



Welcome to Coaching

Let the journey begin

2021

*“A good coach can change a game.
A great coach can change a life”.*

John Wooden

Welcome

Congratulations on choosing to take on the role of netball coach.

Coaches are an important part of our netball workforce and play a pivotal role in creating positive sporting experiences and providing inclusive, safe and fair environments for participation. They also provide opportunities for children and adults to be active, participate in team sports and healthy competition, and establish positive relationships with their peers.

Coaching can be very rewarding, however it is also important to acknowledge the time, commitment and planning it takes to develop and mentor participants and ensure that they have a fun and enjoyable experience that has them wanting to come back again.

While many people jump at the chance to coach netball, we also know that some are encouraged to volunteer to be a coach due to a need at their club or association or with a specific team. However ever you have come to be a coach, Netball Queensland is committed to supporting you to develop and enhance your skills and knowledge, and build your confidence.

This *Welcome to Coaching Guide* will help you get started on your coaching journey and we encourage you to visit the [Netball Queensland website](#) where you can find out more information about how we can assist you, including coaching workshops and resources. Your Netball Club and/or Association will also provide a range of support and development opportunities for coaches and we encourage you to find out about these.

Have fun and be patient, begin with the basics and the rest will develop.



The Role of the Coach

Coaching can be fun and rewarding as well as challenging.

Coaches play an important role in children exploring and discovering a love of physical activity and sport. You can do this by providing lots of fun and enjoyment as children are learning new skills, keep them active and engaged by giving lots of opportunities to practice and touch the ball, and opportunities to play the game.

As you start your coaching journey, keep in mind, the three main reasons children play sport:

- to have fun
- to play with their friends
- to learn new skills

As a coach you are a leader and teacher, and have an opportunity to provide a positive experience for children which meets their needs, so they learn to love the game.

Characteristics of a good coach include:

- An understanding of the basic skills and strategies of netball;
- An understanding of the rules of the game;
- Planning training sessions which are fun, encourage learning, provide challenges and incorporate the skills of the game;
- Flexibility to change when required;
- Providing positive feedback to players, including what they are doing well and ways they can improve; and
- Developing great relationships with your players, their parents and carers, and other coaches.



The Role of the Coach

Player and parent/carer expectations of their coach includes:

- Always being prepared and organised
- Being approachable and inclusive of all players
- Considering players needs, skills and differences
- Ensuring that all players have a fair and equitable chance to play
- Balancing competition with participation
- Demonstrating good sportsmanship
- Open communication with parents and carers
- Being patient — remember there is more to sport than winning
- Maintaining appropriate boundaries, and
- Having a genuine love of netball.

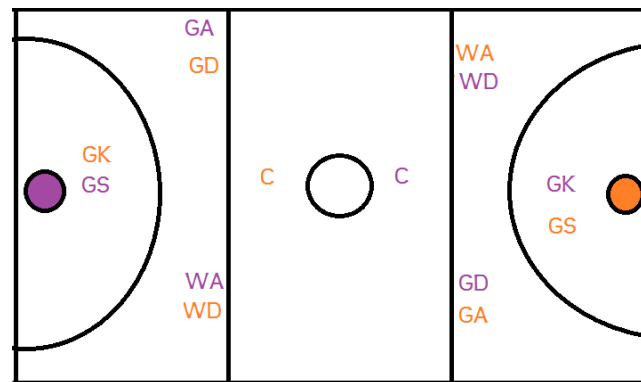


The Basics

Understanding the rules of netball, the positions on the court and the skills required by your team is a great way to start your role as coach.

- Netball is an invasion game played by two teams made up of seven players each;
- The netball court is rectangular in shape with three designated zones plus the scoring zone (goal circle). The scoring zone (goal circle) has a raised goal ring
- Players are assigned specific positions which determine their movement in designated areas of the court.
- The team in possession uses passing and catching to reach their scoring zone. The opposition team aims to gain possession from the attacking team.
- Once in the scoring zone, the attacking players aim to score goals by throwing the netball into the goal ring.
- Teams take alternate passes to start play after each goal is scored.
- The team who score the most goals is declared the winner.

This [Introduction to Netball](#) video gives more details about the game of netball, positions and rules.



The Basic Rules

The following information is provided as a guide to the official netball rules Australia players must follow in order to participate in and enjoy a fun, inclusive and positive game of netball. You can also access the [International Netball Federation Rules Book](#) online.

Game length

Netball games generally last 60 minutes and are played over four 15-minute quarters. Between the first and second quarters and the third and fourth quarters, a three-minute break is allowed. Five minutes is allotted for the halftime break while two minutes is given for injury time.

Playing positions

There are seven playing positions in each team: Goal Shooter, Goal Attack, Wing Attack, Centre, Wing Defence, Goal Defence, and Goal Keeper.

How the game starts

The game begins at the umpire's whistle, when the first centre pass is taken; the same whistle is also used to announce the beginning and end of each quarter.



The Basic Rules

Goals

A goal can be scored by a player assigned to the Goal Attack or Goal Shooter position, when the ball is thrown completely through the goal ring (signalled by the umpire's whistle).

Changes and Substitutions

Any number of substitutions can be made by a team at the quarter, half or three-quarter time break. This also applies during stoppages caused by illness or injury. Even when the team that called for a timeout makes no positional changes or substitutions, the opposing team can make changes of their own.

Sanctions

There are two different types of sanction the umpire will call relating to the rules of the games.

- Penalty Pass – for major infringements (e.g. contact, obstruction)
- Free Pass – for minor infringements (e.g. footwork, 3 seconds, offside)

Three-second rule

A player must shoot for a goal or pass the ball within three seconds of receiving it.



The Basic Rules

Over a third

The ball must be touched by a player in each third of the court. If the ball is not touched in a third, the opposition team gain possession.

Obstructing another player

A player, with arms extended, is not allowed to defend a player holding the ball closer than 0.9 metres (3 feet) (1.2m in NSG) (from the attacking player's first landed foot to the defending player's nearer foot).

However, a player (who does not have arms extended) is allowed to stand close to an opponent who is not holding the ball. Intimidating actions cannot be used against an opponent, regardless of whether the opponent has or doesn't have the ball.

Offside rules

Players must stay within their restricted playing areas. Moving offside or outside of these areas will result in a free pass being awarded to the opposing team in the offside area.



Netball positions and roles

- **Goal Shooter (GS)** - To score goals and to work in and around the circle with the GA. Can go in the attacking third including the goal circle.
- **Goal Attack (GA)** - To feed and work with GS and to score goals. Can play in the attacking and centre third including the goal circle.
- **Wing Attack (WA)** - To feed the circle players giving them shooting opportunities. Can play in the centre and attacking third, cannot go in the goal circle.
- **Centre (C)** - To take the centre pass and to link the defence and the attack. Can play in the defending, centre, and attacking thirds, cannot go in the goal circles.
- **Wing Defence (WD)** - To look for interceptions and prevent the WA from feeding the circle. Can play in the centre and defending third, cannot go in the goal circle.
- **Goal Defence (GD)** - To win the ball and reduce the effectiveness of the GA. Can play in the centre and defending thirds, can go in the goal circle.
- **Goal Keeper (GK)** - To work with the GD and to prevent the GA/GS from scoring goals. Can play in the defending third, can go in the goal circle.



Basic Netball Skills

- **Passing** – there are different types of passes used during a game including chest, shoulder, overhead, lobs, bounce, two-handed. The ability to use these different types of passes will vary with age, experience, strength and coordination. Players should develop these passes over time and learn how to choose the best time to use each type of pass during a game.
- **Catching** – young players learn to catch in front of their bodies first, then to each side, then low passes (below the waist) and catching overhead is the last catch they master. Use different types and sizes of balls as players are learning to catch. The next step is catching on the run followed by catching and turning in the air which is usually for older groups.
- **Landing** – the game of netball requires players to land and stop quickly. Find ways to incorporate landing into warm-ups as well as activities during training. The [Netball Australia KNEE program](#) has some great ideas for activities to help practising landing skills.
- **Movement** – players use a variety of movement patterns and speeds to execute skills like leading drives, change of direction, dodging, shadowing and moving around a player in defence.
- **Shooting** – a specific skill to score goals. When players start out often the ball is quite heavy for them to hold overhead and it is a long way up to the hoop. Keep encouraging them to practice, find a spot to aim for such as the front or back of the ring or the space above the ring.



Getting Started

Preparing for the netball season

Take advantage of the time you have with your team before the season officially commences.

This is the time to get to know your team and their parents/carers, and it helps to connect with your team as early as possible. Early and clear communication of expectations is vital to ensure you can establish a positive relationship with your team members, their parents/carers and supporters. This can include:

- Getting to know your players, their experience and current skills
- Asking players and parents about their expectations for the season
- Letting your team know what you expect as a coach
- Confirming how you will communicate with your team and parents, as well as how often this might be
- Agreeing to a training schedule that reflects the age and experience of team members
- Developing a season plan or setting your personal coaching goals

ACTIVITY: What do your players want to hear from the sidelines?

At the start of the season, have your players individually or in small groups write down up to three things they like to hear from the sidelines from their coach and parents. Ask the players to write down one or two things they don't like hearing from the sidelines. Have a chat with the players and decide what they think is most important. Make a list and distribute it to the team, coaches, managers and parents. Hold everyone connected to the team accountable to this list during the season.



First few weeks

The first few weeks of training can feel hectic and a little daunting at times.

These are a few tips as you start the season:

- Learning the names of your players and their positions is a great starting point when your team trainings begin.
- Getting to know your players includes finding out what they can already do and where there are opportunities to add to their skillset.

It's a good time to check out their:

- fundamental skills, like balance and movement and awareness of space (*keep in mind space is an abstract concept and majority of children find it challenging until about 12*).
- Basic skills including passing and catching
- Teamwork and ability to work together towards a target
- Plan the activities you will cover during your training sessions, including the equipment you will need and questions you could ask your players.
- When training starts it's great to set up a positive and supportive environment with lots of praise, fun and laughter while they practice.
- Setting up a positive environment also includes:
 - Getting players to help the coach with picking up and setting out equipment and balls during the session
 - Set up a routine where they have one place for drink bottles, towels, etc so they come together as a group during breaks



Planning for training

There are lots of great resources available to help you plan for your training sessions. You can use [prepared session plans](#) or you can create your own.

A training plan will help you to use the time you have with your players wisely, and should include:

- Structure - have a start, middle and an end
- Focus area – what skill are you working on in this session
- Number of players – how many players will be available for this session
- Equipment – what equipment do you need, when will you need it during the session
- Time – how long will you plan to spend on each progression of the activity
- Questions – what questions could you ask the players about the skill they are working on.

Start with a warm-up: This includes activities from the [KNEE program](#) like running, stopping, jumping, hopping, skipping and turning. There are lots of warm-up games you can use like Cars (movement and spatial awareness) or Tail Tag (footwork and strategy) which are in the NSG resources.

Middle: Use games or skill activities starting simply and building up with progressions so the players get to practice lots of time.

End: Every player wants to play the game. You can use games like End Ball which include all the elements of netball in a smaller setting without specific positions, as well as playing half-court or full court games.

Progressions: You can use [CHANGE IT principles](#) as a way to make the activity easier or harder depending what the player's need.

[Coaching Session Template](#)

Mid-season

When it gets to the middle of the season, you've had time to get to know one another and develop skills together, however, the excitement and passion can drop off.

Keep in mind your players are likely to be growing and changing throughout the season as well as developing their netball skills.

You may need to revisit some of the skills you've already covered earlier in the season or add another layer of development to a particular skill to keep your players interested and energised.

You may need to mix up training or add different activities if players need motivation.

Consider if you've been giving similar feedback or whether you can change up your questions so it keeps training interesting for you and the players.

As the end of the season approaches, your team may or may not be heading towards finals (depending on the competition). Games can also be tough at this time of the year with lots of people invested in the outcome.

At training you can add in distractions like having loud music playing or lots of people wandering around to get used to the atmosphere. You can also do more scenario-based situations like "there's a minute to go and scores are even" for players to test out what they will do if that happens in a game.

If your team will finish playing at the end of the fixtures, start thinking about how you will wrap up the season, talk with them about the skills they have learned and developed and what they enjoyed.



Finals

Finals at the end of the season are a great source of excitement and nerves.

This is a great time to recap on skills learnt during the season.

Provide individual players and the team with hints and tips about what has been working well for them during the season and ways they can deal with the nerves they might be feeling. This will build confidence for players along with their self-belief.

Keep coaching as you have throughout the season as this will offer consistency to the players and help them with staying calm during games.

Encourage everyone to enjoy the game and appreciate the contest between the two teams.

“I’ve missed more than 9000 shots in my career. I’ve lost almost 300 games. 26 times, I’ve been trusted to take the game winning shot and missed. I’ve failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed”. Michael Jordan



End of Season Review

Reflect with players and as a coach on the successes throughout the season as well as areas for improvement next season.

Consider the skills each player has developed through training and games and what areas they can continue to work on for improvement. Provide players with one or two specific areas to keep working on heading into the next season.

It's also important as a coach to reflect on your own coaching behaviours, planning and delivery of sessions through the season and how that's been reflected in player development. Identify those areas which are your strengths and those you want to keep working on. Devise a plan how you will continue to grow.

Remember to reflect on the fun things as well.



Providing feedback

During training and games, aim to provide players with positive, specific feedback which will help them learn the skills and use them in the context of the game.

Some tips when providing feedback to players:

- Use simple and clear language
- Use 'Good, Better, How' as a framework for your feedback
 - What is the player already doing good – let them know
 - What can they do better – what do they need to work on
 - How can they do it better – do they need to change their position, or their body angle, or their target when passing?
- Give feedback when you see it happening, they're more likely to remember it, than feedback given at the end of the training or game.
- If you've given feedback to a player, watch for them doing it well shortly after the feedback - they're more likely to remember it when they've had positive feedback.
- Prioritise what's the most important piece of information right now – they only remember one or two things at the most, keep it short and simple, and let them practice before adding any more information
- Use analogies or metaphors to explain a skill – it helps when the players connect with the analogy, for example light as a feather, land like a fairy.

Coaching behaviours

When you are coaching:

- Be positive and supportive
- Be specific in your instructions and feedback
- Provide opportunities for players to learn from one another
- Avoid demonstrating yourself – adult bodies don't move the same way children's bodies do
- Time on Task – you want players to practice lots, by keeping your talking to a minimum
- Positioning - Position yourself so you can see all of the players, and when observing players practising, move to different spots so you can see from different angles. You can then give more individual feedback to the player or group in front of you whilst watching the other groups as well.
- There is more than one way to do each skill and each player may be at a different level of development and coordination. Always look at the outcome and ask yourself “is the skill effective? Is it efficient? Is there another way they could do it?”



Training Diary Resources

We have a range of free resources available to help you to manage, plan and play. These can be downloaded at the links provided below.

[Player Profile](#): keep information about each player including their preferred positions, skill development and progress across the season

[Player Training Attendance](#): it is helpful for your planning to keep a track of attendance at training as well as when people let you know in advance they will be away

[Player Court Time](#): during the season keep notes in your coaching diary as well as on the overview template for court time for each player during the season

[Scoring & Statistics](#): When keep statistics during the season, think about which pieces of information are helpful for skill development. Work on keeping positive stats such as Centre Passes when you score directly, intercepts or turnovers you score from and where shooters are taking their shots from.

[Player Skills List](#): when using this skills list keep in mind the age, developmental stage and training age of players. For example, children develop a change of pace usually about 13-14 when puberty and their energy systems develop (before that they usually keep running until they stop and need a rest)



Next Steps

In addition to this Guide, you can access an ever increasing range of resources, tools and workshops to support you in your role as coach on the [Netball Queensland website](#).

This includes:

- [Introduction to Coaching workshops](#)
- [Coaches Corner – Online Q&A sessions](#)
- Online community: NQ Coaching & Umpiring Corner (Facebook)
- [Checklist for Beginning Coaches](#)
- Session Plans
- [Demonstrating a skill fact sheet](#)
- [Netball Australia Online Learning programs](#)

Coaching Accreditation

While having formal qualifications is not a requirement for becoming a coach, many coaches choose to seek accreditation and continue their development by completing the [Foundation coaching course](#) which is available through Netball Australia in MyNetball Learning.



Acknowledgements

Thank you to the following clubs and associations who shared their coaching resources and materials with us, especially those that have been incorporated into this Guide or are available on the [New Coaches webpage](#).

- Caloundra Netball Association
- Phoenix Netball Club, Townsville
- Cathedral Netball Club, Townsville

