

# THE KNEE PROGRAM

JUNIOR MANUAL  
11-14 YEARS

**KNEE:** Knee injury prevention for Netballers to Enhance performance and Extend play







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# INTRODUCTION

Injury prevention programs are most effective in reducing injuries in younger athletes, especially those aged 18 years and below. It is therefore optimum to implement programs in pre and early adolescence. Girls are at a greater risk of sustaining injury while playing sport, particularly knee injury and more specifically the Anterior Cruciate Ligament (ACL). Netball's unique mix of fast pace play, change of direction, landing impact and immediate deceleration also increases the risk for injury to the lower limbs.

Younger athletes are more vulnerable during periods of growth, particularly where bone and muscle growth is not aligned resulting in awkward movements that increase injury risk. The Junior KNEE program has been tailored to accommodate this, with specific attention placed on designing a program with a reduced degree of difficulty and a greater emphasis on the development of basic strength. It does not involve stretching because stretching prior to activity has not been shown to be protective of injury. Regular stretching independent of or following exercise is however recommended for this age group and a basic stretching sheet has been provided in this resource.

The Junior KNEE Program is designed specifically for the developing athlete, aged from 11 –14 years. It targets basic physical competency and movement skills with particular focus on good techniques for take-off and landing. Without this physical foundation players can carry movement technique faults throughout their netball career, exposing them to higher injury risk and reduced performance capacity.

**THE JUNIOR KNEE PROGRAM HAS BEEN TAILORED TO ACCOMMODATE THIS, WITH SPECIFIC ATTENTION PLACED ON DESIGNING A PROGRAM WITH A REDUCED DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY AND A GREATER EMPHASIS ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF BASIC STRENGTH.**



# HOW TO USE

The following will give coaches an understanding of how to use the resource, how the resource has been structured and the key coaching points for successful implementation.

## CATEGORIES

### Warmup/Footwork

**Purpose:** To switch on the brain for activity and to prepare the body for movement, enhancing footwork patterning in preparation for dynamic activity.

**Implementation:** To be completed as a sequential process, all activities in the warm up/footwork category should be done at the start of the program each time.

### Strength

**Purpose:** Promote strength and develop a stable base upon which the body moves. It specifically targets the muscles that control the trunk, hips, pelvis and knees known to be protective of injury.

**Implementation:** Similar to the warm up/footwork category, all strength exercises should be completed when players are undertaking the program. For maximum strengthening effect it is recommended that additional repetitions of these exercises be performed independent of the warm up.

### Balance/Landing

**Purpose:** To improve players ability to take off and land safely on single or double leg and capacity to absorb force in more challenging circumstances. Use of the ball during exercises further increases specificity of training, ensuring the overhead arm position required of most netball landings is focussed on and attended to.

**Implementation:** Four exercises from the Balance/Landing category should be completed every time the program is delivered. For example the coach may choose one activity from each of take-off/landing, single leg, double leg and repeated effort or a combination of these.

### Agility

**Purpose:** To develop a solid movement foundation upon which skills are honed. The agility exercises aim to improve movement efficiency when decelerating and changing direction using netball specific planes of movement

**Implementation:** Four exercises from the Agility category should be completed every time the program is delivered. For example the coach may choose one activity from each of deceleration, change of direction, follow on step and netball plane of movement sections or a combination of these

## KEY PRINCIPLES

	GOOD TECHNIQUE	POOR TECHNIQUE
TAKE OFF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Feet shoulder width apart</li> <li>Feet facing forwards</li> <li>Hips bent</li> <li>Knees bent</li> <li>Knees in line with feet</li> <li>Use arms to drive movement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Feet wide</li> <li>Feet turning outwards</li> <li>Hips stiff/upright posture</li> <li>Knees stiff/upright posture</li> <li>Knees collapsing inwards</li> </ul>
LANDING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hips bent</li> <li>Knees bent</li> <li>Roll down through feet</li> <li>Feet straight ahead</li> <li>Knees in line with feet</li> <li>Trunk stable</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hips stiff/upright posture</li> <li>Knees stiff/upright posture</li> <li>Feet stiff</li> <li>Feet not aligned</li> <li>Knees collapsing inwards</li> <li>Poor Posture</li> </ul>
DECELERATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Multiple small steps</li> <li>Hips bent</li> <li>Knees bent</li> <li>Chest up</li> <li>Trunk stable</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 large step</li> <li>Hips stiff/upright posture</li> <li>Knees stiff/upright posture</li> <li>Poor posture</li> </ul>
CHANGE OF DIRECTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hips bent</li> <li>Knees bent</li> <li>Small steps</li> <li>Trunk stable</li> <li>Outside leg absorb the landing</li> <li>Inside leg drive acceleration</li> <li>Foot leads direction change</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hips stiff/upright posture</li> <li>Knees stiff/upright posture</li> <li>Wide stance with large step</li> <li>Poor posture</li> <li>Outside leg absorbs and drives</li> <li>Inside leg absorbs and drives</li> <li>Foot not leading direction change</li> </ul>

## MANUAL

The Junior program manual contains the specific information relevant to this level, including the key principles, instructions for each exercise and specific player cues and coaching points. Coaches should make themselves familiar with this information to support their understanding and ability to influence development with their players

## KEY POINTS

### Players

Coaches should use these cues and language to make players aware of how their body should be feeling and moving as they participate in the activities. This is a crucial aspect of supporting players' development of correct technique

### Coaches

This information will support coaches understanding of specific cues to look for as players complete the activities and aid in coaches identifying areas to develop and highlighting excellent technique

### +/- ball

Coaches will come across this throughout the resource in different activities. It simply means this activity can be done with or without a ball and the instructions clearly articulate how to do this

Videos can be accessed via a smart phone or tablet for on court reference when needed.

## VIDEO

Each exercise has a demonstration video with voice over providing clear instruction on how players should complete the exercise as well as supporting technical information and athlete cues. Videos can be viewed individually or as a sequence for each category.

Videos can be accessed via a smart phone or tablet for on court reference when needed.



# KEY COACHING POINTS

## FAMILIARISATION AND PLANNING

- Coaches should spend time studying the content, key principles, instructions and coaching points before beginning the program with their players. It is important that coaches feel confident delivering the activities as well as understanding the key principles and how to support player development
- A key aspect of successful implementation is planning. The KNEE Program should be utilised as the warm up aspect of the training session and therefore not impinge on the normal training structure or timeframes
- Encourage the players to familiarise themselves with the program. This involves the player in the process and places responsibility on them to have a sound working knowledge of the activities and key principles

Demonstrating activities is a vital aspect of the program.



## DEMONSTRATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

- Demonstrating activities is a vital aspect of the program. As all players learn differently it is important to give verbal instructions coupled with a demonstration of the activity highlighting correct technique. This combination of observation and practice enhances learning
- In the early stages of implementing the program players should be given the opportunity to slowly go through activities to understand how to move and the functionality required. This should happen each time a new activity is introduced
- As players and coaches gain confidence more focus can be applied to making players aware of areas to focus on. The combination of observation of correct technique and practice results in more effective learning
- Education forms the backbone of the program. Players should be educated on the importance of injury prevention and given ownership and responsibility to ensure they are engaged in the learning process. This is a key area of player-centred coaching, Netball Australia's preferred coaching approach


## GRADUAL INTRODUCTION

- Introduce sections of the program gradually over a period of weeks rather than all at once. This process allows for players to absorb and learn new information as well as facilitate skill mastery
- For example the Warm Up/Footwork section could be introduced in isolation over two weeks. Once proficient, strength exercises could be added and so on until all elements of the program are included in the team warm up

## VARIABILITY

- Multiple exercises are provided within each section to provide variability and allow for progression. It is not intended that a player perform every exercise during a warm up. It is preferable to keep it simple by performing fewer exercises well than multiple exercises poorly
- It is important to vary the exercises as appropriate to ensure continued motivation and transference of skill. Try not to have the program look exactly the same each session

**It is important to vary the exercises as appropriate to ensure continued motivation and transference of skill**




## SMART PHONE AND TABLET

- Visual feedback is a great way of raising players' awareness of their areas for development. Using a smart phone or tablet can assist players in understanding aspects of their technique that require refinement and will lead to skill acquisition
- Before videoing a player to provide technical feedback it is imperative you gain permission from the player or parent

## FEEDBACK

- The provision of feedback is essential to the success of the program to ensure risky movements are eliminated
- Coaches should provide players with 'external feedback' using analogies that emphasise the desired result of the movement, rather than focusing on actual body position. As an example a coach may instruct a player to 'imagine sitting back in a chair' when landing, as opposed to 'bend your knees' when landing. Medical research has shown this subtle difference in feedback delivery produces a faster and more effective improvement in skill
- The timing of this feedback is also critical. Aligning with player centred coaching principles, coaches should make players aware of technical faults and empower them to be responsible for their development in this area. Coaches should always be guiding this development process
- It is important that the provision of feedback is variable. Initially players require more frequent feedback, however as technique improves it is important that feedback is reduced to prevent dependence
- Feedback can be visual also. Many activities involve players facing each other which allows for immediate feedback on correct or incorrect technique whilst promoting motivation for improvement

**The provision of feedback is essential to the success of the program to ensure risky movements are eliminated**



## WARM UP/FOOTWORK

**Purpose:** To switch on the brain for activity and to prepare the body for movement, enhancing footwork patterning in preparation for dynamic activity.

**Implementation:** To be completed as a sequential process, all activities in the warm up/footwork category should be done at the start of the program each time

### JOG FORWARDS AND BACKWARDS

#### Instructions

##### Starting Position:

- Divide into two groups along opposite sidelines facing partner

##### Instruction:

- Jog to the middle of the court
  - Circle around your partner
  - Stay facing same direction and run backwards to starting position
  - Repeat circling partner in opposite direction
- x2 reps (x1 each way)*

#### Key Points

##### Players:

- Stay tall
- Eyes up
- Light feet
- Swing your arms.

##### Coaches:

- Ensure trunk remains upright and stable
- Use opposite arms and legs to drive movement with arms bent at 90° swinging forwards and backwards
- Ensure short ground contact
- Bend through hips and knees when shuffling around partner

### BUTT FLICKS FORWARDS AND BACKWARDS

#### Instructions

##### Starting Position:

- Divide into two groups along opposite sidelines facing partner

##### Instruction:

- While jogging towards middle of the court, kick heels towards buttock.
  - Stay tall
  - Circle around your partner
  - Stay facing same direction to run backwards to starting position
  - Repeat circling partner the other way
- x2 reps (x1 each way)*

#### Key Points

##### Players:

- Stay tall
- Eyes up
- Light feet
- Swing your arms

##### Coaches:

- Ensure trunk remains upright and stable
- Use opposite arms and legs to drive movement with arms bent at 90° swinging forwards and backwards



## HIGH KNEE MARCH AND HIGH KNEE SKIP

### Instructions

#### Starting Position:

- Divide into two groups along opposite sidelines facing partner

#### Instruction:

- March to the middle of the court
- Lift your swing knee high, opposite arms and legs
- Circle around partner and turn to face direction you have come from
- Skip back to sideline
- Push up through toes to spring into the air
- Lift your swing knee high
- Repeat circling partner the other way

*x2 reps (x1 each way)*

### Key Points

#### Players:

- Stay tall
- Eyes up
- Lift your knees
- Light feet
- Swing your arms

#### Coaches:

- Ensure trunk remains upright and stable
- Ensure arms legs and feet move in a straight path
- Use opposite arms and legs to drive movement with arms bent at 90° swinging forwards and backwards
- High knees on swing leg

## SIDE SKIPPING

### Instructions

#### Starting Position

- Divide into two groups along opposite sidelines facing side onto partner

#### Instruction:

- Sit backwards into a semi squat position
- Side skip to middle of the court
- Stay facing the same direction and shuffle around partner before side skipping back to sideline in semi squat position
- Repeat side skipping circling partner in opposite direction

*x2 reps (x1 each way)*

### Key Points

#### Players:

- Stay in a strong, compact posture
- Feet straight ahead
- Knees wide
- Eyes Up

#### Coaches:

- Keep athletes in compact position but do not let them collapse through the trunk/ensure neutral spine position
- Not letting feet touch creates an awareness of back foot position and keeps centre of mass wider

## FORWARD AND BACKWARDS SHUFFLE

### Instructions

#### Starting Position:

- Divide into two groups along opposite sidelines facing partner

#### Instruction:

- Sit backwards into semi squat position
- Using fast, light feet take two steps forwards and backwards over sideline
- Use your arms
- x2 steps forwards
- x2 steps backwards over sideline
- x10 reps leading with left leg
- x10 reps leading with right leg

### Key Points

#### Players:

- Stay in a strong, compact posture
- Fast, light feet
- Swing your arms
- Knees wide
- Eyes Up

#### Coaches:

- Short sharp footwork balanced over feet
- Ensure bend through hips and knees
- Shoulders hips knees and feet facing forwards
- Knees in line with feet
- Use arms to drive movement
- High knees on swing leg

# STRENGTH

**Purpose:** Promote strength and develop a stable base upon which the body moves. It specifically targets the muscles that control the trunk, hips, pelvis and knees known to be protective of injury.

**Implementation:** Similar to the warm up/footwork category, all strength exercises should be completed when players are undertaking the program.

## QUADRICEPS

### Instructions

#### Starting Position:

- Standing in pairs about arm's length distance from partner

#### Instruction:

- Start in the good technique take off position
- Grip partner's arms at the wrist
- Bend through hips and knees to squat backwards sticking buttocks out behind until arms are outstretched in partners hands
- Use your leg muscles to straighten up again

*x2 reps (x1 each way)*

### Key Points

#### Players:

- Try to use your legs as much as you can
- Only using arm grip for balance
- Keep your knees wide and feet straight head

#### Coaches:

- Ensure knees do not roll in and that knees do come forwards of feet
- Watch that lower back remains straight
- Ensure athletes do not rush the exercise
- Encourage athletes to observe partners position and give feedback

## GLUTEALS/HAMSTRINGS - BRIDGE

### Instructions

#### Starting Position:

- Lying on your back with knees bent and feet flat on the ground pointing straight ahead
- Arms on the ground beside you

#### Instruction:

- Pull in belly button
- Tighten buttocks and lift buttocks up
- Keep hips level

*2x12 reps*

### Key Points

#### Players:

- Try to make a straight line from knees to shoulders
- Keep the movement controlled

#### Coaches:

- Ensure lower back remains straight (do not allow to over arch) and that hips do not twist
- Ensure athletes do not rush the exercise
- Only once proficient place arms across chest



## CORE

### PLANK THROUGH YOUR KNEES

#### Instructions

##### Starting Position:

- Face down
- Leaning through forearms and knees

##### Instruction:

- Pull your in belly
- Tuck buttocks under
- Push through forearms and knees to lift your body off floor
- Keep chest up
- Chin tucked in
- Back straight

*Hold 2x30 seconds or as long as form is maintained*

#### Key Points

##### Players:

- Tighten your stomach and buttock muscles
- Try to form a straight line between knees and shoulders
- Stay strong

##### Coaches:

- Ensure head is in a neutral position (looking straight down and not poked forwards)
- Shoulder blades are set backwards
- Back is flat and buttocks tucked under
- Once proficient lean through forearms and toes and ensure technique as above

### SIDE PLANK THROUGH KNEES

#### Instructions

##### Starting Position:

- Lying on one side with knees bent
- Upper body leaning through forearm placed directly under shoulder

##### Instruction:

- Push through forearms and knees and use abdominal muscles to lift body up off the floor into a straight position
- Keep everything aligned

*Hold 30 seconds each side or as long as you can with good form*

#### Key Points

##### Players:

- Try to form a straight line between knees and shoulders without rolling forwards or backwards
- Stay strong

##### Coaches:

- Ensure head is in a neutral position (looking straight down and not poked forwards)
  - Shoulder blades are set backwards
  - Back is flat and buttocks tucked under
- Once proficient lean through forearms and toes and ensure technique as above*

# BALANCE/LANDING

**Purpose:** To improve players ability to take off and land safely on single or double leg and capacity to absorb force in more challenging circumstances. Use of the ball during exercises further increases specificity of training, ensuring the overhead arm position required of most netball landings is focussed on and attended to.

**Implementation:** Coaches should select 4 activities from the balance and landing category each time the program is delivered. Coaches are encouraged to choose different activities for each session in order to provide variability for players

## SINGLE BALANCE LEG ACTIVITIES

### ARMS AND LEGS

#### Instructions

##### Starting Position:

- Standing on one leg with knee slightly bent

##### Instruction:

- Try to hold your balance while moving your arms overhead in various defensive arm positions
- Then try to maintain your balance while moving your swing leg away from your body in different directions

**Hold 30 seconds each leg**

*Once proficient allow athlete to come up onto toes with defensive arm positions*

#### Key Points

##### Players:

- Try to maintain your balance
- Do not let your knee turn inwards

##### Coaches:

- Ensure hips and knees are in good alignment

### PARTNER PUSH

#### Instructions

##### Starting Position:

- Standing on 1 leg facing partner

##### Instruction:

- Both players stand on one leg and try to hold balance while partner tries to push off balance

**Hold 30 seconds each leg**

#### Key Points

##### Players:

- Try to maintain your balance
- Do not let your knee turn inwards

##### Coaches:

- Ensure hips and knees are in good alignment

## BALL ROLL

### Instructions

#### Starting Position:

- Standing on one leg with knee slightly bent + Ball

#### Instruction:

- Roll ball around body, through legs, overhead etc while maintaining balance as per previous exercise

*Hold 30 seconds each leg*

### Key Points

#### Players:

- Try to maintain your balance
- Do not let your knee turn inwards

#### Coaches:

- Ensure hips and knees are in good alignment

## PARTNER BALL PASSES

### Instructions

#### Starting Position:

- Standing on one leg facing partner + Ball

#### Instruction:

- Try to hold your balance while passing ball to partner

*x10 passes on each leg*

*Once proficient make the passes slightly out of reach/varied*

### Key Points

#### Players:

- Try to maintain your balance
- Do not let your knee turn inwards

#### Coaches:

- Ensure hips and knees are in good alignment

## JUMP AND LAND TECHNIQUE

### Instructions

#### Starting Position:

- Standing on both feet in the good technique take off position

#### Instruction:

- Jump upwards and land in the good technique landing position

### Key Points

#### Players:

- Sit backwards slightly prior to taking off
- Land quietly with knees wide

#### Coaches:

- Ensure good technique take off and good technique landing position



## DOUBLE LEG ACTIVITIES

### FORWARDS AND BACKWARDS +/- BALL

#### Instructions

##### Starting Position:

- Standing on both feet in the good technique take off position

##### Instruction:

- Jump forwards to land on both feet in good technique landing position with arms overhead, pause for one second
- Jump backwards to start position

#### Ball Alternative

##### Starting Position:

- In pairs facing partner + Ball

##### Instruction:

- Start in the good technique take off position

- Repeat as above, catch a ball on landing in the good technique landing

*x10 passes on each leg*

#### Key Points

##### Players:

- Sit backwards slightly prior to taking off
- Land quietly with knees wide

##### Coaches:

- Ensure good technique take off and good technique landing position

*Once proficient progress by*

*(a) increasing the height of the jump and/or*

*(b) reducing the hold time between jumps*

### CROSSES +/- BALL

#### Instructions

##### Starting Position:

- Standing on both feet in the good technique take off position

##### Instruction:

- Start in the middle
- Double leg jump forwards to land on both feet in good technique landing position with arms overhead, pause for 1 second
- Jump backwards to the middle
- Repeat the jump and land to all four points of the cross

*x2 Reps each direction*

#### Ball Alternative

##### Starting Position:

- In pairs facing partner + Ball

##### Instruction:

- Start in the good technique take off position

- Repeat as above, catch and pass a ball on landing in the good technique landing

*x10 passes on each leg*

#### Key Points

##### Players:

- Sit backwards slightly prior to taking off
- Land quietly with knees wide

##### Coaches:

- Ensure good technique take off and good technique landing position

*Once proficient progress by*

*(a) increasing the height of the jump and/or*

*(b) reducing the hold time between jumps*

## ROTATE 90° +/- BALL

### Instructions

#### Starting Position:

- Begin in good technique take off position

#### Instruction:

- Jump off both feet turning 90° to right
- Land in good technique landing position with arms overhead
- Pause one second
- Return to starting position
- Repeat to left

*x5 jumps each direction*

### Ball Alternative

#### Starting Position:

- In pairs facing partner + Ball

#### Instruction:

- Jump off both feet turning 90° to right

- Land in good technique landing position before immediately returning to starting position catching overhead pass on return

- Repeat to left

*x5 jumps each direction*

### Key Points

#### Players:

- Sit backwards slightly prior to taking off
- Land quietly with knees wide

#### Coaches:

- Ensure good technique take off and good technique landing position

*Once proficient progress by*

*(a) increasing the height of the jump and/or*

*(b) reducing the hold time between jumps*

## SINGLE LEG ACTIVITIES

### SIDE STEP +/- BALL

#### Instructions

##### Starting Position:

- Start at goal line
- Standing on left leg in the good technique take off position

##### Instruction:

- Jump over goal line from one leg to the other landing in good technique landing
  - Keep body steady
  - Land with hip/knee bent pause one second
  - Increase jump distance as control improves
- x5 each leg*

#### Ball Alternative

##### Starting Position:

- Standing facing partner + Ball

##### Instruction:

- Jump from one leg to the other catching a pass on landing in good technique landing position
- x5 each leg*

#### Key Points

##### Players:

- Sit backwards slightly prior to taking off
- Land quietly
- Keep hips level and knee in line with foot

##### Coaches:

- Ensure good technique take off and good technique landing position
- Ensure hips stay level and that there is enough hip/ knee bend on landing

### SLALOM FORWARDS AND BACKWARDS +/- BALL

#### Instructions

##### Starting Position:

- Spread out along the goal line
- Begin in good technique take off

##### Instruction:

- Jump off both feet diagonally out to right
  - Land on right leg in ideal good technique landing position with arms overhead, pause for two seconds
  - Repeat jumping off both feet diagonally out to left landing on left leg and pause
  - Repeat in a zigzag pattern to the transverse
- ½ court*

#### Ball Alternative

##### Starting Position:

- In pairs facing partner + ball.

##### Instruction:

- Start in good technique take off position
  - Partner feeds the ball alternating between left or right
  - Jump in direction specified by ball
  - Land on one leg in good technique landing position
- x5 each direction*

#### Key Points

##### Players:

- Sit backwards slightly prior to taking off
- Land quietly
- Keep hips level and knee in line with foot

##### Coaches:

- Ensure good technique take off and good technique landing position
- Ensure hips stay level and that there is enough hip/ knee bend on landing

## REPEATED EFFORT ACTIVITIES

### REPEATED CROSS +/- BALL

#### Instructions

##### Starting Position:

- Standing on both feet in the good technique take off position

##### Instruction:

- Start in the middle
- Jump forwards and instantly take off again in the same direction
- Hold the second landing for three seconds in good technique landing position with arms overhead
- Jump backwards to start position
- Repeat double leg jumps in all directions of the cross

*x5 reps*

#### Ball Alternative

- In pairs, repeat as above, catch a ball on the second landing

#### Key Points

##### Players:

- Sit backwards slightly prior to taking off
- Land quietly with knees wide

##### Coaches:

- Watch for knee alignment at the first landing/second take off
- Once proficient progress by increasing the height of the jump*

### REPEATED SIDESTEP +/- BALL

#### Instructions

##### Starting Position:

- Start at goal line, standing on one leg in the good technique take off position

##### Instruction:

- Athlete takes x3 sideways steps over goal line
- Hold the 3<sup>rd</sup> landing on one leg for one second
- Repeat to the other direction
- Increase jump distance as control improves

*x5 each direction*

- Catch and pass ball
  - Repeat opposite direction
- x5 each direction*

#### Key Points

##### Players:

- Sit backwards slightly prior to taking off
- Land quietly with knees wide

##### Coaches:

- Watch for knee alignment at the first landing/second take off
- Once proficient progress by increasing the height of the jump*

#### Ball Alternative

##### Instruction:

- In pairs, Athlete takes x3 sideways steps
- Hold 3<sup>rd</sup> landing on one leg

## MODIFIED TUCK JUMPS AND PAUSE

### Instructions

#### Starting Position:

- Start in the good technique take off position

#### Instruction:

- Jump and land repeatedly on the spot
- Lifting knees as high as you can in front

*x5 jumps*

### Key Points

#### Players:

- Stay upright and keep chest up
- Land softly and keep knees wide

#### Coaches:

- Ensure knees do not move inwards particularly with repeated landing/take off
- If the exercise is too difficult pause between tuck jumps to ensure good technique landing position alignment



# AGILITY

**Purpose:** To develop a solid movement foundation upon which skills are honed. The agility exercises aim to improve movement efficiency when changing direction, decelerating and then reaccelerating. The agility category targets how to absorb force in landing/decelerating but also how to generate force when reaccelerating.

Use of the ball during tasks increases specificity of training. The elite program extends these principles further to accommodate not only pre-planned change of direction but also the response to unpredictable stimulus.

**Implementation:** Similar to Balance/Landing coaches should select 4 exercises each time the program is delivered. Coaches are encouraged to choose different activities for each session in order to provide variability for players.

## DECLARATION TECHNIQUE

### SLIDING SHUFFLE

#### Instructions

##### Starting Position:

- Spread out along the goal line

##### Instruction:

- Drive forwards 4-5 steps before decelerating over multiple short steps to run backwards 5 steps
- Change direction to repeat running forwards/backwards to half way
- Alternate the leg that you push off from

*2x ½ court*

#### Key Points

##### Players:

- When decelerating stay low and balanced
- Use lots of steps
- Keep your eyes up

##### Coaches:

- Ensure good technique deceleration

## PREDICTED CHANGE OF DIRECTION

### ZIG ZAG RUN

#### Instructions

##### Starting Position:

- Form two lines on the goal line

##### Instructions:

- Drive forwards to the right  
4-5 steps
- Then decelerate to plant outside foot and change direction to drive forwards to left
- Repeat to half way
- Defensive shuffle (below) on return  
*2x ½ court*

#### Key Points

##### Players:

- When decelerating stay low and balanced
- Use lots of steps
- Keep your eyes up
- To change direction outside leg acts like the brake, inside leg is the accelerator
- Start to turn your foot towards direction you are going

##### Coaches:

- Ensure good technique deceleration and change of direction
- Once proficient start to cue players keeping their eyes up

### DEFENSIVE SHUFFLE

#### Instructions

##### Starting Position:

- Form two lines on the goal line

##### Instruction:

- Sit backwards into semi squat position
- Perform x2 repeated diagonally backwards sidesteps in semi squat position
- Keep arms overhead
- Continue to goal line
- Combine with Zig Zag Running  
*2x ½ court*

#### Key Points

##### Players:

- Stay compact throughout
- Keep knees wide
- Quiet feet

##### Coaches:

- Ensure knees in line with feet
- Ensure hips/knees bent
- Ensure strong through torso

## LATERAL SHUFFLE

### Instructions

#### Starting Position:

- Athletes line up behind each other down the middle of goal third
- On coaches command remain in semi squat position
- Start compact and balanced in semi squat position with fast feet

#### Instructions:

- On coaches command remain in semi squat position
- Rapidly side step right
- x5 steps before changing direction to return to the middle
- Repeat to left  
*x3 each direction*

### Key Points

#### Players:

- To change direction the outside leg acts like the brake, inside leg is the accelerator

#### Coaches:

- Ensure body always faces forwards and knee alignment is maintained throughout
- Player needs to shift weight over inside leg to power the drive

## FOLLOW ON STEP

## FORWARD ON RUN

### Instructions

#### Starting Position:

- Coach standing 10m from players lined up in a line
- Coach is the feeder

#### Instructions:

- Run forwards to catch ball
- Do one step on and back peddle to start
- Repeat starting off opposite leg  
*x2 reps each leg*

### Key Points

#### Players:

- Ensure the additional step is taken on catching the ball

#### Coaches:

- Ensures load is dispersed more evenly throughout both feet

## NETBALL PLANE

### V DRILL - DECELERATE

#### Instructions

##### Starting Position:

- Commence at top of the circle in two lines
- First player in the queue commences with fast feet

##### Instructions:

- On coaches command first two players drive diagonally to opposite corners of transverse line
- Decelerate over 3-4 steps to stop
- Jog to the back of the queue and repeat the other way
- Keep knee in line with foot  
*x2 reps each direction*

#### Key Points

##### Players:

- When decelerating stay low and balanced
- Use lots of steps
- Keep your eyes up

##### Coaches:

- Ensure good technique deceleration

### V DRILL - CHANGE OF DIRECTION +/- BALL

#### Instructions

##### Starting Position:

- Commence at top of the circle in two lines
- First player in the queue commences with fast feet

##### Instruction:

- On coaches' command first two players drive diagonally to opposite corners of transverse line
- Decelerate over 3-4 steps before changing direction to return to start position
- Reach down to inside leg to assist weight transference
- Return to the back of the queue and repeat the other way  
*x2 reps each direction*

#### Ball Alternative

##### Starting Position:

- Commence at top of the circle in two lines with two feeders standing facing the players
- First players in the queue commence with fast feet

##### Instruction:

- On coaches command first two players drive diagonally towards opposite corners of transverse line to catch and pass ball before changing direction to return to start position
- Return to the back of the queue and repeat the other way
- May also be done in pairs  
*x2 reps each direction*

#### Key Points

##### Players:

- To change direction outside leg acts like the brake, inside leg is the accelerator
- Start to turn your foot towards direction you are going
- Knees wide

##### Coaches:

- Ensure good technique change of direction

**NETBALL HQ**

191 Johnston Street Fitzroy VIC 3065

PO Box 13285 Law Courts VIC 8010

Phone: +61 3 8621 8600

Fax: +61 3 9614 4308

Email: [infonet@netball.asn.au](mailto:infonet@netball.asn.au)

[www.netball.com.au](http://www.netball.com.au)

