



Queensland  
Government



# TOUCH TIME

## REDUCE INJURY

## PERFORM BETTER

# MANUAL





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# INTRODUCTION



The TOUCH TIME program has been designed for Touch football coaches at all levels to reduce injury and enhance performance.

Research evidence has demonstrated the huge benefits of injury reduction programs.

With the latest evidence in mind and collaboration with physiotherapists, coaches and strength and conditioning professionals this program has been developed to provide an easy structured and targeted standardised warm up.

This manual is supported by online videos. These can be accessed at: [performancegc.com.au/injury](http://performancegc.com.au/injury)

“Touch Football is a fast paced, free flowing game that consists of multiple high sprint efforts and constant direction changes. Conducting a thorough warm up prior to participating in game play is crucial for optimal performance and injury prevention”.

Peter Norman (Australian Men’s Touch Representative)

# WHY YOU NEED THE **TOUCH TIME** PROGRAM

Injuries during sport are frustrating, depressing and often devastating for players, but also coaches, fellow team mates and especially family. Anything that can be done to reduce injury rates, which are on the rise, is crucial across not only Touch, but all sport.

That is why it is crucial that we do all we can as health professionals, coaches, parents and athletes to reduce the rates of injury.

A standardised targeted injury prevention program is the key recommendation from injury experts, such as the Safe Kids for Sport Initiative, to reduce injury, improve participation and save thousands of dollars to the individual and the health care system.





# HOW DOES INJURY IMPACT THE TEAM AND THE ATHLETE?

## The Athlete

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Anterior cruciate ligament injuries, for example, are one of the most common and devastating lower limb injuries in Touch football.

ACL injury has been increasing at a rate of 8%/year in 14 to 25 year olds<sup>1</sup>. They have also increased by 150% in the last decade in 10-14 year olds. Following injury only 55% of athletes return to competitive sport<sup>2</sup> due to on going pain, disability and poor physical and mental preparedness.

As if the mental and physical toll to the athlete isn't enough, the average surgery costs just over \$8000, not including physiotherapy, rehabilitation and time off work. Long-term costs to the individual have been shown to be as high as \$38,000 over their lifespan<sup>3</sup>.

Furthermore, with the rise of women's sport participation, the importance of such an intervention could not be timelier, as females are up to 8 times more likely to tear their ACL than their male counterparts.

## The Team

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Injury to an individual also has a large effect on the team.

Fewer injuries and higher match availability is associated with higher end of season ranking; more games won and improved team performance.

Injury can also affect team dynamics, decrease player and team development and increase the use of resources and finances.

# TOUCH TIME BENEFITS

Reduce Injury. Perform Better.

The good news is that most lower limb injuries can be reduced with structured sports- specific warm up programs that target neuromuscular control, coordination, strength and power.

Programs such as the FIFA11+, Footy First and Netball KNEE program have strong evidence in their effectiveness and ease of application.

Overall, programs have been shown to reduce injury by 32–72%<sup>4,9</sup>. This includes a reduction of:

- ▶ Knee injuries by 50%
- ▶ Ankle injuries by 30%
- ▶ Hip injuries by 40%
- ▶ Hamstring injuries by 60%.

The evidence also shows that they not only prevent injury but also improve performance:

- ▶ Speed
- ▶ Agility
- ▶ Aerobic capacity
- ▶ Strength

This leads to an increase in player availability and games won for the season.

RESULTS ARE ONLY SEEN IF A PROGRAM IS FOLLOWED BY THE ATHLETE AND PERFORMED AT LEAST 2 X WEEK



# DELIVERING THE PROGRAM

Become familiar with the program, ensuring you are familiar with the components, the instructions and cues.

There are four components to the program:

- 1 Movement Preparation
- 2 Strength and Control
- 3 Movement Training
- 4 Lifestyle and Training Education

Adherence is absolutely critical to overall performance improvements and injury reduction.

Introducing sections of the program gradually over a period of weeks rather than all at once is a great way for players to absorb and learn the new exercises and drills. For example, in week one, perform the movement preparation drills, week 2 add the strength and control and week 3, the movement training. If you feel capable then you can absolutely introduce all the components at the same time.

The total time to perform the pre-training components is 15-30 minutes and should not impact on normal training time. Strength and control exercises not completed prior to training, or for players who are absent, must be performed following training or in the athlete's own time.

From pages 8-32 we will outline the sections of the program and the drills to improve performance and reduce injury.

To encourage athletes to take some ownership over their preparation, improve adherence and learn the exercises, cues and program then direct them to the manual and instruction videos.

# COACHING AND FEEDBACK DELIVERY

## Explain

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Depending on the level of the team it can be very useful to explain the purpose of the exercise to increase adherence and understanding.

## Demonstrate

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Demonstrating activities is an essential component to ensure athletes understand the task. If you do not feel confident then get a high level athlete in your team to demonstrate as you explain.

## External cues

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Use external cues like “get low” rather than internal cues describing positioning of body parts such as “bend your knee more”. This significantly increases transfer into sport. It is important to give only 1 or 2 cues at time and then give the athlete time to work on it to not overload them with too much information.

## Reinforce the positive

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Give positive feedback on correct performance as well as constructive feedback on trials for improvement. If you are noticing things across the whole group then you can stop and explain again to everybody.

## Video feedback

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Video can be a highly effective learning tool. Apps such as HUDL and Coaches Eye utilise slow motion and can compare athletes. It is also a great thing to refer back to later or share with athletes so they can watch in their own time.

## Involve the athletes

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Encourage athletes at appropriate levels to give feedback to their teammates to increase player buy in and motivation.



# THE TOUCH TIME PROGRAM

THERE ARE **4**  
COMPONENTS TO THE PROGRAM.

<b>MOVEMENT PREPARATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Mobility and control drills</li><li>▶ Warm up drills</li></ul>
<b>STRENGTH AND CONTROL</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Hip and groin</li><li>▶ Hamstring</li><li>▶ Single leg squat</li><li>▶ Balance</li><li>▶ Neuromuscular function</li></ul>
<b>MOVEMENT TRAINING</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Deceleration</li><li>▶ Cutting</li></ul>
<b>LIFESTYLE AND TRAINING EDUCATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Load management</li><li>▶ Recovery</li><li>▶ Diet</li><li>▶ Hydration</li><li>▶ Sleep</li><li>▶ Stress</li><li>▶ Injury management</li></ul>

# MOVEMENT PREPARATION

## Purpose

General movement exercises to prepare the body for movement throughout all ranges of motion while providing a coordination and control challenge.

Performed for 5 min at the start of every session as a team or as an individual.

Players start by running up and back 3 times between 2 lines 15m apart. Then a mobility and control drill is performed as they travel between the 2 lines and a warm up drill back to the start line. Please refer to the online videos for examples of the following drills.

## Mobility and control drills (pick 4)

- ▶ Lunge with twist
- ▶ Walking reverse lunge
- ▶ Lunge with quad stretch
- ▶ Lunge with cradle hold
- ▶ Alternating lateral lunge
- ▶ Alternating sumo squat
- ▶ Walking arabesque
- ▶ Walking Spiderman
- ▶ Gorilla crawl
- ▶ Bear crawl
- ▶ Crab crawl
- ▶ Leaps
- ▶ Lateral Leaps
- ▶ Bounds

## Warm up drills (pick 4)

- ▶ High knees
- ▶ Lateral high knees
- ▶ Backwards high knees
- ▶ Carioca (grapevine)
- ▶ Ground touches
- ▶ Heel kicks
- ▶ A skip
- ▶ Side shuffle
- ▶ Scissor run
- ▶ Tin man



# STRENGTH AND CONTROL

Strength and control exercises targeting specific qualities for injury prevention. Correct technique is most important.

Performed prior to training after MOVEMENT PREPERATION if time allows. Each level takes approximately 10-15 minutes.

They can be performed as a group, with a partner or as an individual.

Athletes should all start at level 1. The group is then progressed onto the next level after 4 weeks. If the season is longer than 12 weeks then the final phase exercises are continued at the “in season” dose.

Any exercises not completed prior to training or sessions missed must be completed after training or in the athlete’s own time. The exercises MUST be completed 2 x week.



# STRENGTH AND CONTROL LEVELS

Target	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
<b>Hip and groin</b> In season: 1 x 8	Side lie adduction 1 x 12-15/leg	Partner knee supported Copenhagen 1 x 6-10/leg	Partner ankle supported Copenhagen 1 x 8-12/leg
<b>Hamstring</b> In season: 2 x 4	Partner hamstring bridge 2 x 6-8	Partner Nordic 3 x 4-6	Partner Nordic 4 x 4-6
<b>Single leg squat</b> In season: 2 x 8	Split squat 2 x 6-8/leg	Partner Bulgarian split squat 3 x 6-8/leg	Single leg squat 3 x 8-10/leg
<b>Balance</b> In season: x12	Single leg partner ball toss x12/leg	Single leg on toes partner ball toss x12/leg	Side leap and catch x 12/leg
<b>Neuromuscular Control</b> In season: 2x6	Lateral leap 2 x 8/leg	Cone hop 2 x 20/leg	Sideways cone hop 2x20/leg

See online videos for a demonstration of all exercises.



# Side lie adduction

1 x 12-15/leg



## Instructions:

Lying on your side raise and lower the bottom leg.



## Key points:

Keep your body in straight line and hips stacked. Slow steady lift of the leg.



## Watch for:

Rotation of the pelvis. The leg drifting forward. Bending at the hips.



# Partner hamstring bridge

2 x 6-8



## Instructions:

Partner holds the heels of the player while they lift their hips up to neutral.



## Key points:

Push down with heels. Full extension of the hips. Partner maintains strong stance.



## Watch for:

Excessive low back arch.  
Not getting full hip extension.



# Split squat

2 x 6-8/leg



## Instructions:

Starting at the top slowly lower down kissing the back knee on the ground. Push back up and repeat.



## Key points:

Foot knee hip alignment. Knee over toe. Upright trunk.



## Watch for:

Knee diving inwards. Excessive low back arch. Too big or small a stride.



# Single leg partner ball toss

x 12/leg



## Instructions:

Standing approximately 3-4 meters from your partner pass the ball to each other while maintaining your balance in a strong athletic stance keeping your chest up and a slight bend in your knee.



## Key points:

Maintain strong athletic stance with slight knee bend. Must be challenging.



## Watch for:

Too easy. Knee too straight.  
Rounded through thoracic spine.





# Lateral Leap

2 x 8/leg



## Instructions:

Starting in athletic stance leap from side to side pushing strongly off the outside foot.



## Key points:

Own the landing with strong foot knee hip alignment.



## Watch for:

Falling or leaning from the trunk. The knee diving inwards. Leaping too far reducing control.



# Partner knee supported Copenhagen

1 x 6-10/leg



## Instructions:

Partner holding under the thigh and calf maintaining a strong athletic position. The player lifts the bottom leg up to meet the other limb while supported on their elbow.



## Key points:

Straight line through the body. Maintain the height of the hips while you raise and lower the bottom leg.



## Watch for:

The hip dropping. The body rotating excessively. A bend at the hips.



# Partner Nordic

3 x 4-6



## Instructions:

Progressively lean forward as slowly as possible while keeping your back straight. When you can't resist anymore, just fall forward, catching yourself with your hands and pushing back up again.



## Key points:

Control down for as long as possible.



## Watch for:

Excessive hip bend or low back arch.



# Partner Bulgarian split squat

3 x 6-8/leg



## Instructions:

Partner kneels to provide support. Player places back foot up onto the mid thigh of partner as shown. Slowly lower straight down keeping balance and chest up high. Push back up and repeat.



## Key points:

Foot knee hip alignment. Knee over toe.



## Watch for:

Knee diving inwards. Excessive low back arch. Torso leaning.



# Single leg on toes partner ball toss

x 12/leg



## Instructions:

Standing approximately 3-4 meters from your partner pass the ball to each other while maintaining your balance slightly up on your toes in with a slight bend in your knee.



## Key points:

Heels just off the ground. Maintain a challenge but achievable.



## Watch for:

Too high on the toes. Fall too often.





# Cone Hop

2 x 20/leg



## Instructions:

Place a single object on the ground (cone/hat/shoe.)  
Perform quick strong jumps back and forward over the object.



## Key points:

Get on and off the ground.  
Maintain strong body position.



## Watch for:

The trunk falling to one side.  
The knee diving inward. Too much knee bend. Big hops causing poor control.



# Partner ankle supported Copenhagen

1 x 8-12/leg



## Instructions:

Partner holding under the ankle and calf maintaining a strong athletic position. The player lifts the bottom leg up to meet the other limb while supported on their elbow.



## Key points:

Maintain the height of the hips while raising and lowering the bottom leg.



## Watch for:

The hip dropping. The body rotating excessively.



# Partner Nordic

4 x 4-6



## Instructions:

Lean forward as slowly as possible while keeping your back straight. When you can't resist anymore, just fall forward, catching yourself with your hands and pushing back up again.



## Key points:

Control down for as long as possible.



## Watch for:

Excessive hip bend or low back arch causing poor control.



# Single leg squat

3 x 8-10/leg



## Instructions:

Starting tall lower to a 90 degree knee bend keeping chest up and back slightly arched. Push back up and repeat.



## Key points:

Foot knee hip alignment.  
Strong torso position.



## Watch for:

The knee diving inward.  
Excessive trunk sway. Losing control by going too deep.





# Side leap and catch

x 12/leg



## Instructions:

Standing approximately 3-4 meters from your partner throw the ball with your player jumping sideways and catching the ball on the landing.



## Key points:

Catch the ball without compromising the landing. Alternate throws with your partner.



## Watch for:

Losing control due to leaping too far or poor throwing.





# Sideways cone hop

2 x 8/leg



## Instructions:

Four cones on the ground spaced approximately 1/2 meter apart. Single leg hop over each cone and hop back to the start on the same leg.



## Key points:

Get on and off the ground.  
Maintain strong body position.  
Up and back equals one set (x8).



## Watch for:

The trunk falling to one side.  
The knee dicing inward. Too much knee bend. Big hops causing poor control.



# MOVEMENT TRAINING

Drills with a focus on improving deceleration and cutting mechanics. The 2 movements most associated with injury. Correct performance is most important. Drills should be performed slowly at first to reinforce technique.

Performed every session for 10 min (5min each) before starting the main session as a team.

Once an athlete is proficient with technique you can progress the team in a number of different ways. These are:

- ▶ Individually progress a player
- ▶ Progress all players with some exercises and continue with the same exercise for others
- ▶ Progress all players for all exercises

The exercises can be progressed by changing the task the athlete is to perform or by changing how the drill is executed. Options for these are listed in the following sections.



# Deceleration

## ► Performance benefits

The faster you can decelerate the faster you can adjust to the play, change direction and execute skills.

Good footwork with short quick steps will ensure you can nail the touch and not over stride, lunge and miss the touch.

## ► Injury reduction benefits

Teach muscles efficient way to absorb force. Reducing high loads through the joints.

Landing heavy and over striding will put more force on joints and not allow adjustment to next play.



### GOOD TECHNIQUE

VS



### BAD TECHNIQUE



- ✓ BUSY FEET with short quick steps
- ✓ GET LOW by bending the knees and the hips



- ✗ Over stride with large long heavy steps
- ✗ Upright posture
- ✗ Knee too straight
- ✗ Sinking into the ground

# Key Drill

- ▶ Forward backward shuttle run
- ▶ Progressions

Task	Execution
Double leg stop	Make it a race
Split stance stop	Coaches call
Single leg stop	Partner shadow (next to/opposite)
Side stop	Add ball

Please refer to the online videos for examples of the progressions

# Cutting

## ► Performance benefits

The faster you can cut the faster you can adjust to the play, evade opponents execute skills and make a touch.

## ► Injury reduction benefits

Improve coordination and body position to reduce exposure to dangerous positions

Poor technique makes you slower and less evasive but also puts more strain on the knee joint







## GOOD TECHNIQUE

VS



## BAD TECHNIQUE



- ✔ Prepare feet with **BUSY FEET**
- ✔ **GET IN AND OUT OF THE TUNNEL** by getting low planting your feet in the intended direction of travel and exploding out of the tunnel again
- ✔ **BE A MOTORCYCLE** by turning and leaning your body in the direction you want to go

- ✘ Don't overstride and land with outside foot too far out from the body
- ✘ Leg and foot pointing away from direction of travel
- ✘ Torso leaned away from the direction of travel

# Drill

- ▶ Run and cut
- ▶ Progressions

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Task	Execution
S run	Make it a race
Z run	Coaches call
Variable angle Z run	Partner shadow (behind)
Multiple option run and cut	Add ball (carry/passing)

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Please refer to the online videos for examples of the progressions

# LIFESTYLE AND TRAINING EDUCATION

Performance enhancers and injury reduction principles.

Build professional habits on and off the field.

Below is a brief overview of the key target areas. More information is provided within our education videos. You can also contact your health and exercise professional to ensure you are preparing yourself appropriately.

## 1 Load management

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General movement exercises to prepare the body for movement throughout all ranges of motion while providing a coordination and control challenge.

## 3 Diet

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A balanced diet with minimal added sugars and alcohol promotes recovery and provides fuel for performance.

## 2 Recovery

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Choose recovery strategies that work best for the athletes as individuals. This may include ice baths, hot/cold contrast, foam rolling or pool mobility. Better recovery equals better performance. Ensure athletes use active recovery methods such as walking, swimming or bike riding, and break up long periods of sitting by aiming to get up every 20 minutes.

## 4 Hydration

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Athletes need to replace the fluids they lose during training. This is particularly important in the heat.

## 5 Sleep

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Aim for 8 restful hours per night. Vital for recovery and preparation for games.

## 6 Stress

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Athletes need to look after their mental wellbeing and have balance in their lives. This will be individual and might involve mindfulness training, meditation, yoga, or any other activities that promote relaxation and rest.

## 7 Injury management

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Athletes should seek assistance from coaches and medical team if they do not feel well or suffer an injury.

## 8 Strength and conditioning

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Build the physical abilities to perform at the top level. Progressive strength and conditioning for strength, power and endurance should be performed 2x week targeting all the key muscle groups. An exercise professional should guide content.

# ABOUT US



## Adam Walker

Adam is a Gold Coast based physiotherapist and co-founder of Performance GC, a performance based rehabilitation service. Their ACL and lower limb rehabilitation programs strive to return people back to performance after devastating injury. He has a special interest in the prevention and rehabilitation of lower limb injuries and is undertaking his PhD at Bond University on ACL rehabilitation. His mission is to return every athlete back to the field, pitch or court with up most confidence



## Richard Newton

Assistant Professor Richard Newton is an APA Sports Physiotherapist with 30 years of experience in Elite, Professional, Olympic, Community and School Sport. Richard is the Founder of Pindara Physiotherapy and Sports Medicine, Runaway Bay Physiotherapy and Sports Medicine and Bond Physiotherapy and Sports Medicine. These Clinics and their elite team of Physiotherapists, Podiatrists, Doctors and Dieticians continue to provide the Gold Coast's range of athletes with cutting edge sports medicine initiatives. The Touch Time program along with the Performance GC programs in conjunction with Adam Walker, has been a major focus for the last 5 years.



# PARTNERS

TOUCH TIME is brought to you through the support of the following organisations:

- ▶ **Gold Coast Touch Association**
- ▶ **Performance GC**
- ▶ **Pindara Physiotherapy and Sports Medicine**
- ▶ **Runaway Bay Physiotherapy and Sports Medicine**
- ▶ **Bond Physiotherapy and Sports Medicine**
- ▶ **The Queensland Government Get going for Clubs Grant**

The Queensland Government provided \$6700 to Gold Coast Touch Association to develop the Touch Time program to enable Queenslanders to participate in sport and recreation activities.




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Information was collated during a collaborative project with the Gold Coast Touch Association and the below organisations. It is informed by the best available evidence and expert opinion.





### PART 1 MOVEMENT PREPARATION 5 minutes

A mobility and control drill is performed between 2 lines 15m apart then a warm up drill on return.

#### MOBILITY AND CONTROL DRILLS (pick 4)

- ☒ Lunge with twist ☒ Walking reverse lunge ☒ Lunge with quad stretch ☒ Lunge with cradle hold ☒ Alternating lateral lunge
- ☒ Alternating sumo squat ☒ Walking arabesque ☒ Walking Spiderman ☒ Gorilla crawl ☒ Bear crawl ☒ Crab crawl ☒ Leaps
- ☒ Lateral Leaps ☒ Bounds

#### WARM UP DRILLS (pick 4)

- ☒ High knees ☒ Lateral high knees ☒ Backwards high knees ☒ Carioca (grapevine) ☒ Ground touches ☒ Heel kicks
- ☒ A skip ☒ Side shuffle ☒ Scissor run ☒ Tin man

### PART 2 STRENGTH AND CONTROL Each level takes approximately 10-15 minutes

## LEVEL 1

## LEVEL 2

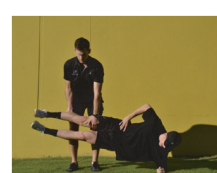
## LEVEL 3



#### SIDE LIE ADDUCTION

Key points:  
Keep your body in straight line and hips stacked. Slow steady lift of the leg.

1 X 12-15/LEG



#### PARTNER KNEE SUPPORTED COPENHAGEN

Key points:  
Straight line through the body. Maintain the height of the hips while you raise and lower the bottom leg.

1 X 6-10/LEG



#### PARTNER ANKLE SUPPORTED COPENHAGEN

Key points:  
Maintain the height of the hips while raising and lowering the bottom leg.

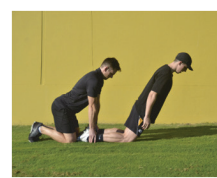
1 X 8-12/LEG



#### PARTNER HAMSTRING BRIDGE

Key points:  
Push down with heels. Full extension of the hips. Partner maintains strong stance.

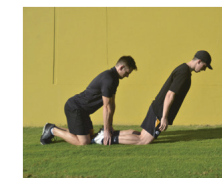
2 X 6-8



#### PARTNER NORDIC

Key points:  
Control down for as long as possible.

3 X 4-6



#### PARTNER NORDIC

Key points:  
Control down for as long as possible.

4 X 4-6



#### SPLIT SQUAT

Key points:  
Foot knee hip alignment. Knee over toe. Upright trunk.

2 X 6-8/LEG



#### PARTNER BULGARIAN SPLIT SQUAT

Key points:  
Foot knee hip alignment. Knee over toe.

3 X 6-8/LEG



#### SINGLE LEG SQUAT

Key points:  
Foot knee hip alignment. Strong torso position.

3 X 8-10/LEG



#### SINGLE LEG PARTNER BALL TOSS

Key points:  
Maintain strong athletic stance with slight knee bend. Must be challenging.

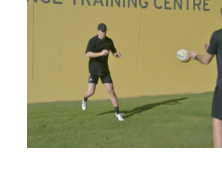
X 12/LEG



#### SINGLE LEG ON TOES PARTNER BALL TOSS

Key points:  
Heels just off the ground. Maintain a challenge but achievable.

X 12/LEG



#### SIDE LEAP AND CATCH

Key points:  
Catch the ball without compromising the landing. Alternate throws with your partner.

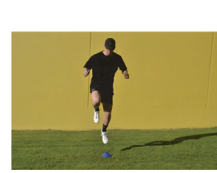
X 12/LEG



#### LATERAL LEAP

Key points:  
Own the landing with strong foot knee hip alignment.

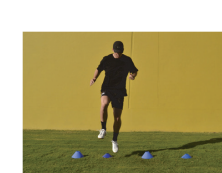
2 X 8/LEG



#### CONE HOP

Key points:  
Get on and off the ground. Maintain strong body position.

2 X 20/LEG



#### SIDeways CONE HOP

Key points:  
Get on and off the ground. Maintain strong body position. Up and back equals one set (x8).

2 X 8/LEG

Any exercises not completed prior to training or sessions missed must be completed after training or in the athlete's own time.

### PART 3 MOVEMENT TRAINING 10 minutes (5 minutes each)

## DECELERATION

BUSY FEET  
GET LOW



#### KEY DRILL

Forward backward shuttle run

#### PROGRESSIONS

##### TASK

1. Double leg stop
2. Split stance stop
3. Single leg stop
4. Side stop

##### EXECUTION

1. Make it a race
2. Coaches call
3. Partner shadow (next to/opposite)
4. Add ball

## CUTTING

BUSY FEET  
GET IN AND OUT OF THE TUNNEL  
BE A MOTORCYCLE



#### KEY DRILL

Run and cut

#### PROGRESSIONS

##### TASK

1. S run
2. Z run
3. Variable angle Z run
4. Multiple option run and cut

##### EXECUTION

1. Make it a race
2. Coaches call
3. Partner shadow (behind)
4. Add ball (carry/passing)