



WHERE WE ALL BELONG

# INTRODUCTION TO COACHING GAELIC GAMES



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## COACH

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Club/School: \_\_\_\_\_

## COACH DEVELOPER

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Club: \_\_\_\_\_

To keep up to date on upcoming courses in your area and for more information on Coach Education and Coaching Resources register on [learning.gaa.ie](http://learning.gaa.ie)

## COACH EDUCATION IN THE GAELIC GAMES FAMILY

The GAA's Coach Education Programme has seen in excess of 80,000 participants certified at various levels since the early 1990s. Foundation Level, Level 1 and Level 2 Courses have been developed in association with the N.C.T.C. as part of the National Coaching Development Programme.

Since early 2019, the GAA, LGFA and Camogie Associations have been working together on a new common Introduction to Coaching Gaelic Games Award. This common approach will ensure that all beginner coaches - regardless of their code of choice - can learn from and share with each other at the introductory stage. The broader Coach Education structure in each Association will then look as follows:



The varying levels and streams of the programme allow for coaches to develop their knowledge, skills, competencies and values when dealing with the Child, Youth or Adult playing population.

The **Introduction to Coaching Gaelic Games Award** course has been developed using these guidelines. Participants are provided with a solid foundation in coaching from which they can then choose to follow the Child, Youth or Adult streams which provides opportunities for coaches to develop their abilities as a coach with specific reference to those players that you coach.

Each Association is committed to continuing the development of the Coach Education Programme and to having a series of resources available to support the coach. Keep up to date on the latest developments in Coach Education by logging onto the GAA Learning website [www.learning.gaa.ie](http://www.learning.gaa.ie).



The Introduction to Coaching Gaelic Games award is structured around three key elements – The Coach, The Player, and The Game.

- Under the **Coach** section we cover sections on ‘Being a Coach’, ‘How to Coach’, and ‘Preparation for Planning’.
- Under the **Player** section we cover elements ‘Who are you coaching?’. Whether they are child, youth or adult players, male or female and being inclusive.
- Under the **Game** section we cover the elements related to Movement for Gaelic Games, Skill Development and Games.

**This programme will provide coaches with knowledge and experiences related to:**

**Why do you Coach?** – Every coach is an individual, and each of you are bringing your own skills and characteristics to our games. We’ll focus on this section during the ‘Being a Coach’ module

**What do you Coach?** – The different games, and developmental activities that can be used by coaches, and how to structure sessions to get the most for your players.

**Who do you Coach?** – We’ll focus on the players that you have within your team/group, looking at their age, stage of development, being inclusive and how this might impact upon your coaching

**How do you Coach?** – a set of skills that coaches can use in games and training sessions that will enhance ‘What you coach’

## INTRODUCTION TO COACHING GAELIC GAMES

The Introduction to Coaching Gaelic Games is the introductory award for coaches of Gaelic games.

The course is aimed at beginner coaches and will enable participants in the organisation of activities to develop Hurling/Camogie or Gaelic Football/Ladies Football.

The course is 9 hours for a single code (either Hurling/Camogie or Gaelic Football) and 12 hours for a dual course.

### **These 9 modules are:**

- Introduction
- How to coach
- Being a coach
- Who are you coaching
- Movement in Gaelic Games
- Skill Development
- Introduction to Our Games
- Preparation and planning
- Conclusion

### **By the end of this course, coaches will be able to:**

- Ensure that their coaching practice will reflect their Gaelic games values/coach education values
- Create a positive learning environment, through Building Rapport - Explaining, Provide Demonstrations, Observing, Analysing and Providing Feedback
- Organise a range of movement activities suitable to Gaelic games
- Identify the Skills of Hurling/Camogie/Gaelic Football
- Coach, through progressive activities (fun activities and games) to develop 5 key skills
- Organise a range of age appropriate games
- Organise and manage players for an effective practice session
- Reflect on their coaching journey/Learning (Plan, do, review)

Players flourish in an environment that is positive, and where development, enjoyment and learning are central to all that they do. As a coach you can have a major influence on this through what you say and how you act.

### **When players are exposed to a positive learning environment, they:**

- Enjoy learning and developing skills
- Are enthusiastic about attending games and coaching sessions and do not want to leave
- Arrive early, and the sessions are upbeat
- Enjoy training
- Relish spending time with other team members on and off the field
- Gain confidence through positive feedback and treat corrective feedback as an opportunity to learn
- Take great pride in stating they are a member of the team

## HOW TO USE THE INTRODUCTION TO COACHING GAELIC GAMES MANUAL

The Introduction to Coaching Gaelic Games manual is an important element of the Coach Education Programme. The Coach will spend time assisting in the preparation of a team, which will permit him/her to:

- Experience what it is like to have coaching responsibility
- Use and develop skills that the coach already possesses
- Record details relating to this experience.
- Establish areas where further training/experience/assistance is required

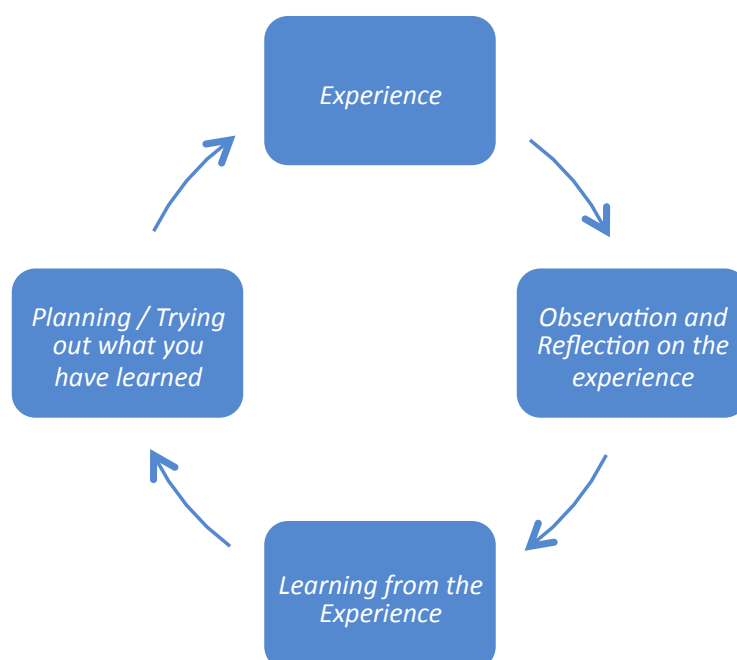
The purpose of reflection is to try to improve our coaching and improve the context in which our coaching takes place. Many coaches develop their skills and expertise through their experiences and by watching other coaches. However, simply acquiring experiences does not guarantee coaching competence. It is the integration of experience and knowledge in a meaningful way that promotes learning and in turn develops expertise. Coaches need to know how to best learn through their experiences. Reflective practice is a major learning tool that is at the heart of the learning process. It is a necessary component in learning to regulate one's thoughts, feelings and actions.

Reflection links experience and knowledge by providing an opportunity to explore areas of concern in a critical way and to make adjustments based on these reflections tool in this regard

Reflection allows coaches to think beyond what 'what went well' and 'what could have gone better'. It also stimulates coaches to ask why things might have gone well or not, and to how they can influence future practice. The reflective learning cycle below shows how coaches:

1. Experience their coaching practice
2. Consider their experience through observation and reflection
3. Learn from the experience
4. Plan and experiment with a different way of doing things based on what they have learned

## REFLECTIVE LEARNING CYCLE



# MODULE 1 INTRODUCTION



## WHY DO I COACH?

Write down your top three motivations or reasons for getting involved in coaching.

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## EXPECTATIONS OF PROGRAMME

Write down the top three reasons why you embarked on this course. These expectations will be revisited at the end of the programme to identify if we have achieved them.

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
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2. \_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_\_  
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3. \_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_





# MODULE 2

## HOW TO COACH



### 6. FEEDBACK

1. Ask 'what did you notice about...' to promote self-analysis
2. Limit information to 1-3 key points
3. Give specific, simple information in a positive way
4. Check for understanding: 'what will you now do?'



### 1. BUILD RAPPORT

1. Show interest in and respect for each participant and others
2. Smile and make eye contact with each participant
3. Learn and use participants names
4. Coach the person rather than just the sport



### 2. EXPLAIN

1. Plan what to say
2. Gain attention before starting
3. Keep it simple
4. Use questions to check for the players' understanding

## 6 STEPS



### 5. ANALYSE

1. Compare your observation with your picture of good practice
2. Identify the matching key points
3. Identify the mismatching key points
4. Decide whether to reinforce, modify or note but take no immediate action



### 4. OBSERVE

1. One point at a time: head, hands (Hurley) and feet
2. Observe each participant from different angles
3. Observe each participant several times
4. Check if the activity is working



### 3. DEMONSTRATE

1. Position so all can see and hear
2. Provide correct demonstration then focus attention on 1-3 key points
3. Provide demonstration more than once from different angles
4. Check for understanding before they go for practice



## HOW TO COACH - STEP 1



1. Show interest in and respect for each participant and others

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

How will you try to build rapport with your players?

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What is the most challenging aspect to building rapport and how will you overcome this?

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## HOW TO COACH - STEP 2

# 2. EXPLAIN



1. Plan what to say

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

How will the language that you use be different when explaining to children, youths or adults?

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Identify different methods of gaining attention:

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### HOW TO COACH - STEP 3



1. Position so all can see and hear

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

If you do not feel confident to demonstrate yourself, how will you ensure that a demonstration is provided?

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Identify some questions that you can use to 'check for understanding'?

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## HOW TO COACH - STEP 4



1. One point at a time: head, hands (hurley) and feet

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

Describe how coaches can observe a number of players at one time in practice?

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Identify how you can establish if the activity is working?

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## HOW TO COACH - STEP 5



1. Compare your observation with your picture of good practice

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

Describe how coaches can develop their picture of good practice?

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Under what circumstances would it be best to take no immediate action?

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## HOW TO COACH - STEP 6



1. Ask 'what did you notice about...' to promote self-analysis

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

Feedback must be accurate, relevant and positive. Outline a piece of feedback that meets these criteria.

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How will the language that you use be different for providing feedback to children, youths or adults?

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## LEARNING & REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

Complete the following self-reflection:

### MODULE 2 - How to Coach

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What aspects of this module will you apply in your next coaching session?

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What aspects of this module should your club apply in their coaching environment?

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What was the one 'stand out' or 'Ah' moment for you as a coach from this module?

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# MODULE 3

## BEING A COACH



A **C**oach is someone that builds Competency by **A**ssisting and **C**hallenging players to achieve their potential

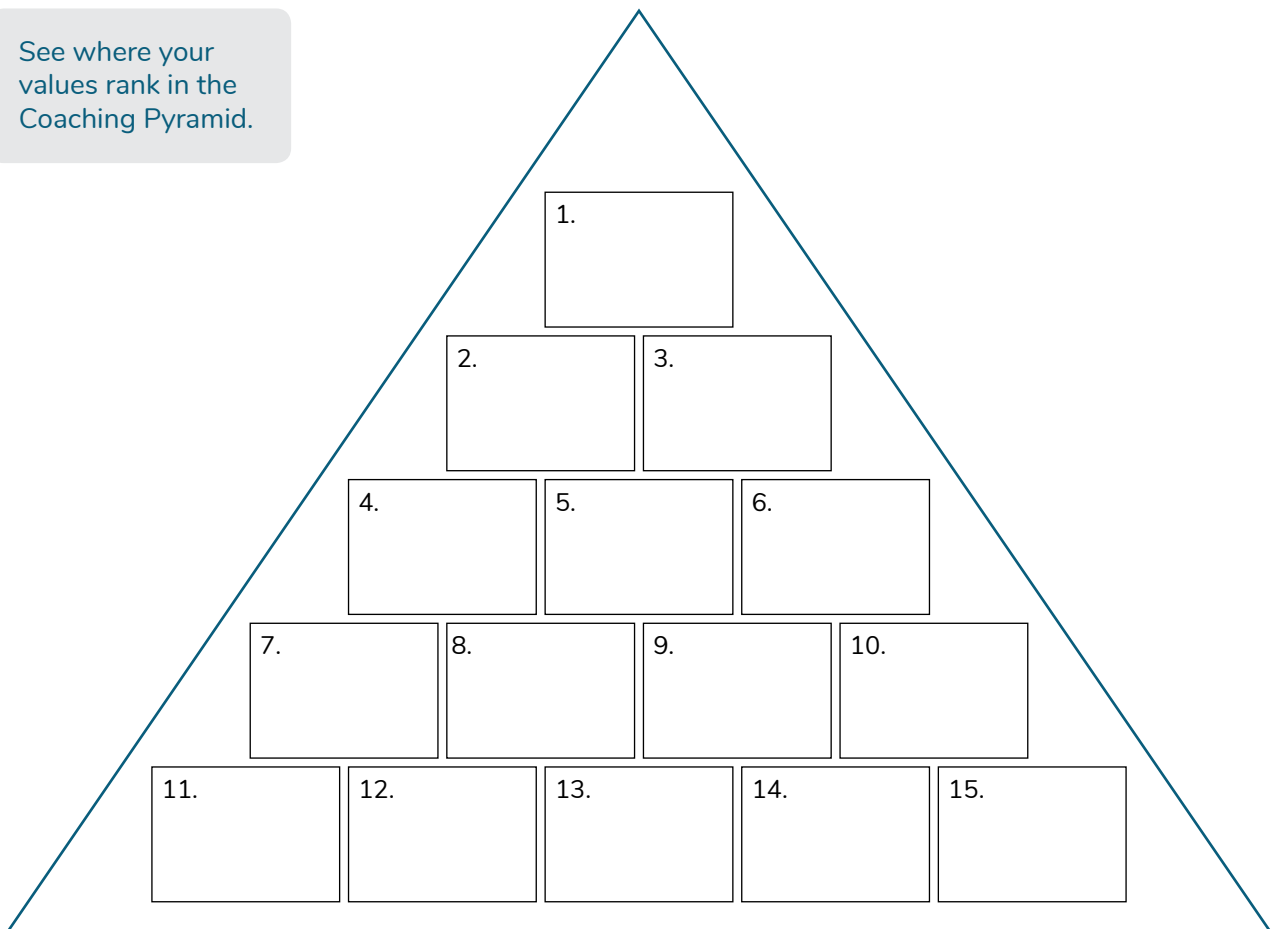
### TASK - SAMPLE COACHING BELIEFS - HOW WE LEARN

Coach	Coaching Philosophy
Coach A	"I create a positive environment which allows players to construct knowledge from themselves. So therefore they attach meaning to it rather than the Coach barking out information to the players."
Coach B	"My philosophy is anchored in providing meaningful experience to my players while enhancing their skills and values in life through sports. I aim to provide them with the opportunities for physical, social, emotional, and mental enhancement that will lead them to become a good and productive citizen."
Coach C	"I want to teach my players sportsmanship and how to have fun and to love the game. And knowing that winning is not the reason to play, it is to have fun with the experience and getting to know your team mates and to help each other when its needed."
Coach D	"My teaching philosophy is simple, I always provide an opportunity to develop their skills and create a learning environment that is constantly challenging and enjoyable."

## TASK – COACHING VALUES

- Values are qualities and standards that govern the behaviour of a coach

See where your values rank in the Coaching Pyramid.



Value	What to Look For?
Fun	Create a fun, safe, positive coaching environment where everyone feels valued and challenged appropriately
Enjoyment	
Integrity	Operate to the highest standards (everything, everyday) in our dealings with ourselves and all coaches we work with
Inclusive	Provide developmentally age appropriate opportunities catering for all to participate in an active way irrespective of ability and motivational level
Encourage	Provide the culture, structures, supports and resources to bring out the best in all our players
Respect	Promote mutual respect for all, between coaches, players, officials etc.
Pride	Take pride in the quality and positive impact of all our activities
Leadership	Seek to bring out the best in our players and work together to create the best future for our players
Innovative	Harness the creativity, practicality and energy of our players
Fair	Build accountability and transparency into all activities and are just and impartial in our decisions
Dynamic	Value positive thinking, learning, decisiveness and action
Identity	Be unique with everything we do helps to enrich the players and Communities we serve
Opportunity	Provide the best playing opportunities at all levels to meet the needs of all our players and to allow players of all abilities reach their potential
Direction	Have a clear focus with long term development for all our players
Humble	The players come first, inspires cooperation

## COACHING VALUES

List three to five of your **core coaching values** and using one statement, how do you expect to express these values in your coaching sessions?

Core Value (WHAT)	Core Value Action Statement (HOW)
<b>Example:</b> Integrity	Always try to do the right thing
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

Richard Bowles & Anne O'Dwyer, September 2018 (Adapted from Gilbert, 2017 p.13)

## OUR VALUES ABOUT LEARNING

- Learning as a topic, surpasses all others.
- Everyone has a basic right to learn and develop.
- There is no more important task than helping people take responsibility for their own learning.
- Its just as easy to learn wrong things as it is right things.
- Learning is a skill which, like any other skill, you can develop and improve.
- Learning to learn is your ultimate life skill.
- It is your duty to share your learning and spread your best practices.

## LEARNING & REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

Complete the following self-reflection.

### MODULE 3 - Being a Coach

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From your own experience – what do you think makes a good coach?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

What is your definition of success as a coach?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

Write a description of the coach you want to be

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Write down your thoughts and ideas on how you might become the coach you want to be

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# MODULE 4 WHO ARE YOU COACHING?



## COACHING CHILDREN, YOUTHS OR ADULTS

For too long the practice in sport has been to identify and cultivate the talented players and elite teams at younger and younger ages. There is the tendency to nurture the perceived best and neglect the rest. This has contributed to adult training regimes and playing conditions being imposed onto young players.

For coaches of children, there must be a balance between the need to win games and trophies versus the need to develop players and recognise the importance of fair play - provide full participation within an environment where players are encouraged to achieve their full potential.

In their teens players are developing, where the behaviours of childhood are adapted and adjusted to fit the behaviour of adults. The beginning of adolescence is generally thought of as coinciding with the onset of puberty. Where this stage of development ends is hard to define exactly, as each player will develop at a different rate.

Many coaches of adult players are judged on their success – how many games and trophies they win, rather than on the development of the players.

Identify characteristics, issues and challenges that you would associate with the Child Player, the Youth Player and the Adult Player.

### CHILD

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### YOUTH

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### ADULT

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### Impact of physical activity domains on subsequent physical activity in youth: a 5-year longitudinal study Michelle Hardie Murphy, David A. Rowe and Catherine B. Woods

- Study evaluated how domains of physical activity (PA) in youth predict later PA and assesses factors influencing changes in sports participation.
- Young people from the Children's Sport Participation and Physical Activity study (n = 873; baseline age 10–18 years; 30.4% male) completed self-report surveys in 2009 and 2014.

### Top 5 reasons reported for **UPTAKE** of a Sport in previous 5 years.

Below figures, are calculated using participants who reported taking up a new sport ONLY!

Male (n=177)			Female (n=370)		
Rank	Reasons for Uptake	%	Rank	Reasons for Uptake	%
1	Fitness	19.9	1	Fitness	25.8
2	Build Strength/Muscles	12.1	2	Enjoyment/Fun	10.6
3	Enjoyment/Fun	10.5	3	Body Image**	9.5
4	Friends/to socialise	8.1	4	Friends/to socialise	8.7
5	Like it	5.4	5	To try something new	5.7

\*\*Body Image represents desire to lose weight, get bigger or tone up

### Top 5 reasons reported for **DROPPING OUT** of a Sport in previous 5 years.

Figures are calculated using participants who reported dropping out of a previous sport only.

Male (n=157)			Female (n=413)		
Rank	Reasons for Uptake	%	Rank	Reasons for Uptake	%
1	Lack of Interest	19.0	1	Other Commitments (School/Work)	22.5
2	Other commitments (School/Work)	16.5	2	Lack of Interest	16.0
3	Injury	9.1	3	Took up too much time	14.0
4	Took up too much time	8.9	4	Too expensive	6.3
5	Training was boring	7.6	5	Not good enough	6.1

## LEARNING & REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

Complete the following self-reflection.

### MODULE 4 - Who are you coaching?

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What aspects of this module will you apply in your next coaching session?

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What aspects of this module should your club apply in their coaching environment?

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What was the one 'stand out' or 'Ah' moment for you as a coach from this module?

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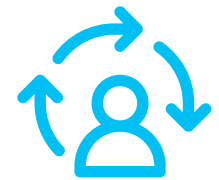
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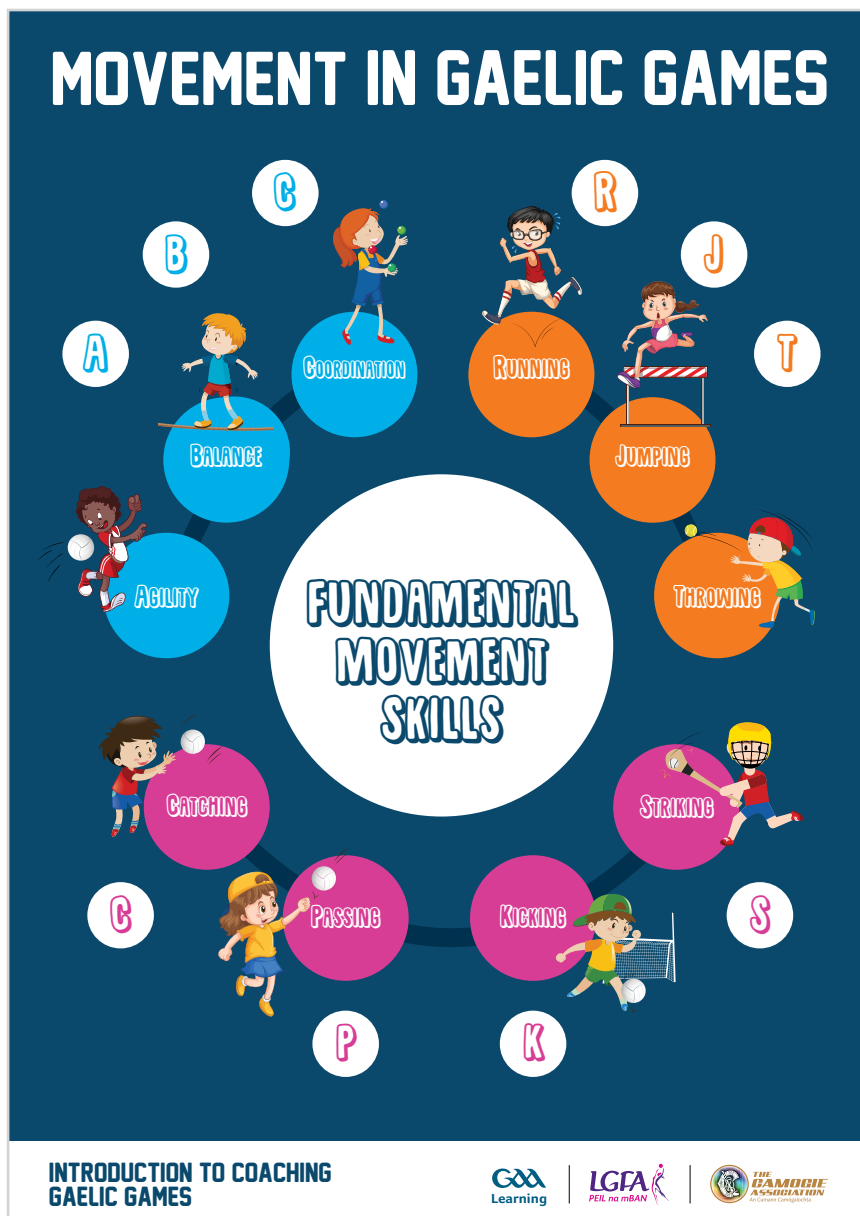
# MODULE 5 MOVEMENT IN GAELIC GAMES



In early childhood, children begin to learn a group of skills called fundamental movement skills (FMS). Such skills are classified as locomotor skills, object-control skills or stability skills. Locomotor skills include skills such as hopping, skipping, jumping and running. Object-control skills are kicking/striking, catching, and throwing, whilst examples of stability skills include balance or turning.

These skills are the building blocks of movement, forming the basis of more advanced and specialised actions, and representing the foundation for future participation in physical activity and in Gaelic games.

In addition to running, players are also required to jump, catch, kick/strike, hand pass, tackle and use both sides of their bodies to excel at Gaelic games. These movements should be practiced throughout the career development of a player, and are typically utilised as elements of warm-up activities for both developing and elite players.



## HOW ARE THE FOLLOWING USED IN GAELIC GAMES?

AGILITY

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BALANCE

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COORDINATION

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RUNNING

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JUMPING

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THROWING

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## LEARNING & REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

Complete the following self-reflection.

### MODULE 5 - Movement in Gaelic Games

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What aspects of this module will you apply in your next coaching session?

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What aspects of this module should your club apply in their coaching environment?

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What was the one 'stand out' or 'Ah' moment for you as a coach from this module?

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# MODULE 6

## SKILL DEVELOPMENT



Gaelic games have a vast range of skills that must be mastered to successfully participate in games. As such the ability to facilitate the development of the skills of the game is central to successful coaching.

Many young or new players simply cannot learn all of these aspects of play simultaneously. As they are introduced to and practice the skills, players will develop at a rate particular to themselves and gradually extend their abilities. Effective coaching requires the coach to organise activities appropriate to the abilities of the players in order to help them develop. To do so requires the ability to:

- (a) identify the level at which your players are performing, and
- (b) identify an appropriate activity to gradually challenge that level

However, these are not simple tasks for even the most experienced coach.

### SKILLS ARE DEVELOPED WHEN THE COACH:

- Aims for **mastery of the skill**
- Knows the **components of the skill**
- **Demonstrates how** to do the 'elements' of the skill correctly
- **Recognises and praises** the elements being performed correctly
- **Gives feedback about** skill performance
- **Spots the 'elements'** of the skill being performed incorrectly
- **Instructs how to modify** the 'elements' that need correction
- Allows players to **risk error** to achieve success
- Focuses on **one component** of the more complex skills at a time

## IDENTIFY SOME OF THE DIFFERENT SKILLS OF GAELIC FOOTBALL:

GAINING POSSESSION	MAINTAINING POSSESSION	RELEASING POSSESSION	CONTESTING POSSESSION	OTHER SKILLS
The Pick Up*	The Bounce	The Fist Pass	Side to Side Charge	Agility
The High Catch	Solo	The Hand Pass	Checking/Shadowing	Balance*
The Body Catch	The Feint/Side Step	The Punk Kick	The Near Hand Tackle*	Coordination
The Low Catch	Evasion/Roll Off	The Hook Kick	The Block Down	Catching and Passing
The Reach Catch		The Penalty Kick	The Frontal Tackle*	Jumping

Please note the following differences between Men's and Ladies Football

### \*Pick Up (Ladies Football)

- A player may pick the ball off the ground with the toe or with one or both hands, providing she is in a standing position (both knees must be off the ground)

### \*The Tackle (Ladies Football)

- A player holding the ball into her body cannot be legally dispossessed. Any attempt to do will result in a free
- When making a tackle to dispossess a player of the ball, it must be timed when the player in possession is soloing, bouncing, kicking or passing the ball. The ball must be knocked from the opponents hand by flicking it with the open hand or hands.

### \*Contact / Shouldering

- No deliberate bodily contact is permitted

## THE SKILLS OF HURLING/CAMOGIE



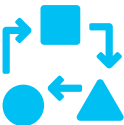


GAINING POSSESSION	MAINTAINING POSSESSION	RELEASING POSSESSION	CONTESTING POSSESSION	OTHER SKILLS
The Ground Block	The Dribble	Striking a Stationary Ball	The Frontal Air Block	The Grip
Controlling a Moving Ball	The Solo Run	Ground Strike on the Run	The Hook	The Swing
Blocking a Ball Overhead	Evasion/Roll Off	Doubling Back	Shoulder to Shoulder Clash*	
The Chest Catch	The Feint/Side Step	Striking from the Hand	Shoulder to Shoulder Charge*	
The Jab Lift		The Overhead Strike	The Frontal Ground Block	
The Roll Lift		The Hand Pass*	The Ground Flick	
The Overhead Catch			Batting a Ball Overhead	
			Checking	

Where Skill has a \* Camogie Skill may differ.

For playing rule differences between Hurling & Camogie please see [www.camogie.ie](http://www.camogie.ie)

## COACHING A SKILL

The following table provides a synopsis of each step.

SEQUENCE		HOW TO COMMUNICATE
1. Introduce the Skill		Verbally introduce the skill, providing a brief description.
2. Demonstrate		Demonstrate the skill; perform it in full at least three times.
3. Explain		Break the skill down, providing teaching points of note for the position of the head, hand, feet and hurley. Repeat the skill in full again
4. Action		Organise an activity to practice the skill and attend to the participants during the activity
5. Look and Observe		Provide feedback and correct errors as participants are practicing the skill

## HEAD, HANDS, FEET FOR BETTER TECHNIQUE

Kerr.P.,Mc Williams.T & Morrison.J. (1998). Head Hands, Feet, for better Technique

1. Demonstrate the skill yourself or select a player who can do it properly. Be aware of the left-handed/footed player - Demonstrate using both sides of the body if possible.
2. On the second demonstration ask a few questions and allow them to come up with the Head, Hands, and Feet rules:

### HEAD:

Where is the head? (Head up / down)

What about the eyes, where are they looking? (Eyes on the ball / looking up)

Why?

### HANDS/HURLEY:

Is the hurley being held at its full length or has the player shortened it?

Do the hands lock?

What are the hands doing? (Hands together/apart)

What about the fingers? (Together / apart)

Are the arms straight? Why?

### FEET:

What do you want the legs, knees doing?

How do the feet move, is there a sequence? (E.g. Step then kick)

What shape is the foot when striking the ball?

Which part of the foot do you want to strike the ball with? How far apart do you want your feet to be? Why?

3. Summarise the two or three key points.
4. Demonstrate again and then allow players to copy the demo within a structure (pairs, a drill etc.).
5. LET the players practice - you OBSERVE. If there are problems, use the SPOT and FIX rules. Look at the head, hands/hurley and feet to identify where the problem is, then suggest and show the child how she could improve.
6. Where more than one issue needs fixed in a player's technique, take it one at a time.



# CHOOSING THE CORRECT HURLEY SIZE

Choosing the correct size hurley will increase a player's success at mastering the skills of the game. A shorter, lighter hurley is especially recommended for children and those new to the game.

## HOW TO MEASURE THE CORRECT SIZE:

- Player stands nice and relaxed with their hands down by their sides.
- The distance from the ground to their wrist is the correct length.
- Player should be able to hold the hurley at the top and the hurley should be just touching the ground.
- If a player is between sizes it is still better to have the hurley too small rather than too big.

## TOP TIP!

With the correct size, your finger should align with/touch the player's wrist bone.

Place your finger horizontally just underneath the grip as shown.

## WHAT ABOUT THE WEIGHT?

Players should hold hurl in their dominant hand and be able to make ever increasing larger circles for 30 seconds comfortably. Then this is correct weight.



**THE CAMOGIE ASSOCIATION**  
An Cumann Camógaíochta

# HOW TO COACH

**IDEAL**

**ABC, RJT  
CPKS**

**HH(H)F**

**STEPR**

**GAMES**

**INTRODUCTION TO COACHING  
GAELIC GAMES**

**GAA**  
Learning

**LGFA**  
PEIL na mBAN

**THE GAMOGIE  
ASSOCIATION**  
An Cumann Gaelgíochta

# SKILL DEVELOPMENT

## FUN ROUTINES



**CHASING AND FLEEING GAMES**



**TARGET GAMES**



**COURT GAMES**



**FIELD GAMES**



### BALL SENSE

Activities To Develop Technical Proficiency by maximising the amount of Ball Contacts in a Training period by striking/kicking the ball off a wall



### BASIC DRILLS

Stationary



### INTERMEDIATE DRILLS

Add Movement



### ADVANCED DRILLS

Add Pressure

## IDEAL PRINCIPLE



Introduce the skill



Demonstrate the technique



Explain the activity



Action



Look and observe

## LEARNING & REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

Complete the following self-reflection.

### MODULE 6 - Skill Development

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What aspects of this module will you apply in your next coaching session?

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What aspects of this module should your club apply in their coaching environment?

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What was the one 'stand out' or 'Ah' moment for you as a coach from this module?

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# MODULE 7 INTRODUCTION TO OUR GAMES



## SMALL SIDED GAMES

Small sided games are versions of our games that have fewer than 15 players per team. For the Child player, Go Games rules outline the playing numbers per team.

Small sided games have been shown to increase the number of ball contacts, scoring opportunities and physical challenges of playing our games. Additionally, having played small sided games, players believe that they are more competent at playing the game.

## CONDITIONED GAMES

Conditioned Games are based on the standard version of Hurling/Gaelic Football, but conditioned by a limitation to the playing area, playing rules or scoring system. These games can be devised to suit the particular needs and abilities of specific playing groups.

## FULL-SIDED GAMES

As players progress and develop they should be gradually introduced to playing full-sided games.

Differences between Adult and child games

Adult	Child

Identify how you might alter a game to develop good defensive or attacking play:

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## STEPR PRINCIPLE

### 5 WAYS A COACH CAN VARY A GAME



#### SPACE

Where the activity is happening. E.g. increasing or decreasing the area in which the task is performed.

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#### TIME

How long are players working for? Challenge the intensity by reducing the time.

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#### EQUIPMENT

What is being used? E.g. Modify the equipment changing the size, level and height of equipment.

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#### PLAYERS

Who's involved? E.g. Modify the players in pairs, small or bigger teams.

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#### RULES

Adapt the rules of the game to assist with achieving a certain outcome. E.g Hand pass only, 3 points for a point, two touch hurling etc..)

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### TASK – Best Practice Demonstration

Write down what you see/hear coach do during the GAMES best practice demonstration using below STEPR acronym

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\_\_\_\_\_

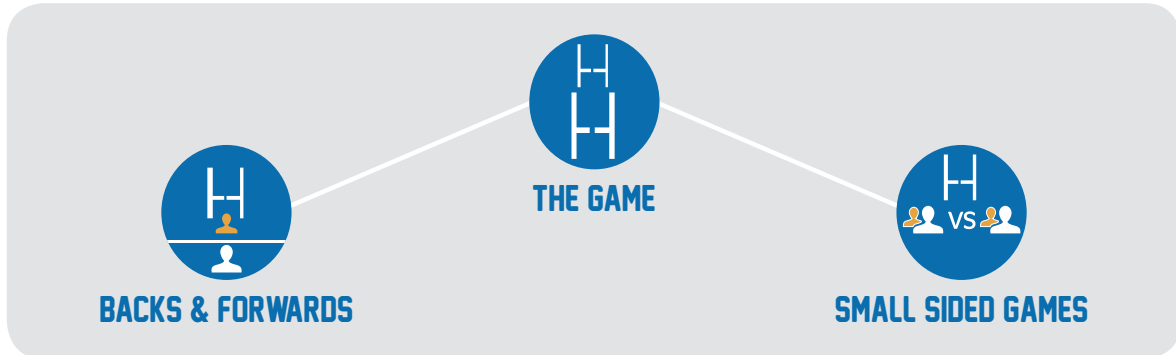
T \_\_\_\_\_  
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E \_\_\_\_\_  
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P \_\_\_\_\_  
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# INTRODUCTION TO OUR GAMES



**PART INVASION GAMES**



**FULL INVASION GAMES**



**Goal**



**Active Learning**



**Motivation**



**Enjoyment**



**Scores**

O'Connor, G (2019) Give us a Game Second Edition

## STEPR PRINCIPLE There are different ways you can change the game played to make it more challenging for every player.

**Space** - Where the activity is happening. E.g. increasing or decreasing the area in which the task is performed.



**Time** - How long are players working for? Challenge the intensity by reducing the time.



**Equipment** - What is being used? E.g. Modify the equipment changing the size, level and height of equipment.



**Players** - Who's involved? E.g. Modify the players in pairs, small or bigger teams.



**Rules** - Adapt the rules of the game to assist with achieving a certain outcome. E.g. Hand pass only, 3 points for a point, two touch hurling etc...)





## WHAT ARE GAA GO GAMES?

GAA Go Games are Hurling/Camogie and Gaelic Football for children up to and including 11 years of age, where every child gets to play (a Go) in every game, for the full game.



For too long the practice in sport has been to identify and cultivate talented players and elite teams at younger and younger ages. There is a tendency to nurture the perceived best and neglect the rest. This has contributed to adult training and playing conditions being imposed on young players. Training and competition are geared for outcome and not for the process of development. For children's games, coaches must reassess the balance between the need to win games and cups versus the need to develop players and recognise the importance of fair play; i.e., provide full participation within an environment where participants are encouraged to achieve their full potential.

Children participate in Gaelic games for a number of reasons – to have fun, to play with friends, parental encouragement, etc. Lack of fun, lack of perceived competence and an over-emphasis on competitive outcomes (which usually come from coaches and parents) are major reasons for dropout.

Players can generally learn the basic skills of Football and Hurling/Camogie with relative ease. The better players who practise more often, come on faster than those who only participate in collective coaching sessions. However, players find it more difficult to develop the ability to make the right decisions – when to pass, who to pass too, where to run, etc. Through small-sided games the aim is to optimise their decision-making and at the same time enhance their technical development.

Recent research conducted at DCU sheds light on the error of imposing traditional competitive models on young players who, during their formative years, are particularly susceptible to dropout.

The study looked at the activity patterns and responses of children when playing small-sided games and 15-a-side games. The study found that, when participating in small-sided games, the children worked harder (as measured by heart rate), had more touches on the ball (catches, passes, lifts and scoring attempts), and expressed a greater level of enjoyment and perceived competence as compared with participation in 15-a-side games.



Go Games is national policy of the Gaelic Games family under their official guides.

## DEFINING GAA GO GAMES

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Go Games are small-sided versions of Camogie/Hurling and Gaelic Football which have been devised for children up to and including 11 years of age. The following are the key underpinning principles of Go Games:

All participants play in the full game.

- Participant needs are catered for, where possible, on the basis of two-year age cohorts – Under-7, Under-9 and Under-11 - in a manner consistent with the ethos of Go Games.
- Activities are structured in a manner which optimises the level of fun, friendship, fair play and achievement derived by participants.
- Participants train and play in a safe, supportive and stimulating environment where they are encouraged to risk error, to learn and to derive maximum enjoyment from their involvement.
- Players master the basic skills of Camogie/Hurling and Gaelic Football and experience the sense of accomplishment, which derives from acquiring playing proficiency on the left and the right hand sides of the body.
- Everybody involved in Go Games, whether as players, parents/guardians, spectators, mentors, teachers, officials, etc. should adhere to the key underpinning principles and give expression to the GAA 'Give Respect, Get Respect' initiative.

## GO GAMES REGULATIONS

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- Go Games are subject to general rules of the Association.
- Go Games may be organised on a blitz basis. Go Games may be organised by a Club, Primary School or at an Approved GAA Centre on an internal (i.e. single unit) or external (i.e. multiple unit) basis.
- Teams shall be a maximum of 7-a-side at Under-6 & 7, 9-a-side at Under-8 & 9 and 11-a-side at Under-10 & 11 age levels.
- Participants may play up one age grade – Under 7 may play at Under-9 level; Under-9 may play at Under 11 level; Under-11 may play at Under-12 & U.13 age levels.
- No provision is made to publish scores, to play on a knock-out basis nor to include semi-finals, final, etc.
- No provision is made to present trophies, cups, etc. Where certificates/medals are presented in lieu of participation, the same certificate/medal must be presented to every participant.

### GO GAMES PLAYING RULES

The playing rules for Go Games Camogie/Hurling and Gaelic Football are provided by way of best practice recommendations and can be adapted to meet localised needs. Where units from different counties play a game, these playing rules should be used.

## ORGANISING A GO GAMES BLITZ

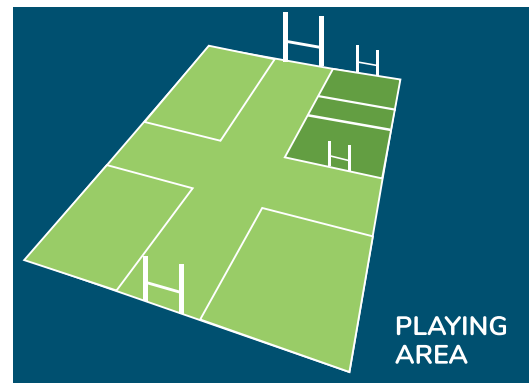
Go Games are organised on a blitz basis by a Club, County, Primary School. A blitz is a games event that involves two or more teams and can run on an internal (single unit) or external (multiple unit) basis, usually played at one venue.

Coordinating a Go Games Blitz involves running and planning of all the people, teams and features that come together to create this event. The steps involved can be:

1. Develop a blitz overview
2. Select blitz event management team
3. Designate key roles, responsibilities and tasks
4. Develop a blitz event checklist and management related documentation
5. Develop reporting and communications process
6. Develop and conduct a post-event review process

A particular challenge for Blitz Coordinators is to facilitate full participation; i.e., to work with Coaches to ensure that every child gets an opportunity to play (a Go) in every game, for the full game.

As playing rules can be modified, here are some potential challenges and solutions:



CHALLENGE	SOLUTION
Clubs show up with uneven numbers of players	Mix the players from different clubs
When teams are divided up, the number of players is uneven	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Play with a 'fly-goalie'</li> <li>• The team with the extra player swaps to the other team for the second half</li> </ul>
Some Coaches and Parents want to play finals and/or present winners with trophies/cups	Remind them that it is National Policy not to have finals or present trophies. Every child participating in the blitz can receive the same medal, certificate, etc.

When planning a blitz, it would be important to consider the following:

- ✓ **PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES:** Issued for event helpers, team coaches, etc.
- ✓ **WEATHER:** If it is suitable for children to play in.
- ✓ **GAMES:** Pitch sizes, playing surface suitability, referees, light availability, pitch coordinators, etc.
- ✓ **EQUIPMENT:** Goals, cones, footballs / sliotars
- ✓ **FACILITIES:** Drinking water, toilets, dressing rooms.
- ✓ **PARKING:** Bus, car and bike
- ✓ **BRIEFINGS:** Emergency evacuation meeting point
- ✓ **MEDICAL:** First Aid equipment and personnel
- ✓ **SAFETY:** Walks of all areas
- ✓ **CONTACT LIST:** Ensuring everyone involved knows who to contact

## LEARNING & REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

Complete the following self-reflection.

### MODULE 7 - Introduction to Our games

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What aspects of this module will you apply in your next coaching session?

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What aspects of this module should your club apply in their coaching environment?

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What was the one 'stand out' or 'Ah' moment for you as a coach from this module?

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# MODULE 8 PREPARATION AND PLANNING



Variety is one method of keeping sessions enjoyable. Adequate planning is the most important factor in ensuring variety in coaching sessions.

It is possible to incorporate variety in coaching sessions in a number of different ways:

- Vary the training time
- Vary the training venue
- Vary the training area
- Ensure teams are picked for games in different ways
- Allow players to design activities to take place

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## TIPS AND HINTS FOR BETTER COACHING SESSIONS

### ORGANISATIONAL HINTS

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- Gather players in a semi-circle
- Separate 'giddy' players
- Gather in all the sliotars/footballs
- Face players away from distractions and the sun
- Speak with the breeze
- On the whistle – activity stops and players jog to the coach

### POINTERS FOR POSITIVITY

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Here are a number of tips to help you ensure that all players enjoy themselves while playing:

- Vary activities regularly - make sessions fun by constantly keeping the players active, not spending too long on any one activity to prevent boredom and quickly changing over between activities.
- Activities should be challenging but doable, so that they maintain the players interest. If a player feels that they cannot perform a task they will not enjoy themselves. However, if a player experiences success they will develop a perception of competence, self-esteem and enjoy participation.
- Sessions should be set up to allow the player to learn and develop their skills. Try to establish a positive environment where children are not afraid to make mistakes.
- Young players see participation as an opportunity to socialise with their friends. Organise events within the club or school that allow the players to get to know each other.
- Make the session exciting – use games that apply the skills that players are learning but challenge them in a new way, e.g. fun games to challenge striking or kicking accuracy.
- All players want to play games. Use conditioned games appropriate to the players' abilities. Set the tone by defining winning as playing well, not just beating others. Praise effort and use 'because' to be more specific with your feedback.

## COACHING SESSION PLAN

<p>Group:</p> <p>Age:</p> <p>Session:</p> <p>Theme/Topic:</p>	<p>Learning Outcomes:</p> <p>Equipment:</p>
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TIME	SESSION CONTENT	COACHING POINTS & ORGANISATION
5-8 Minutes	Warm Up and Introduction	
45 Minutes	Activity 1	
	Activity 2	
	Activity 3	
8 minutes	Warm Down & Reflection	

\* Reinforce a playing rule of the game in each session



# PREPARATION AND PLANNING



## WHAT MAKES A GOOD SESSION?



The session is organised



The session has clear objectives



The coach praises the players



The coach is a positive role model



The session challenges players



The session is fun



Activities are age appropriate



Logical progression of activities

**IMPORTANT** GET TO KNOW YOUR PLAYERS. BE AWARE OF INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES WHEN COACHING.



## WHAT CAN I DO AS A COACH?

Develops players physical, social, emotional, cognitive and psychological skills



Coaches create a positive environment for learning



Players of all abilities are included in the session



Coaches have a good understanding what they are teaching

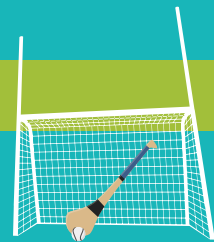


Coaches use a wide range of equipment to engage players



## HOW CAN I ENGAGE PLAYERS?

Coaches plan sessions that increase players' knowledge and understanding and enable them to develop a range of skills



There is an emphasis on players learning



The lesson incorporates thinking time



The coach is enthusiastic and motivates players



The coach asks open ended questions



The coach creates an environment which engages players



The coach creates opportunities for players to experience success



Players know and understand what they are trying to achieve



The coach allows players to make decisions for themselves

## LEARNING & REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

Complete the following self-reflection.

### MODULE 8 - Preparation and Planning

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What aspects of this module will you apply in your next coaching session?

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What aspects of this module should your club apply in their coaching environment?

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What was the one 'stand out' or 'Ah' moment for you as a coach from this module?

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## PREPARING FOR AND RECOVERING FROM TRAINING AND GAMES

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### WARMING UP

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It is important to always warm up prior to training and games. Warm up activities incorporate brief, mild exercise which is performed in preparation for more vigorous activity.

Warming-up typically involves:

- Pulse Raising – e.g. Walking, jogging, hopping, skipping, jumping
- Mobilisation – Bring the joints through their range of movement e.g. arm rotations, hip rotations etc.
- Stretching – Light, short stretches of the major muscle groups

It is good practice to warm up dynamically; that is to incorporate the mobilisation and stretching activities into the overall pulse raising activity. Remember, incorporate the ball into warm-up activities where possible.

As part of your warm up do your players get the opportunity to:

- Shoot at goal without pressure
- Shoot at goal under pressure
- Block down an opponent
- Evade/Avoid a tackle
- Change direction
- Accelerate/Decelerate quickly

Remember, the warm up should prepare players to play the game.

Go to GAA learning website for more on the GAA15 warm up [Learning.gaa.ie](https://www.gaa.ie/learning)

### COOLING DOWN

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Cooling Down helps ease the body from activity back to normal. Cooling down should incorporate a gradual reduction in activity from intense (i.e. running etc) to moderate (i.e. jogging and walking).

Stretching exercises should be conducted in a more static manner and on the ground where possible. Stretches should be held for 10-15 seconds.

Always ensure that water or sports drinks are available during the cool down.

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## DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

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### WELCOMING NEW CITIZENS

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Many GAA people have direct personal or family experience of emigration. They know what it's like to have to go abroad for work, simply because the opportunities don't exist at home. That experience should leave us well-placed to appreciate the plight of the many migrants who now live in our communities. Many of our emigrants were bolstered by the GAA when they arrived in their new countries. The GAA act as a constant community resource with many relationships with migrants support groups. Being proactive in welcoming new citizens to the Association, this will contribute to a global transcultural exchange with many benefits to the community in which we all belong. Each year, the GAA benefits greatly from the many volunteers that help make our games as accessible as possible to the diverse populations that make up our communities.

Identify some simple steps that a club or a coach can take to welcome the new citizens to our clubs:

- Find out how many migrants live and/or work in the local community
- Get an idea of where they're from
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- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

### GAA FOR ALL

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A club which is inclusive of people with disabilities is one which has: 'Proactively planned the inclusion of people with disabilities in all aspects of the club and has taken practical steps to bring about positive change'. All people with special needs and/or a disability should have an equal opportunity to partake in Gaelic games to reach their full potential. GAA for All programmes and initiatives: Wheelchair hurling/ Camogie, Football for All, Cúl Camps, All-star's Inclusive groups, Fun and Run programme, Adapted Rounders, Have-a-Go Blitzes, Healthy Clubs Initiatives- Lá na Clubanna.

Depending upon the ability level of the players involved, coaches can modify games and activities to support participation.

Identify how you might modify a game to include players with a physical impairment:

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Identify how you might communicate with a player who's first language is not english:

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## FIRST AID

Participation in sport carries with it a risk of injury. Gaelic games being contact sports, have an inherent risk of injury attached. The aim must be for all involved to take all reasonable action to make our sports as safe as possible, not only for players, but also for referees, other officials, coaches, voluntary workers and spectators.

Preventing injuries in Gaelic games is the ultimate goal, but as injuries will continue to occur despite the most thorough of prevention strategies, attention must also be given to the response to and the treatment of injuries.

This guide will assist you to deal with many common sports injuries, however it is not intended to be a substitute for First Aid training. In all cases if you are unsure as to what has happened or how to treat an injury call a medical professional.

### COMPONENTS OF A FIRST AID KIT



There are many commercially available First Aid kits which can be purchased. It is important to regularly check the contents of a First Aid kit, as even kits that are purchased whole - with a collection of items bundled together in a convenient package - change over time through use. Always ensure that any items taken from a First Aid kit are replaced as soon as possible. Items should not be used after the expiry date shown on packets.

The following are recommended as being the minimum requirement which should be in place at every training session or match. It is advisable to contact a medical professional to ensure that your First Aid kit contains relevant equipment and information:

- Card giving the general first-aid guidance
- Individually wrapped sterile adhesive dressing
- Individually wrapped moist cleansing wipes
- Adhesive and butterfly bandages
- Self-adhesive elastic bandages
- Safety pins
- Scissors
- Tweezers
- Liquid antiseptic to clean wounds
- Latex gloves
- Large plastic bag

Do not keep any form of heat agent or any similar product in the first aid kit as there is no incidence in the first aid treatment of sports injury where heat agents should be used. In the vast majority of cases heat treatment will cause more damage and pain to the player. An ice pack should be included in the first aid kit.

Smelling salts should also be removed from all first aid kits. If a player has received a head injury/ concussion and is either unconscious or drowsy, placing smelling salts under their nose will cause them to pull their head away from the salts and risks damaging their neck.

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## THE GAA RESPECT INITIATIVE

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The GAA respect initiative has been developed in order to ensure that Gaelic games are promoted in a positive manner and within an environment which is conducive to ensuring that all participants achieve their full potential. This underlying approach will help to underpin the values of the association and to consolidate the three core principles which underpin these i.e. player centered, family orientated and community based. The respect initiative forms part of the Code of Behaviour (Underage).

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### WHAT DOES THE GAA RESPECT INITIATIVE INVOLVE?

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- Implementing the Code of Behaviour (Underage)
- Club information evenings for parents and mentors
- Coach & Referee Education Programmes
- Designated spectators area
- Implementing Go Games Policy
- Strong club leadership
- Respect awareness programme for all
- Recognition and merit awards
- Accept and respect all players regardless of race, creed, colour, gender or ability

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### HOW DOES IT WORK?

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- ✓ Players and coaches line up behind their coaches before and after the game to shake hands with the referee, opposing players and coaches
- ✓ Referees communicate decisions to players in an effective manner
- ✓ A merit award- based on sporting endeavour and fair play- is awarded to a players/teams at the end of each season/blitz
- ✓ A line of cones/tape should mark out a designated spectators area two metres from the playing area
- ✓ Supporters remain in designated areas at the side of the pitch for the full duration of each game.
- ✓ Team coaches (a maximum of five) should wear designated bibs and are the only personnel allowed along the sideline area
- ✓ Each unit must strive to achieve maximum participation for all players
- ✓ Referees to be welcomed to the club
- ✓ Clubs should endeavour to offer participants the opportunity to socialise after the game through providing snacks and light refreshments where possible



For more information on the GAA Respect Initiative visit [www.gaa.ie/respect](http://www.gaa.ie/respect)

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## CODE OF BEHAVIOUR (UNDERAGE) AND SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

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All coaches who work with children and young people are bound by a joint Code of Behaviour (Underage), agreed by the GAA, LGFA, Camogie, Rounders and Handball Associations. The Code acts both as a backdrop and also as a legal directive for those who work with players under 18 yrs. of age in our Associations.

It is important to note that the Code of Behaviour (Underage) outlines the minimum levels of good practice expected of our coaches etc. while addressing our legislative requirements as well.

Breaches of the Code, whether by an adult or a child, may invariably be heard as part of the implementation of the Code at Club, County or National level. However, occasions may arise where breaches of the Code would best be dealt with in accordance with other disciplinary regulations.

The Code of Behaviour (Underage) forms part of our Associations' Child Safeguarding procedures.

The Code contains guidance on the following:

- The appropriate levels of behaviour we expect from Coaches, Players, Parents, Spectators and Referees
- The Child Safeguarding Statement process
- Guidelines on Transport, Hosting, Away Trips and Overnight Stays
- The agreed supervision ratios are 2 adults to 16 players U/12 / 2 adults for 20 players over 12
- Recruitment and child safeguarding training of those who work with Underage Players
- Communications and Social Media
- Disciplinary Procedures in Accordance with the Code
- The Give Respect – Get Respect initiative
- Anti - Bullying Policy Statement

Young people will spend some of the most enjoyable days of their lives playing our games and socialising with their friends in each of our Associations. Whether attending or playing GAA matches, playing Ladies Football or Camogie, or participating in Rounders or Handball activities, they will do so during some of the most important developmental years of their lives.

Our role and our responsibility is to ensure that young people benefit from and participate in our Gaelic Games in a safe and enjoyable environment. We seek that our Games take place in a spirit of fair play where we can integrate respect, equality, safety and non-discrimination in all aspects of our work and in all of our activities with children and young people.

Each member of our Associations has a responsibility to accept and implement this Code and uphold our Safeguarding practices.



## USEFUL CONTACTS AND RESOURCES

### USEFUL CONTACT DETAILS

NAME	ROLE	TELEPHONE	EMAIL

### USEFUL GAMES DEVELOPMENT CONTACTS

NAME	TELEPHONE	EMAIL	WEBSITE
GAA	01 – 8363222	info@gaa.ie	www.gaa.ie
GAA Games Development	01 – 8363222	Gamesdevelopment@gaa.ie	Learning.gaa.ie
Camogie Association	01 - 865 8651	info@camogie.ie	www.camogie.ie
Ladies Gaelic Football Association	01 – 8363156	info@lgfa.ie	www.ladiesgaelic.ie

### RESOURCES

NAME	TYPE OF RESOURCE	WHO TO CONTACT
GAA Fun Do Resource	Combination of dvd, dvd-rom and manuals for Hurling and Gaelic football for Coaches of Players up to 12 years	County Games Development Personnel
GAA Gameplanner Resource	DVD-ROM containing animation and video footage of activities for players aged 13 – 18 years	GAA Games Development website

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# Notes

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