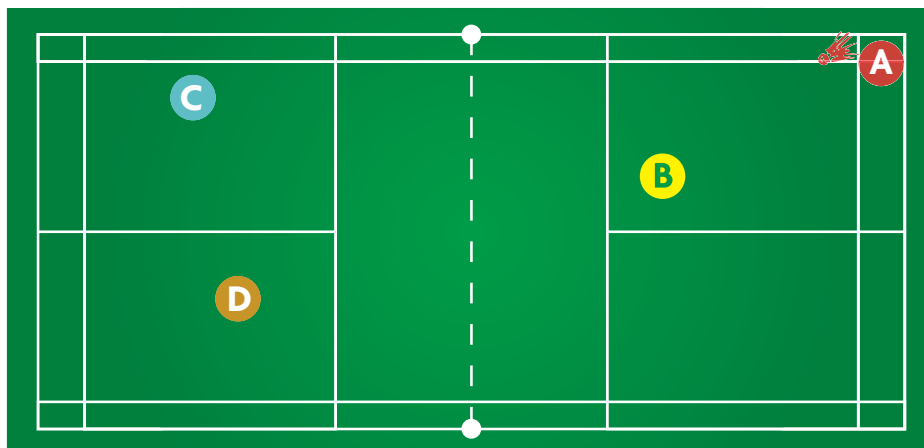
Note that the front player's position (**B**) is:

- Back from the service line so they can influence play in a fair proportion of the court.

- Slightly to the same side as the shuttle (i.e. not over the centre line). For children explain this in terms of two players "ganging up" against one. The actual reason is that the % game means attacking the straight player (**C**), so both **A** and **B** should be wary of straight replies from **C**. **A** and **B** and are slightly less concerned about cross-court replies from **C** that are in the air longer, giving more time to intercept.

Partner awareness

Partner awareness can be developed initially via throwing games that use bean bags or shuttles weighed down with blu-tac inserts. These games take away some of the concerns the players have for striking the shuttle and are slower, allowing them to concentrate more on where to move on the court in relation to their partner.

Partner awareness – basic throw practices
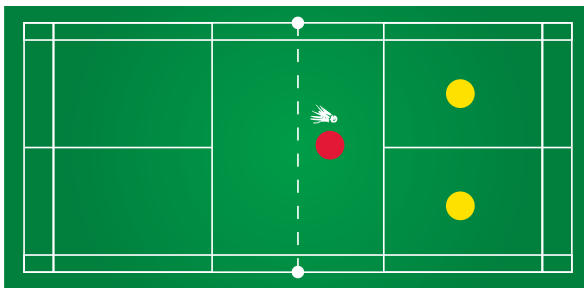
Coach/player (red circle) is in possession of a shuttle (green). Players (purple) stand in side positions.
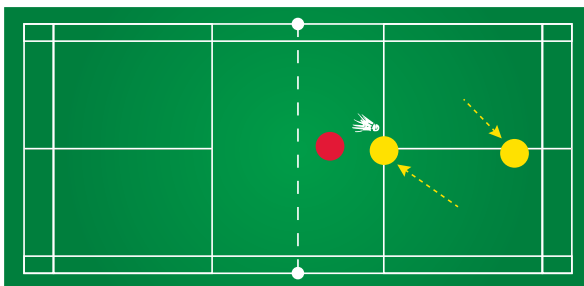
Coach/player (red circle) gently throws shuttle towards "T". The catching player's partner should immediately take up a rearcourt position.
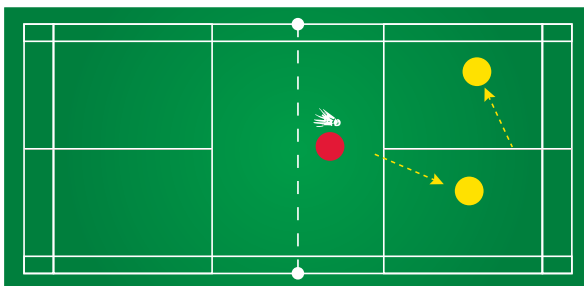
Catching player immediately throws the shuttle back to the coach and returns to a mid-court position of their choice. The rear-court player moves accordingly to reform a side by side formation. The other player then takes their turn.
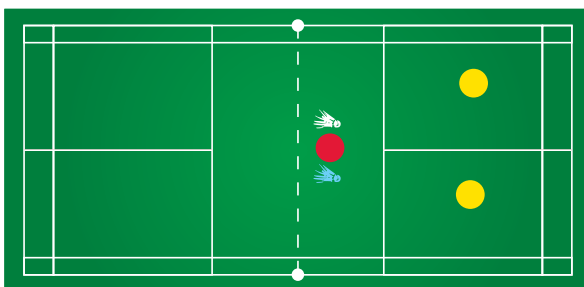
Progression – the coach/player (red circle) holds two shuttles, one of which is a different colour. Players are told which colour of shuttle they should move forwards to catch. The coach then throws the shuttles in a random order and players change formation accordingly.

Questioning is vital to support these practices, examples being:
Which player decides which side to go to? (Answer is the front player as the back player can see the front player and respond accordingly).

# Partner awareness – throwing practice with net included
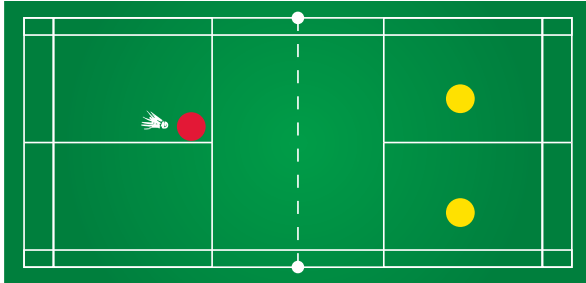
Coach/player (red circle) stands just behind the "T" and holds the shuttle (green) above their head. The players (purple circles) stand in a side by side formation.
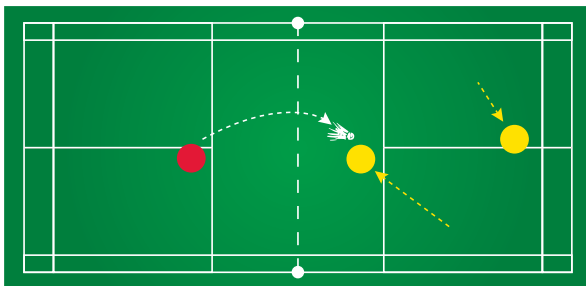

Coach/player (red circle) throws the shuttle (green) with an overarm action towards the "T". The catching player's partner moves to take up a rearcourt position.
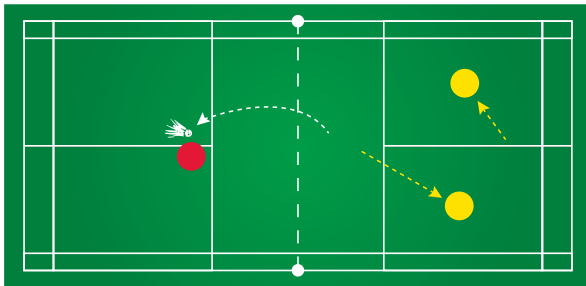
The front player immediately throws the shuttle underarm and high so the coach/player can catch the shuttle in an overhead position. Immediately on making this throw that player retreats to a midcourt position. The rearcourt player moves accordingly to create a side by side formation. The next player takes their turn.
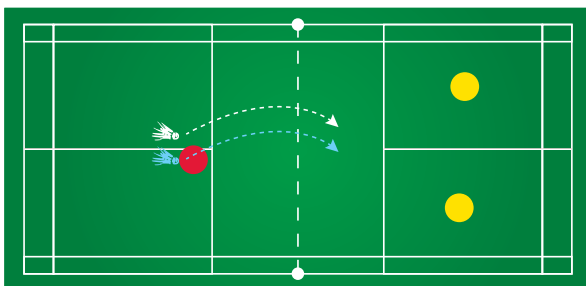
Progression – the coach/player (red circle) holds two shuttles, one of which is a different colour. Players are told which colour of shuttle they should move forwards to catch. The coach then throws the shuttles in a random order and players change formation accordingly.
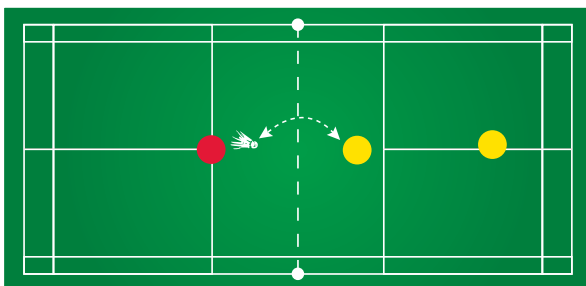
Progression – at the net, the catching player can either:

- throw gentle underarms over the net that can be caught underarm. Whilst this is happening the front player stays at the net (shown in the diagram).

- throw more dynamically underarm which forces the coach to catch overhead. This should trigger the front player to return to a defensive, side by side formation.

The next player takes their turn.

There are many more progressions possible and you should seek to design further practices that include long throws to mimic clears, throwing sequences with two pairs on court that mimic a set rally (e.g. dropshot, net shot, lift). With more advanced children it may be possible to have complete throwing rallies, with overhead throws only in the back half of the court and underarm throws in the forecourt. A count of 3 between each catch and subsequent throw can slow the game and increases the chances of correct formations to be taken up.

Partner awareness – hitting the shuttle

The aim of these practices is to help children to position themselves correctly when certain situations occur. Most children can recite fairly quickly that "side by side" is defensive, "front and back" is attacking. However, being able to make these adjustments at speed is difficult with all the other thoughts such as balancing, watching, moving and hitting taking place at the same time. For this reason many of the practices begin with a set play, where children have time to think about the positions they should move to straight away in the rally.

Practice 1
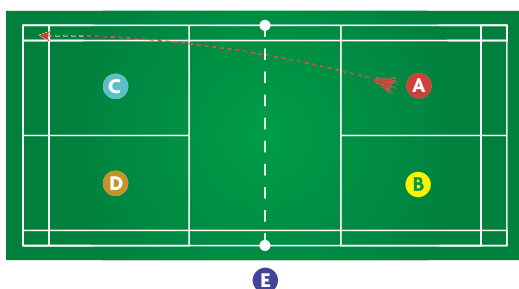
Players **A** and **B** play against **C** and **D**. Player **E** acts as the umpire. All players start in a side by side formation. Player **A** lifts the shuttle to **C**.
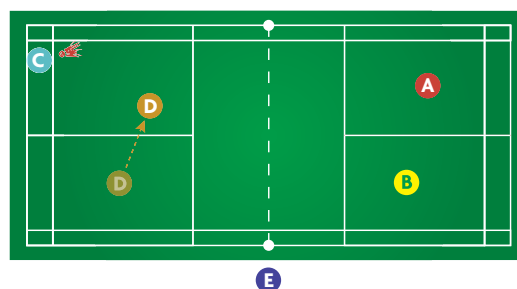
Immediately player **C** moves back, player **D** moves to a front position. You may want to indicate the position with a cross. The rally is then played out to a conclusion.
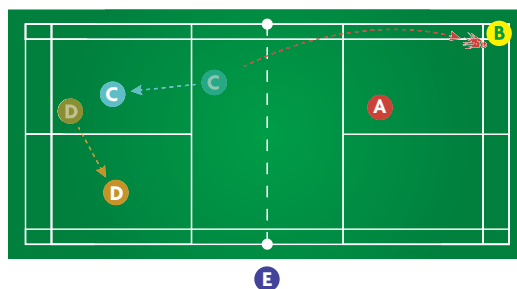
Points are scored by:

- If **D** does not take up their position immediately, or watches the shuttle travelling back to their partner, then the umpire calls "fault", the rally stops and **A**⁄**B** gets a point.

- Winning the rally.

There are various ways you can continue the game, but allowing **A** to start 3 times, then **B**, then **C** then **D** is a suggestion, with a progression being that the rally is started with a cross-court rather than straight lift. The final aggregate score of the game would add up to 12 (eg. 7-5). Then **E** gets a go and another player umpires.

Practice 2
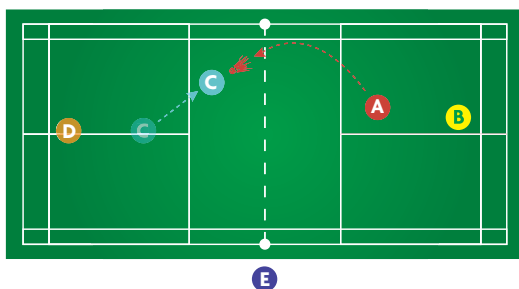
Both pairs take up front and back positions. Player **A** hits a shuttle straight gently over the net for **C** to hit

C lifts the shuttle straight to **B**, then **C** and **D** take up a side by side, defensive position and the rally is played out to a conclusion.

Points are scored by:

- If **C**⁄**D** do not take up their position immediately, then the umpire **E** calls "fault", the rally stops and **A**⁄**B** gets a point.

- Winning the rally.

There are various ways you can continue the game, but allowing **A** to start 3 times, then **B**, then **C**, then **D** is a suggestion. The final aggregate score of the game would add up to 12 (eg. 7-5). Then **E** gets a go and another player umpires.

Coaching progressions

A useful addition to your coaching is to design set plays of 2-3 shots starting from either front-back and side-side positions. Also asking the players to design set plays where they work out where they should move to is invaluable.

Opponent awareness

Practice 1 – Dropshots

The aim of this practice is to reinforce the idea that dropshots between two players is a desirable basic practice as it can create confusion and narrows down the possible angles of return.

Tape is placed on top of the net at one metre intervals in the centre of the court (see diagram).
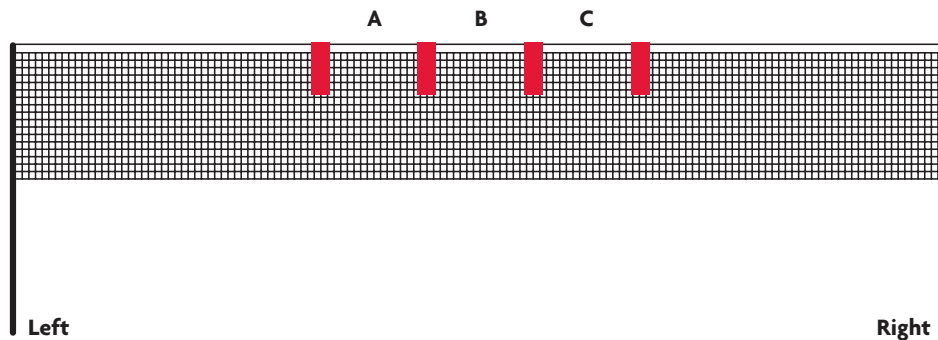
A player has the shuttle lifted to them continually in the left hand court and aims to play a dropshot return back through gate A each time. The player lifting should return to a realistic doubles base after each stroke. The practice is progressed as follows:

- Lift to right court, dropshot through gate C.
- Alternate lifting to left and right, dropping through gates A and C alternately.
- Lifting in to random sides, try to sustain drops from left through gate A, drops from right through gate C.
- Take away the gates and continue the practice.

Repeat the above practice playing two against one. The pair begins side by side and lift in different directions, both players returning to a realistic, side by side doubles base after each stroke. The one player drops to the forecourt between the two players.

Practice 2 – Smashes

A shuttle is lifted short and immediately that player extends their racket out very deliberately to the forehand or backhand side. The person receiving the lift has to smash to the opposite side of the player lifting the shuttle (i.e. away from their racket). This is a useful practise as it enhances the use of peripheral vision. Also many players can be caught over-committing their racket to one side or another when defending.

A shuttle is lifted short and immediately that player places their racket face on their racket hip (i.e. right hip if they are a right hander). This creates a triangular shape between the trunk racket and racket arm of the player. The player receiving the short lift smashes, aiming to hit the racket strings of the stationary player. They get 5 points if the hit the strings, 2 points if the shuttle travels through the triangle. This is a useful practice to help players to hit at a defender in an area where they can become confused whether or not to hit a backhand or forehand reply.

Practice 3 – Drives and net kills

Two players hit controlled drives along the tramlines, each stroke being hit with the racket head above the hand. One player then hits a softer shot to the net and the receiver of that stroke moves forwards to play a net shot from below net height with the racket head below the hand. The original player who played the softer shot should move forwards and attempt to kill the net shot. Note that discussions should consist of analysing what triggers the player using the softer shot to move forwards (e.g. they know first the shot they intend to play, anticipation that shuttle will be taken below net height, the shuttle is struck below net height, player hitting with racket head below hand etc.)

Compare and contrast

Play a doubles game where one partnership is only allowed to lift the shuttle straight, then repeat that process where only crosscourt lifts are allowed. Then use questioning to compare and contrast the relative merits of the two types of lift. Answers could include the merits of cross-court lifting when being hit at straight as a method of relieving pressure and also moving your opponents around. Straight lifting could be seen as a method to protect a weaker partner by leaving that player in a crosscourt position from the shuttle, giving them more time if the shuttle is hit towards them.

Play a game where dropshots can only be straight, then only to the middle of the two players, then only crosscourt. After the practices, use questioning to compare and contrast the relative merits of the three directions of dropshot. Outcomes of the discussion should consider:

• Choosing the direction of dropshot you are likely to use most frequently, giving reasons for your answer?

• The advantages and disadvantage of using other directions of dropshot (eg. variation, targeting a weaker player etc).

Targeting a weaker player

A useful tactic in doubles is to target the weaker player in a partnership. A useful practice to develop this skill is to designate one player as the target player. The partner of that target player is allowed the following:

• They can serve and are allowed one more stroke in that rally

• They can receive serve and are allowed one more stroke in that rally

• If neither serving or receiving they are only allowed one stroke per rally

The game commences and rallies are played as normal and scoring is as normal unless the above guidelines are broken, in which case the rally is automatically lost.

The use of flick and low serves and the relative ease or difficulty of targeting a player in the rear, mid and forecourt should be discussed

No lifting doubles

Players play a game where no lifting or clearing of the shuttle is allowed. The height of the tallest player standing with their racket head extended above their head could be used as a guide to lifting heights that are permitted. Flick serves may or may not be allowed. This creates a more positive attacking style, with great emphasis on not being dominated early in the rally and also finding creative ways to avoid lifting the shuttle

Tactical Umpires

Each pair is assigned a tactical umpire. The tactical umpire is given a specific event to look out for in a rally and is allowed to fault a pair if they see this incident occur. Examples could be:

• Unnecessary lifting. The tactical umpire can call a fault if they see a player lifting from the net when there was a good opportunities to play to the net and gain an attacking opportunity.

• A cross-court dropshot that puts your partnership under pressure (i.e. it changes things from an attacking to a defensive situation)

• Not moving to a front and back formation when a clear opportunity is presented

• Lifting cross court under pressure then retreating cross-court

• Two consecutive straight net shots being played with the racket head below the hand

• Standing straight legged when partner serving

This can be extremely useful to break habits in players as it uses peer pressure and this can be an extremely powerful method. However coaches may find the following guidelines useful:

• This method is probably most useful with a group with which you are familiar

• The group should be sufficiently experienced to the adequately observe correctly the chosen aspect of the rally

• Brief the group as to the value of the practices for all parties. The umpire learns by watching, the players learn from their mistakes.

• The role of umpire should be treated sensibly and maturely – the umpire's decision is final!

Doubles serving

Doubles serving is predominantly backhand serving.

Low serve

An effective low serve is essential as it can create attacking opportunities almost immediately by increasing the chances of a lifted return. Serves are generally delivered from as close to the "T" as possible. Junior players often serve initially from a little further back, often having a lower waist and being able to achieve a flatter trajectory from this position. As soon as possible encourage these players to serve from close to the "T" to give the opponent's less time to return the shuttle.

Serving to the "T" of the opponent's court cuts down the potential angles of return. Small adjustments of serving along the front service line are invaluable however to prevent the receiver becoming attuned to returning the shuttle from the same position all the time. Low serves directly at the receiver can create uncertainty as to whether the return should be backhand or forehand. Serves out wide into the tramlines can be used as a variation but the potential advantages (variation, drawing a predictable reply) and disadvantages (opening out angles) should be investigated.

Flick serves

A deceptive flick serve, produced with the same action as a low serve, is also valuable as it can throw opponent's off-balance, can reduce pressure on the low serve by introducing a degree of uncertainty in the opponent's mind or can move a weaker player into the rearcourt. Flick serves using a variety of width extending from the centre line to the outside tramlines can be useful to throw opponent's off-balance and potentially draw more predictable replies.

High serves

High lifted serves are a risky strategy that gives opponents a lot of time to attack what is in effect a short lift, although at lower levels of play its use should not be entirely dismissed.

Doubles return of serve

The type of return of serve played in doubles depends on a number of variables, including:

- The type of serve you are returning (low, flick or high)

- The quality of the serve being returned

- The game plan

- Your strengths and weaknesses

- Your opponent's strengths and weaknesses

Because of these variables it is not desirable to set too many hard and fast rules about returning serve however the following guidelines are useful:

- Aim to take the shuttle as early as possible to give your opponent less time, increase the range of possible strokes and also their potential effectiveness. This can be achieved by:
  - Aiming to receive serve from as close to the low service line as possible
  - Receiving serve with the racket head above the hand

- Note which returns create the most difficulty for your opponent and least difficulty for yourself

- Be decisive

- Don't change a winning formula

Serving and returning practices

Spatial awareness – serving accuracy

Working in pairs, players have alternate serves, hitting to a designated target (eg. a spare racket on the court). The position of the target should be varied along either the low or rearcourt service lines. The first player to an agreed number (eg. six) wins. Alternatively if in a group after two minutes the game is stopped. The winner moves up the hall and the loser moves down the hall where the game will recommence against a new opponent.

Spatial awareness – returning accuracy

Players serve within a predefined area (eg. low serves, as close to the service line as possible and within metre of the "T"). The opponent returns the shuttle and tries to land it in predetermined target areas. An element of competition can be introduced as in the above example

Spatial awareness – varying the width on a low serve

Players participate in a game where they are:

- Only allowed to serve low.

- Have 5 serves each.

The receiver cannot:

- Move until the serve is delivered.

- May be asked to stand a small distance further back from where they usually receive.

- Cannot return the shuttle with hard hits directed straight at the server or receiver.

Players should be encouraged to overcome the potential disadvantage of only being allowed to serve low by varying where they serve to along the low service line.

Spatial awareness – varying the width on a flick serve

Players participate in a game where they are:

- Only allowed to flick.

- Have 5 serves each.

The receiver cannot:

- Move until the serve is delivered.

- May be asked to stand a small distance further forwards from where they usually receive.

Players should be encouraged to overcome the potential disadvantage of only being allowed to flick serve by varying where they serve too along the rear doubles service line.

Compare and contrast on return of serve

Players participate in a game but are given various restrictions on the returns they are allowed to use. For example;

- Players can only return serve straight.

- Players can only return cross-court.

- Players can only return to:
  - The rearcourt or forecourt.
  - The midcourt or forecourt.
 - The rearcourt or midcourt.

Discussion should follow as to the effect on these restrictions, in particular how the serving team may alter their behaviour. The willingness of the server to anticipate probable replies and/or the server's partner changing their starting stance/position on the court are typical areas of discussion.
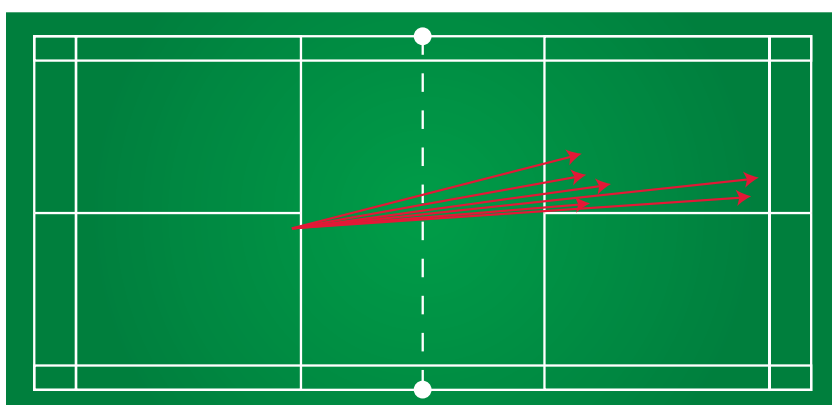
Watching serving and returning

Players are given a sheet of paper with 4 blank courts marked out and asked to plot the type and direction of serves and returns used by the player they are observing. How you might use this information is then discussed.
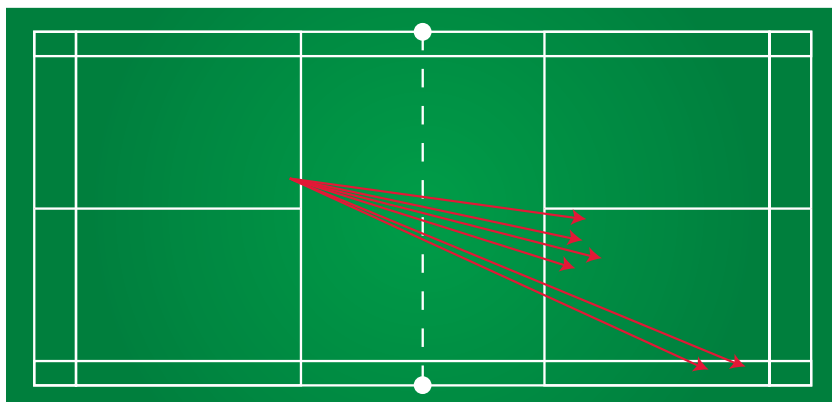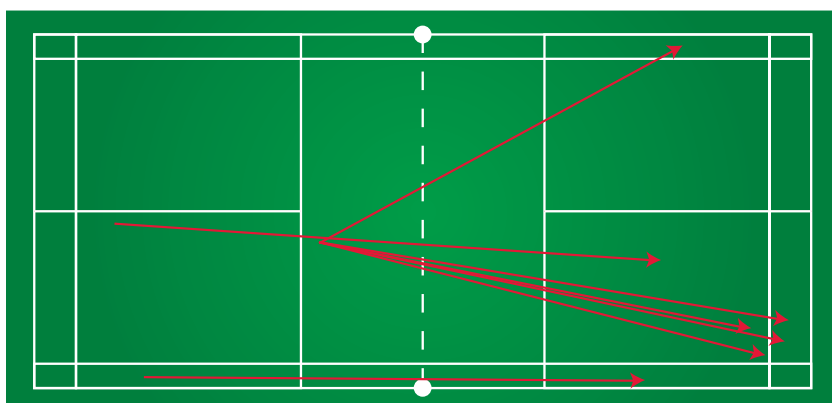
Serve left court
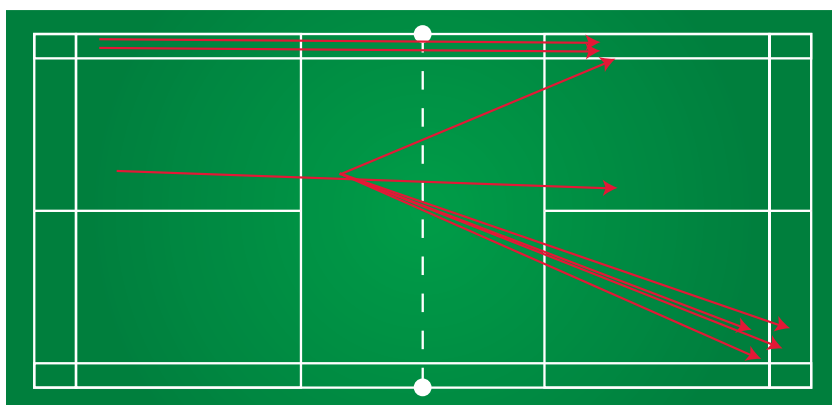
Receive left court

Serve right court

Receive right court

Mixed doubles tactics

Mixed is essentially adapted level doubles. Generally, the aim should be to create situations where the man is in the rearcourt and the woman is at the net. Unfortunately, this has led to a very narrow definition of mixed tactics, consisting of "the woman must go to the 'T' and stay there". This is a very restrictive and ineffective view of mixed tactics.

Serving

When the man is serving, the woman takes up a position in the forecourt in front of the man. In this situation the woman is committing to covering the forecourt so the man must be aware of his responsibilities to cover the midcourt and rearcourt. The higher the level the further forwards the man tends to stand to serve.

If the woman takes up a deeper position when the man is serving, she must be confident that she is powerful enough not to get isolated in the rear to midcourt where she can be pressured by the opponents. This position is rarely used apart from at early junior level where level doubles tactics is more appropriate (less strength differential between boys and girls).

Receiving serve

Low serve

Both the man or woman should aim to put the shuttle on the floor or create a weak 3rd shot.

The man
The man must be aware of his responsibilities in the mid to rearcourt when returning a low serve if the woman has taken up an advanced forecourt position. He should be aggressive but careful not to overcommit, unless there is a good chance to force a weak return.

If the man is receiving well, or the opponents are serving badly, then the woman may take up a position more in the midcourt to help put away likely weak 3rd shots.

The woman
When the woman receives serve, the man tends to take up a midcourt to rearcourt position.

Flick Serve

Both the man or woman should aim to put the shuttle on the floor or create a weak 3rd shot. If possible they should take the opportunity to hit down unless caught completely off-balance. If the man or woman is caught off-balance, the shot selection should focus on cutting down the effectiveness of the opponents' possible replies.

Rallying

For the purposes of describing mixed tactics in rallies after serve/return, 3 scenarios will be described.

Attack

The ideal situation is with the man hitting down from the midcourt and rearcourt and the woman hitting down from the forecourt. The ideal situation would be to pressurise the opposing female player by channelling the attack on her.

Neutral: front and back

In this situation, both pairs have tried to commit to a front and back formation, leaving space down the sides and in particular the midcourt where both players may go for the shot. Rallies of this nature consist of pushes and drives. The higher the level of play, the shorter rallies of this nature tend to be as the players seek to use other areas of the court.

Neutral: side-by-side

In this situation, both pairs find themselves in a side-by-side formation, with shots being hit very flat and fast. Change of pace, particularly blocking softly to the net and following in, can be effective.

Defending

The aim of defending in mixed is to stop defending and start attacking! As a general guideline, the woman tries to lift away cross-court as this allows her to take up a defensive base slightly closer to the net. The man should lift straight to take any straight attacking replies. Note that this is not a rigid rule and if there are opportunities to turn defence into attack by doing the opposite, then do it! Using width and depth on lifts effectively is vital to relieve pressure, particularly on the cross-court defender.

Mixed doubles practices

Many of the practices described in the level doubles practices have relevance to mixed doubles. In addition you may wish to consider the following ideas.

Compare and contrast

Play a game where both players in a pair can only lift straight, then play a game where they can only lift cross-court. Discus the relative merits of each direction of lifting for the male and female player. Questioning should lead towards answers such as:

- In percentage terms males will tend to lift more straight, females will tend to lift more cross-court as this restricts the effectiveness of any subsequent attack at the women by placing her further from the shuttle, giving her more time to deal with replies.

- Exceptions to the above direction of lifting can occur, for example:
  - if the direction of lifting becomes too predictable and needs to be varied.
  - if by changing the direction of lift you exert pressure on your opponent.

One shot in the rearcourt

In this game the woman is only allowed to play one consecutive stroke in the rearcourt. If she is forced to play two consecutive strokes in the rearcourt then that pair automatically loses the rally. This is a very useful practice if a women player is staying in the rearcourt and this tactic is proving ineffective. This practice:

- Helps the women to select strokes that allow greater opportunities to move out of the rearcourt.

- Helps her to understand her responsibility after the stroke has been played (i.e. she should cover the mid/forecourt directly in front of her).

- Gives the man a greater understanding of what he needs to cover (i.e. both the rearcourt corner, plus the net area diagonally away from where the women has hit her stroke).

Accuracy of lifting

A mixed pair lifts to a singles practice partner who dropshots and smashes. The male player lifts straight, the female player lifts cross-court. Questioning should be concerned with how the quality of the lift (in terms of depth and height) can assist the female player to take up a more advanced position in the court (i.e. enabling that pair to get closer to a desired front and back formation).

Lift short and not too wide
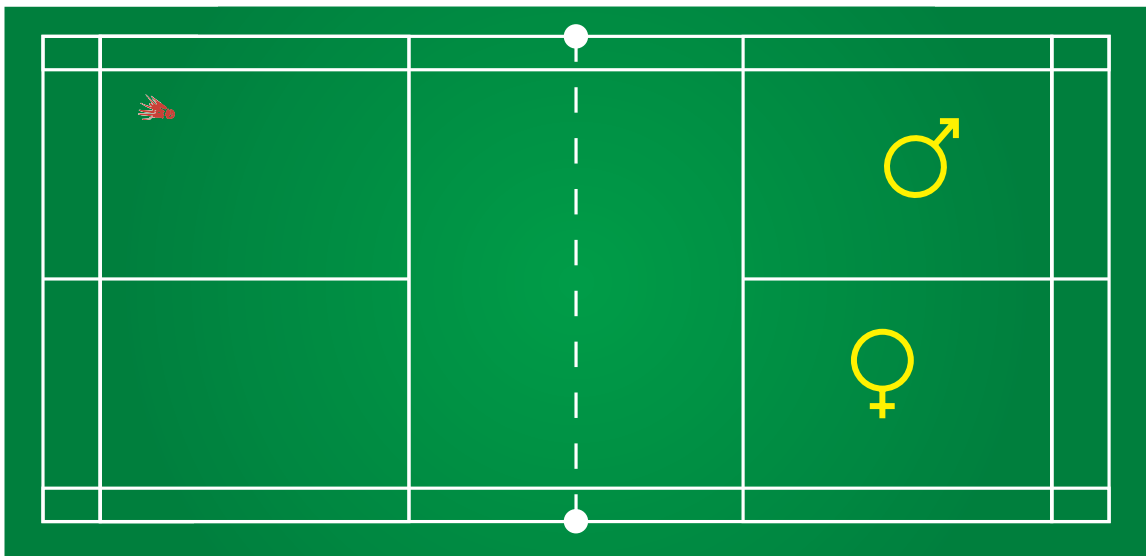
Lift deep and wide
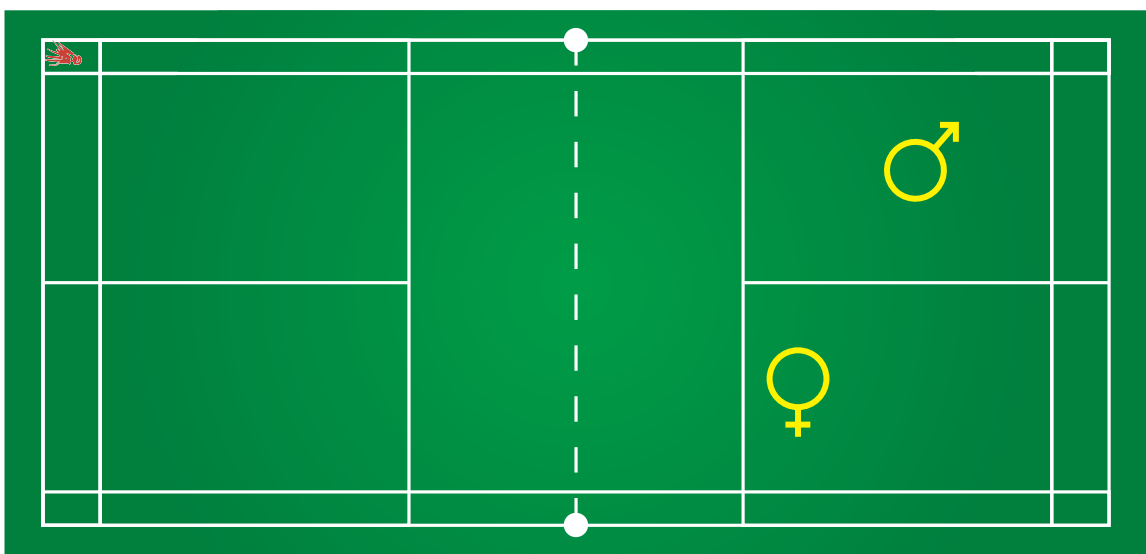
More advanced position for the woman is now possible

Appendix 1
Useful contacts

Contact details for Governing Bodies that make up the National Source Group:

Welsh Badminton Union
Unit E4, South Point Industrial Estate
Foreshore Road, Cardiff, CF10 4SP

T : 02920 497225
www.welshbadminton.net
wbu@welshbadminton.net

BADMINTON England
National Badminton Centre
Milton Keynes, MK8 9LA

T : 01908 268 400
www.badmintonengland.co.uk
coaching@badmintonengland.co.uk

BADMINTON scotland
Cockburn Centre, 40 Bogmoor Place
Glasgow, G51 4TQ

T : 0141 445 1218
www.badmintonscotland.org.uk
enquiries@badmintonscotland.org.uk

sports coach UK
114 Cardigan Road
Headingley
Leeds, LS6 3BJ

T : 0113 274 4802
F : 0113 275 5019
coaching@sportscoachuk.org