



SQUASH STARS

Squash Stars Level 2



Squash Stars Programme:

INSPIRING **YOUNG PLAYERS** **TO SHINE**

Squash Stars Level 2 is a follow-on programme from Squash Stars, designed to progress children who are ready through the next step of their squash journey by introducing the basic rules, shots and tactics of squash.

Through engaging and age-appropriate activities, the programme provides a fun, inclusive, and supportive environment where every child can develop their skills, build confidence, and make new friends. Our vision is simple:

**More young people
experiencing and thriving
through squash.**

Developed in collaboration with leading experts from the wider squash community and other sporting codes, and supported by our national partners, Squash Stars integrates evidence-based methods with a modern, game-centred approach. By focusing on play and game-based activities, we create an environment where skill development is both fun and effective. Our goal is to nurture a love for the sport while promoting physical literacy and personal growth.

How Squash Stars Works

The programme spans 8 or 10 weeks, with each session lasting 45 minutes to one hour. Activators and coaches use age-appropriate equipment and activities to ensure every child has a positive and fulfilling experience, whether they are new to the game or have some experience. Each session focuses on key skills such as movement, striking, and tactical play, helping participants not only learn the fundamentals of squash but also gain the confidence to participate in other sports and physical activities.

THANK YOU

Squash New Zealand Poipātū Aotearoa gratefully acknowledges the support from the Pub Charity and New Zealand Community Trust in producing these resources.



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STAR AWARDS

To further encourage and recognise young players' progress, the STAR Awards are integrated into the programme. These awards test players' abilities in basic squash skills, understanding of the rules, and tactical knowledge.

AWARD LEVELS:

1 Star, 2 Star, 3 Star, Bronze, Silver, Gold, and Referee.

CORE PRINCIPLES:

Competence, Confidence, Connection, and Character

Squash Stars is dedicated to nurturing well-rounded young people by focusing on these four core principles:

- **Competence:** Developing a broad range of skills to enable children to engage confidently in squash and other physical activities.
- **Confidence:** Building self-belief and helping children apply their skills effectively in game situations.
- **Connection:** Creating a sense of belonging by encouraging teamwork and camaraderie among participants.
- **Character:** Promoting values like integrity, respect, and humility, which support both personal growth and positive interactions with others.

The Philosophy – CREATING SMILES

Traditional repetitive drills and isolated practice often lead to disengagement among young players. Squash Stars takes a modern approach, valuing play, exploration, and enjoyment, creating an environment where young people can thrive. Our programme is designed to meet the unique needs of today's young people, fostering growth, joy, and a love for squash that lasts a lifetime.

SMILES GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Skill Learning happens through play. Squash should be a game kids love—not just a sport they learn. Every rally, every movement, and every laugh is part of their development. Learning is messy, and mistakes? They're not setbacks; they're stepping stones. Progress isn't a straight line—it's more like a mountain range, with ups and downs along the way. By experimenting, adjusting, and trying again, kids build resilience and develop skills naturally, shaping a lifelong love for the game.

More Action, More Often More play, less waiting. Active participation drives improvement. When kids are constantly involved—hitting, moving, and problem-solving—they learn faster and stay engaged. Sessions are designed to minimise downtime, replacing lines and lectures with movement and meaningful play. The more they play, the more they grow.

Inclusive: No matter a child's skill level, background, or ability, they should feel welcome. Activators and coaches adjust activities to meet each player where they are. A mix of challenges and adaptations ensures that everyone, from beginners to confident players, can participate fully and experience success—ensuring everyone has a chance to shine.

Learning through Exploration: Curiosity fuels progress. Children aren't just told what to do—they discover it. There's no single "perfect" technique. They experiment, problem-solve, and develop their own style. The game becomes a puzzle to solve, a challenge to overcome, and an adventure to explore.

Engaging & Enjoyable: Squash should feel exciting and rewarding. Where possible, encourage kids to take charge of their learning, set their own challenges, and have fun along the way. When children enjoy their experience, they build a personal connection to the game—one that lasts beyond the session and into a lifelong passion.

Success: What's learning without progress? Every improvement—big or small—is worth celebrating. Whether it's hitting the ball one more time, moving with more confidence, or discovering a new skill, every step forward builds belief. Success isn't about comparison; it's about personal growth. When children feel a sense of achievement, they develop the confidence to keep playing, keep improving, and keep coming back for more.

This is squash, reimagined—where every child plays, learns, and thrives with SMILES.

USING THE SQUASH STARS RESOURCE



This resource guide offers developmentally appropriate, engaging activities to develop children's skill levels and confidence through a play-based, game-centred approach. The activities allow children to learn squash skills while playing, making the experience more enjoyable than just learning drills.

You can use the example 10-week programme or mix and match activities to set your own sessions.

Simply pick an activity from each section to create your Squash Stars session. You can even create a longer session by choosing several activities from each section—the choice is yours! For example, you could select:

- 1 introduction activity
- 1-2 skill-based activity
- 1-2 games

This combination creates a fun, engaging session of approximately 45 minutes. You can create a longer session by choosing additional activities from the list.

THE RESOURCE INCLUDES:

- **Brief Introduction and Learning Focus** – Each activity includes a learning focus, highlighting the key skill, movement, or tactical concept being developed.
 - **Equipment Required** – A list of necessary equipment for each session.
 - **Activities** – A range of developmentally appropriate, engaging activities that will make up each lesson.
 - **Easy-to-Use Ideas** – Tips to make activities harder or easier.
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SAFETY

The Squash Stars programme is developed to ensure that each child has the opportunity to be active in a safe learning environment. Regardless of the group size and playing area, activators/coaches need to provide a safe environment that allows children to participate without risk.

Activators need to consider the following when conducting their lessons:

- Ensure a safe playing environment: Check the court/hall surface before starting. Ensure it is dry, clean, and free of foreign objects.
- Provide enough space: Keep at least 2m between activity stations to prevent collisions or interference.
- Clearly define play areas: Use floor tape, spot markers or cones to outline boundaries and individual workspaces.
- Give clear instructions: Ensure students understand activity rules and how to use equipment safely.
- Monitor spacing during activities: Ensure students have enough room to swing racquets and strike balls safely.
- Keep the court clear: All obstacles or equipment not required should be removed from the playing area before starting each activity.
- Modify activities as needed: Assess and adjust games to ensure safety and engagement for all participants.
- Always Supervise: Maintain control of the session, ensuring participants are safe and engaged throughout.

Child safeguarding training can be accessed via [Sport NZ portal](#)

By following this guide, activators can create enjoyable and safe sessions that build confidence and skills in a fun, inclusive environment.

EQUIPMENT LIST FOR SQUASH STARS

- Non-slip markers /cones or tape– to define play areas and safe zones and targets
- Soft objects (bean bags, foam balls, small cones) – for coordination activities
- Squash rackets (junior and standard sizes)
- Squash balls - foam and blue dot or other squash balls suitable variation in skill levels
- Hula hoops - for aiming and target-based activities
- Balloons – for hand-eye coordination and introductory activities
- Skittles or triangle cones – for accuracy-based games like 'Rebound Skittles'
- Foam or tennis balls – for cooperative and competitive catch games

SAFETY & ORGANISATION:

- First aid kit – for minor injuries
- Whistle or signal tool – for starting and stopping activities
- Goggles – for eye protection

EXAMPLE – 10 SESSION PROGRAMME

WEEK	RULE	INTRODUCTION	SKILL DEVELOPMENT	LEARNING	GAME PLAY
WEEK 1 DROP	Parts of the Court (6.11) (walls, tin, out line, T, service boxes, short line)		Wall Taps (7.8) Keep it Boiling (7.22)	Feeder and Hitter (7.21) Around the Sun (7.7)	Half-Court (8.7) – front • Cooperative • Competitive
WEEK 2 LOB	Gameplay (one bounce, alternate hits) Scoring (PAR 11/15, win by 2)	Competitive Catch Squash (6.10)	Lined Up (7.9) 1,2,3,4 (7.10)	Feeder and Hitter (6.10) Lob Game (7.13)	Escape the Corner (8.6) Modified Game – One shot above, one below service line
WEEK 3 SERVE	Service (foot in the box, above the line, into opposite back corner)	Split Step (6.3) The Lunge (6.4)	Service Preparation (7.11)	Service Games (7.12)	Three-Quarter Court (8.8) – normal
WEEK 4 VOLLEY	Let – Interference	Forwards, Backwards and Lateral (6.5)	Volley Hitting (7.15)	Bench Ball (7.1)	Three-Quarter Court (8.8) – no back ¼ strip Modified Game – play above service line unless volleying
WEEK 5 RETURN OF SERVE	Warm-Up Time & Etiquette	6 Corner Ghosting (6.6) Mirror Ghosting	Radical Rallies (7.3)	Serve & Return (7.17)	Half-Court (8.7) – alley ½ court Three-Quarter Court (8.8) – choose variation
WEEK 6 GAMEPLAY / MARK + REFEREE	Role of Marker and Referee (racket spin, shake hands, thank marker/ref)	Bouncy Ball Ghosting (6.8)	Serving (7.16)	Game Play – short sets with marking & refereeing	
WEEK 7 DRIVE	Interference (Let, No Let, Stroke)	Cat and Mouse Box (6.9)	Target Rotations (7.18)	Game of Lives (7.5) Team Rally Challenge (7.4)	Score on 5 (8.2)
WEEK 8 BOAST	Interference (Dangerous play, hitting opponent)	Corner to Corner (7.14)	Feeder and Hitter (7.21)	Boast to Target (7.19)	Three-Quarter Court (8.8) – choose variation
WEEK 9 CROSS COURT		Over the Gate (6.2)	Target Trainer (7.2)	Cross Court Challenge (7.20)	Pairs Attack (8.1)
WEEK 10 GAME PLAY TOURNAMENT	Time Keeping	Mini Tournament			

STEP PROCESS

The STEP process is an inclusion model that helps activators modify activities to enhance learning, engagement, and accessibility. By adjusting game constraints — eliminating, refining, or adding rules and conditions—activators can guide focus towards specific learning elements.

For example, games can be adapted by:

- Adjusting the court/playing space size
- Changing the type of ball or other equipment
- Modifying rules, such as allowing two bounces positive interactions with others.

STEP FRAMEWORK:

- **Space** – Modify the size or shape of the playing area
- **Task** – Adjust rules, scoring, or coaching approach
- **Equipment** – Use different balls, introduce rackets, or adapt gear
- **People** – Change the number of players or team structure

By applying the STEP framework, activators and coaches can tailor activities to suit different abilities, ensuring sessions are inclusive, engaging, and developmentally appropriate for all players.

A quick reference guide to CREATING SMILES



SKILL LEARNING

Learning is Messy: Skill development through fun, game-based activities involves ups and downs, and that's okay!



MORE ACTION, MORE OFTEN, FOR MORE PLAYERS

Less Waiting, More Playing: Sessions are structured to keep children active and involved, avoiding long lines and lectures.



INCLUSIVE

Catering to All Children's Needs: Adjust activities to suit each player's skill level and interests.



LEARNING THROUGH EXPLORATION

Encourage Creativity: There's no single "right" way to play. Allow space for players to try new things and find their own solutions.



ENGAGEMENT & ENJOYMENT

Promote Ownership: Encourage players to set their own goals and challenges, moving from coach-driven to player-driven choices.



SUCCESS

Celebrate Progress: Ensure every player experiences a sense of achievement, no matter how small.





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SQUASH FUNDAMENTALS





The grip is fundamental in squash—everything else builds from it.

A good grip allows consistent racket control and accurate shot-making, especially under pressure. Use the same grip for forehand and backhand, as there isn't time to change during rallies.

KEY COACHING POINT:

- Hold the racket halfway up the handle, like a handshake.
- Form a "V" with the thumb and index finger along the inside edge of the shaft.
- Keep a gap between the index finger and other fingers for better control—avoid a hammer grip.
- Slightly open the racket face so the strings are visible.
- Maintain a cocked wrist at roughly 90 degrees for control.
- Keep the grip firm but relaxed, with steady control of the racket head.
- After each shot, return to this position with the racket head up and ready.
- Keep the wrist stable—avoid it dropping or flopping.

REMINDER OF KEY POINTS:

- Fingers are spread comfortably with a firm (not tight) grip.
- Handle size and grip position should feel right for the player.



THE GRIP: ERROR DETECTION AND CORRECTION

Errors related to the grip are mirrored affecting the stroke on both sides. Below are some common errors seen with the grip.

1. Hand placed on top of the grip with the racket head facing down.



2. Racket face too open, grip held too far round.



3. Racket gripped hammer style with no gap between top two fingers and thumb wrapped straight round the grip.



4. Racket held too short or too long.



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WHY CHOOSING THE RIGHT BALL MATTERS;

Skill Development: Using the correct ball ensures players learn proper technique and timing.

Game Quality: The right ball provides appropriate bounce and speed for the player's level.

Safety: A ball that's too fast or too slow can lead to frustration or injury.

Progression: Players advance more effectively when equipment matches their ability.

Colour Dot	Hang Time	Speed	Player Level
Double Yellow (Pro)	Standard	Very Slow	Advanced
Single Yellow (Competition)	+10%	Slow	Intermediate
Red (Progress)	+20%	Fast	Improver
Blue (Intro)	+40%	Very Fast	Beginners / Juniors

HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT BALL

- Juniors: Typically use Blue for better bounce and confidence.
- Beginners: Start with Blue or Red for longer rallies and easier control.
- Intermediate: Move to Single Yellow as skills improve.
- Advanced: Use Double Yellow for competitive play.

COACHING TIPS

- Warm-Up Matters: Squash balls need warming up to bounce properly—demonstrate this to players.
- Progress Gradually: Don't rush players to slower balls; let them master control first.
- Explain the Why: Help players understand that the right ball improves enjoyment and skill.



JUNIOR BALLS

Dunlop also offer Mini Squash Balls which are available through Squash New Zealand and are perfect for Squash Stars.

WHY MINI SQUASH BALLS?

- Designed for younger juniors and perfect for Squash Stars programmes.
- Helps kids learn squash in a fun, progressive way.
- Encourages family involvement and enjoyable rallies.

1. DUNLOP MINI SQUASH RED 'FUN' BALL (AGES 5-7)

- **Size:** Same as a tennis ball.
- **Bounce:** Highest of the three – very lively!
- **Purpose:** Ideal for beginners and family play.
- **Benefits:**
 - Easy for kids to rally with.
 - Great for parents to join in – a fantastic family activity!

2. DUNLOP MINI SQUASH ORANGE 'PLAY' BALL (AGES 7-9)

- **Size:** About half the size of the Red Ball.
- **Bounce:** Still good, but firmer and faster than Red.
- **Purpose:** For kids ready for more challenge.
- **Benefits:**
 - Promotes better control and technique.
 - Allows exciting rallies while building confidence



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5.3

THE DROP

The drop is a key attacking shot used to bring your opponent to the front of the court, using their energy while conserving your own. It is typically played after forcing a weaker return, aiming to land softly on the front wall and stay tight to the side wall.



KEY COACHING POINT:

- Strike the ball low and slightly in front of the lead foot.
- Keep the front knee bent (around 90°) for balance and recovery.
- Use a short backswing, bringing the racket down and forward.
- Keep the racket head in line with or slightly above the wrist.
- Follow through briefly towards the target.
- Angle the shot to stay close to the side wall.
- Add slice when appropriate to reduce pace and tighten the ball.

FOREHAND STRAIGHT DROP



BACKHAND STRAIGHT DROP



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5.4

THE LOB

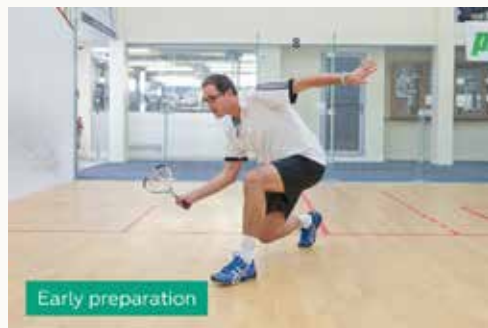
The lob is primarily a defensive shot used to relieve pressure and regain position, but when played well it can turn defence into attack. It is most often used from the front of the court to lift the ball high and deep, allowing time to recover to the T.



KEY COACHING POINT:

- Use a soft touch—often a short backswing or wrist action is enough.
- Get low to allow an open racket face under the ball.
- Strike the ball in front of the lead foot.
- Aim high on the front wall so the ball travels over the opponent and into the back corners.
- Keep the head steady and complete the follow through.
- Maintain a balanced, stretched stance to allow recovery to the T.

FOREHAND CROSS-COURT LOB



BACKHAND CROSS-COURT LOB



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5.5

THE SERVE

The serve is a key shot that can strongly influence the rally. A good serve puts you in control, while a poor one can give advantage to your opponent. The lob serve is generally the most effective.



KEY COACHING POINT:

- Start balanced near the front of the service box with shoulders parallel to the side wall.
- Prepare with the racket head up and face open (strings visible).
- Pick a clear target on the front wall.
- Toss the ball slightly in front and strike with a controlled underarm action, keeping the wrist firm.
- Aim high and across the front wall so the ball reaches deep into the back corner.
- Follow through upwards, finishing around head height.
- Move quickly to the T after serving.

THE SERVE



Forehand serve preparation



Forehand serve contact area



Forehand serve follow through



Forehand serve backhand side preparation



Forehand serve backhand side point of contact



Forehand serve moving to the T



Finish position on the T

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5.6

RETURN OF SERVE

The return of serve is critical to avoid early pressure and gain control of the rally. A strong return is typically played straight down the wall or cross-court, hitting high on the front wall to land deep and tight, allowing you to take control of the T.



KEY COACHING POINT:

- Start in a balanced position between the service box and back wall, shoulders facing the side wall.
- Keep the racket up and ready in a vertical position.
- Look to volley where possible to avoid being put under pressure.
- Stay patient—track the ball before committing to movement.
- Aim to hit high on the front wall and keep the return straight and tight.
- Follow through towards the target and recover quickly to the T.

FOREHAND RETURN OF SERVE



BACKHAND RETURN OF SERVE



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5.7

THE VOLLEY

The volley is a key attacking tool that helps speed up play and create pressure. It can be used to attack the front of the court or to control length, allowing you to take time away from your opponent.



KEY COACHING POINT:

- Track the ball closely and prepare the racket early.
- Step into the shot and use a short backswing where possible.
- Strike the ball in front of the body at arm's length.
- Keep shoulders aligned and play similarly to a drive when required.
- Push or punch the racket through towards the target with appropriate follow through.
- For volley drops, strike in front and control pace (including using cut/slice when needed).
- Aim for a target that keeps the ball tight to the side wall.

FOREHAND VOLLEY



BACKHAND VOLLEY



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5.8

THE DRIVE

The Drive is a shot that can be hit straight or cross-court in an effort to put pressure on an opponent in the back corners.

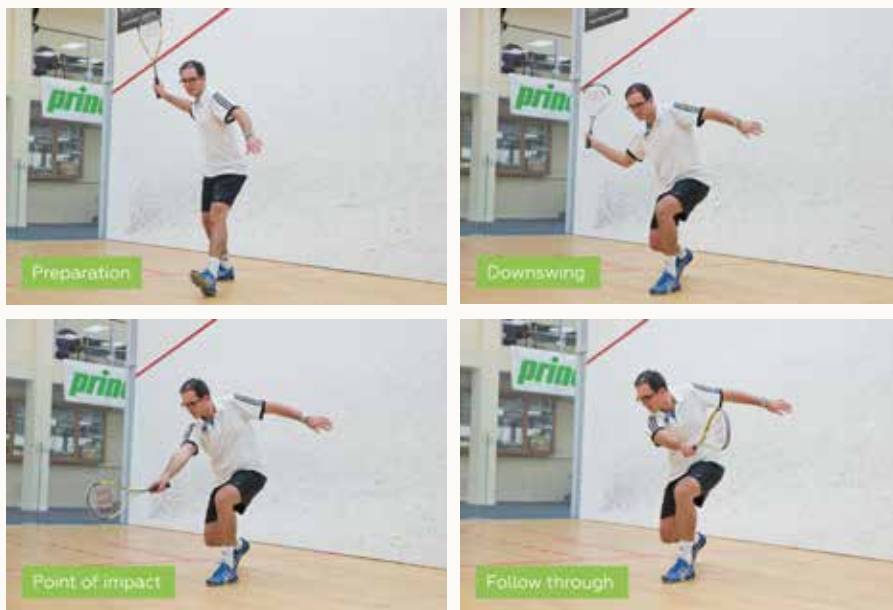


KEY COACHING POINT:

The straight drive is played close to the side wall in an effort to make it difficult to return. The other advantage is that a good drive will draw an opponent away from the T area, giving you control of that area.

A cross-court drive goes on a diagonal to the back of the court. The shot can be very effective if hit well, however it can cause problems if not hit wide enough as it can be picked up by the opponent on the volley.

COACHING POINTS: FOREHAND SWING



- Prepare with the racket up and a full backswing, keeping good spacing from the body.
- Extend the arm through the shot, striking with the racket fully extended.
- Rotate shoulders and hips to align with the intended direction. For a cross-court the shoulders should be in line with where you want the ball to travel.
- Transfer weight from back foot to front foot, using a balanced lunge.
- Strike the ball level with or slightly in front of the lead foot.
- Push the racket through towards the target and stay balanced.
- Watch the ball closely and recover to the T after the shot.

COACHING POINTS: BACKHAND SWING



- Prepare with the racket up, elbow away from the body at around 90°, and the racket head pointing upwards.
- Drive the racket through the ball with a smooth downswing and full extension.
- Use the non-racket arm for balance during the swing and follow through.
- Rotate shoulders and hips to align with the shot direction.
- For a cross-court the shoulders should be in line with where you want the ball to travel.
- Transfer weight forward with a balanced lunge, keeping the front knee stable.
- Strike the ball level with or slightly in front of the lead foot.
- Stay balanced, watch the ball closely, and recover to the T.

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5.9

THE BOAST

The boast can be used defensively to recover from pressure or as an attacking shot to create winners. It involves striking the ball onto the side wall to reach the front wall at the correct angle.



KEY COACHING POINT:

- Play the shot like a drive, but direct the ball onto the side wall.
- Adjust your body position—more closed for defensive boasts, more open for attacking ones.
- Stay balanced with knees slightly bent and weight moving into the shot.
- Strike through or slightly under the ball to ensure it reaches the front wall.
- Visualise the angle (e.g. aiming for a far front corner) to guide accuracy.

FOREHAND BOAST



BACKHAND BOAST



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INTRODUCTION ACTIVITIES





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6.1

CORNER BALL

Corner Ball is a fast-paced team tagging game that encourages communication, movement, and quick decision-making. Players must work together to pass an object and tag opponents within a set time, warming up the body while developing teamwork and spatial awareness.

LEARNING FOCUS

The focus of this activity is on developing teamwork, communication, and quick decision-making under pressure. Players learn to work together strategically. The activity promotes cooperation, agility, and tactical thinking.

SET UP

- **Equipment:** One ball or throwable object per team.
- **Space:** Defined playing area on court.
- **Safety:** Always make sure there is enough space for the number of people taking part in the activity.



PLAY:

- The aim of this activity is to tag all members of the opposing team.
- Define an area for the activity.
- Divide the group into two teams. One team has possession of an object, and they attempt to tag as many people as possible within one minute.
- Players cannot move when in possession of the object; instead they must pass the object between themselves.
- When tagged, players must stop and complete 10 star jumps before returning to the game.

EXAMPLE INSTRUCTIONS

"This is a fast team game focused on communication and decision-making. One team passes the object to create tagging chances, but remember—you can't move while holding it. Work together, think ahead, and stay active."

POST ACTIVITY REFLECTIONS

- How effectively did teams communicate under pressure?
- Did players make quick decisions when passing?
- How well was space used during play?
- Were all players engaged throughout the game?

LEARNING QUESTIONS

- Which strategy did you use when you were the tagger?
- Which strategy did you use when you were the player?
- What would you do differently next time?
- How does your body feel after warming up?

SKILL LINK

This activity develops teamwork, communication, spatial awareness, and quick decision-making while improving fitness and agility through continuous movement.

ENCOURAGE PLAYERS TO

- Use space effectively.
- Pass in front of moving players.
- Plan and implement strategies.
- Review and revise the strategies.
- Pass accurately



MAKE IT **HARDER**

- Require tagged players to perform movement tasks before returning.
- Reduce the playing area.
- Limit tagging zones or target body areas.
- Use smaller objects.
- Reduce the number of taggers.



MAKE IT **EASIER**

- Increase the size of the area.
- Tag anywhere on the body.
- Use large balls which are easier to catch.
- Increase the number of taggers.

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6.2

OVER THE GATE

Over the Gate is a cooperative throwing game played in pairs, where players form a 'gate' by holding hands and softly hit a ball over it. The aim is to keep rallies going by working together, developing hand-eye coordination, communication, and control.

LEARNING FOCUS

Players develop cooperation and teamwork as they work together to maintain the 'gate'. It emphasises hand-eye coordination by requiring players to track the ball and time their hits accurately.

SET UP

- **Equipment:** One racket per player and one ball per pair
- **Space:** Open court space with room for pairs
- **Safety:** Always make sure there is enough space for the number of people taking part in the activity



PLAY:

- The aim of this activity is to work cooperatively to get as many points as possible by hitting the ball over a barrier.
- Players work in pairs with one ball.
- They make left handed gates by holding hands with their left hand.
- They play right handed by gently hitting the ball over the 'gate' so that the other player can return it over the net.
- The ball must bounce once before it is returned over the gate.
- When hitting the ball over the gate, players must use an open palm, which faces upward.
- The gate must always remain intact.

EXAMPLE INSTRUCTIONS

"Work in pairs to create a 'gate' by holding hands. Gently hit the ball upward over the gate and return it after one bounce. Communicate clearly and work together to keep rallies going."

POST ACTIVITY REFLECTIONS

- How well did pairs cooperate to maintain the gate?
- Did players adjust positioning to return the ball?
- How did players respond to mistakes?
- What strategies helped extend rallies?

LEARNING QUESTIONS

- What did you like about working cooperatively?
- What did you like about working competitively?

SKILL LINK

This activity develops cooperation, communication, and hand-eye coordination while reinforcing controlled throwing and movement patterns.

ENCOURAGE PLAYERS TO

- Work cooperatively as 'gates' even when playing against each other.
- Move their feet to the ball and be balanced when playing the ball.
- Remain in the ready position, which allows them to move quickly in many directions.



MAKE IT *HARDER*

- Increase the space for pairs to work in.
- Use small balls, tennis balls, low compression balls
- Volley the ball (hit it before it bounces).
- Play competitively; try to score a point as an individual by making the ball bounce twice before the opponent can return it.



MAKE IT *EASIER*

- Reduce the space for pairs to work in.
- Allow players to throw and catch the ball.
- Use larger bouncy balls.

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Split Step is a movement activity focused on learning how to move quickly and effectively from the T. Players practice balanced, explosive movements in multiple directions.

LEARNING FOCUS

Players develop an understanding of how to move off the T quickly and effectively. The activity focuses on balance, weight transfer, and explosive first movement to improve court coverage in squash.

SET UP

- **Equipment:** Six spot markers per player
- **Space:** Split players into three to four areas of the court. Two players work in each area. In each area, place two spot markers in a standing position, with two different coloured markers positioned in front and behind, as shown in the image.
- **Safety:** Ensure enough space between activity areas. Players must return fully to the T before starting the next repetition



PLAY:

- Players start on the two spot markets in the middle. On the coach's call of 'go', the players performs a split step by jumping lightly off the ground, placing their feet onto the diagonal markers, and then moving explosively in the instructed direction. The players returns to the T and resets before repeating five times.
- Repeat the activity using the following directions of travel:
 - Front left
 - Front right
 - Side left
 - Side right
 - Back left
 - Both front corners
- The emphasis is on correct technique and quality of movement rather than speed.

EXAMPLE INSTRUCTIONS

"This activity helps you practice moving off the T quickly and efficiently. You will use a split step to prepare your body to move explosively in any direction. Start relaxed and light on your feet on the middle spot markers. When you hear 'go', perform the split step and move powerfully to the called position, then recover back to the middle markers before repeating."

LEARNING QUESTIONS

- What should your head be doing as you leave the T?
- What did your first stride feel like when it was effective?
- How did staying relaxed help your movement?

ENCOURAGE PLAYERS TO

- Begin in a relaxed, balanced position.
- Stay on the balls of the feet.
- Control body position with soft knees.
- Move explosively in the chosen direction.
- Recover fully to the T before repeating.

POST ACTIVITY REFLECTIONS

- Were players starting from a relaxed, balanced position?
- Did players demonstrate a small step followed by a powerful first stride?
- Were players able to recover and stop fully on the T between repetitions?
- How consistently did players apply the split step technique across different directions?

SKILL LINK

This activity develops effective split step mechanics, balance, and efficient first movement. These skills support faster reactions, improved recovery to the T, and better court coverage during rallies.



MAKE IT *HARDER*

- Increase the speed of the 'go' call.
- Randomise movement directions.
- Require faster recovery back to the T.
- Add a racket to simulate match readiness.



MAKE IT *EASIER*

- Practice one movement direction at a time.
- Slow down movement speed.
- Allow walk-through repetitions before explosive movement.

READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH



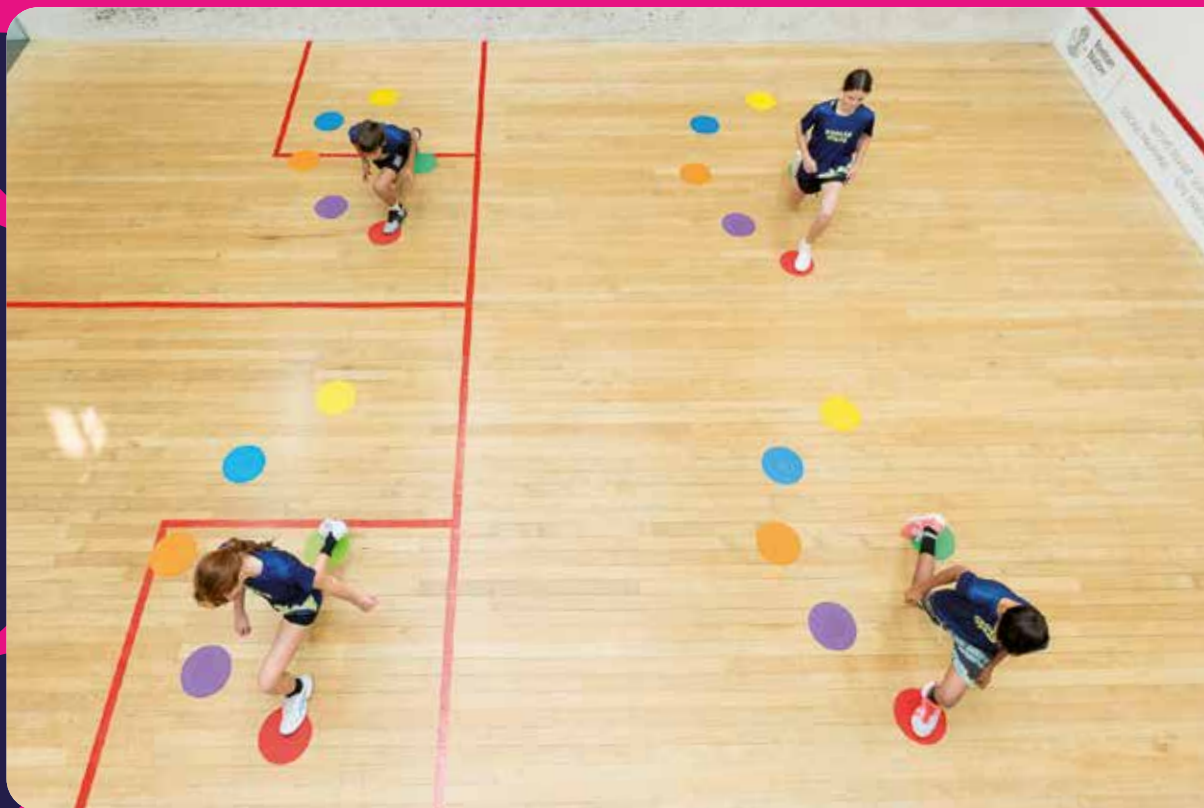
The Lunge is a movement-focused activity that helps players practise safe and efficient lunging. Players work on braking, balance, and body alignment while moving to different positions, developing strong foundations for injury prevention and court movement.

LEARNING FOCUS

Players develop an understanding of the lunge and how it is used to brake efficiently, maintain balance, and prevent injury. The activity focuses on controlled movement, body alignment, and stability when lunging in squash.

SET UP

- **Equipment:** Spot markers. One racket per player.
- **Space:** Split the court into four areas. In each area, mark one central spot. Place three to four other spots in a radius of approximately one metre from the central spot.
- **Safety:** Ensure sufficient space between players. Emphasise controlled lunging and correct alignment to reduce injury risk.



PLAY:

- Players work individually within each court area. Starting on the central spot, players lunge toward each surrounding spot in turn. At each spot, they practice a controlled stroke action, first using a forehand action and then a backhand action.
- Players return under control to the central spot after each lunge before moving to the next target. The emphasis is on braking smoothly into the lunge, maintaining balance, and correct body alignment rather than speed.

EXAMPLE INSTRUCTIONS

"The lunge is one of the most important movements in squash. It helps you slow down safely, stay balanced, and protect your body from injury. In this activity, focus on control, body alignment, and strong stopping positions each time you lunge."

LEARNING QUESTIONS

- When you are in the correct position, do you feel balanced?
- Can you see that your hips and feet are aligned?
- What do you think may happen if your front knee moves ahead of your foot?

ENCOURAGE PLAYERS TO

- Land with control and brake smoothly into each lunge.
- Keep the front knee behind the foot and stay aligned.
- Maintain an upright chest and balanced posture.
- Use a low centre of gravity for stability.
- Recover under control before moving again.

POST ACTIVITY REFLECTIONS

- Did players land with control and brake smoothly?
- Were players able to keep their knee behind the front foot?
- Did players maintain a low centre of gravity and upright posture?
- How consistently did players recover back to the central spot under control?

SKILL LINK

This activity develops safe and effective lunge mechanics, balance, and alignment. These skills support efficient braking, injury prevention, and reliable recovery movements during squash rallies.



MAKE IT *HARDER*

- Increase the distance to the outer spots.
- Add a ball feed and hit a live ball at each lunge.
- Alternate forehand and backhand lunges continuously.
- Increase repetition count while maintaining correct technique.



MAKE IT *EASIER*

- Reduce the distance between spots.
- Remove racket use and focus on movement only.
- Pause at each lunge to check posture and alignment before recovering.

READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH



SQUASH STARS

6.5

FORWARDS, BACK-WARDS & LATERAL

Forwards, Backwards & Lateral is a movement activity where players practice common squash movement patterns. Using different shapes and directions, players gradually increase speed while focusing on balance, coordination, and efficient footwork.

LEARNING FOCUS

Players will develop forwards, backwards, and lateral movement skills. The activity focuses on balance, coordination, body control, and efficient movement patterns used frequently in squash.

SET UP

- **Equipment:** Spot markers
- **Space:** Split the court into four distinct quarters. Use spot markers to create the following movement shapes: Box run, Lateral zig zag, Forward and backward zig zag, Giant L. Assign two players to each area or shape.
- **Safety:** Ensure sufficient space between groups. Reinforce controlled movement before increasing speed.



PLAY:

- Players work in pairs within each movement area. Player 1 completes the movement pattern at 50% pace, followed by Player 2. Player 1 then repeats the movement at 75% pace, followed by Player 2, and then again at 100% pace, followed by Player 2.
- Once each activity has been completed three times by each player, all pairs rotate to a new shape. This continues until all four movement shapes have been completed. The emphasis is on quality movement rather than speed.



EXAMPLE INSTRUCTIONS

"This activity helps you practice moving forwards, backwards, and sideways using different movement patterns. You'll start slowly to focus on balance and control, then build your speed. Keep your head up, stay light on your feet, and use your arms to support your movement."

LEARNING QUESTIONS

- Does bending at the knees assist with balance and movement?
- What part of the body will assist you most with balance during movement?

ENCOURAGE PLAYERS TO

- Keep the head up to stay aware of direction and space.
- Bend the knees slightly to support balance and movement.
- Move lightly on the balls of the feet.
- Use the arms to assist balance and drive.
- Increase speed gradually while maintaining good technique.

POST ACTIVITY REFLECTIONS

- Did players maintain balance as speed increased?
- Were players keeping their heads up and staying spatially aware?
- Did players use their arms effectively for balance and drive?
- Which movement shape was most challenging and why?

SKILL LINK

This activity develops essential squash movement skills including forwards, backwards, and lateral movement. These skills underpin effective court coverage, recovery, and positioning during rallies.



MAKE IT *HARDER*

- Increase the size or complexity of the movement shapes.
- Reduce recovery time between repetitions.
- Add reaction cues or directional calls.
- Add a racket to simulate match movement



MAKE IT *EASIER*

- Reduce the size of movement shapes.
- Limit movement pace to 50–75%.
- Allow walk-through practice before progressing to higher speed.

READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH



Six Corner Ghosting is a movement drill where players practice travelling to all areas of the court and recovering to the T after each movement. The activity develops balance, controlled lunging, and efficient movement patterns used during rallies.

LEARNING FOCUS

Players develop an understanding of where the T is and the importance of returning to it after each shot. The activity focuses on efficient movement, court coverage, balance, and controlled lunging when moving around the court.

SET UP

- **Equipment:** Seven spot markers for each square.
- **Space:** Set up four squares using six spot markers. Place a central marker between the two middle markers to represent the T.
- **Safety:** Ensure sufficient space between players. Emphasise controlled movement and safe lunging technique



PLAY:

- Players start on the central T marker.
- On the call of "Go", players move at 50% speed to the front right marker, finishing with a controlled lunge.
- At each marker, players perform a shadow swing using the appropriate forehand or backhand action.
- Players return to the T after each movement before travelling to the next marker.
- Players continue until all six markers have been reached, always returning to the T.
- Repeat the activity at 75% speed and then again at 100% speed, maintaining correct technique.

EXAMPLE INSTRUCTIONS

"This activity helps you learn where the T is and why returning to it is so important in squash. Each time you move to a corner, focus on moving with control, lunging safely, and then getting back to the T ready for the next shot."

LEARNING QUESTIONS

- Does returning to the T help you reach the next ball more easily?
- What should you be ready to do when you arrive back at the T?
- How does controlled movement help your balance and recovery?

ENCOURAGE PLAYERS TO

- Keep their head up and eyes forward
- Stay on the balls of their feet with soft knees
- Use arms for drive and balance
- Brake smoothly into lunges
- Pause briefly on the T before moving again

POST ACTIVITY REFLECTIONS

- Did players consistently return to the T after each movement?
- Were lunges controlled with good balance and alignment?
- Did players maintain technique as speed increased?

SKILL LINK

This activity develops efficient court movement, recovery to the T, balance, and safe lunging technique. These skills support effective court coverage, anticipation, and readiness during rallies.



MAKE IT *HARDER*

- Make it full court
- Call out random corners
- Add a lunge at every corner
- Increase speed while maintaining technique



MAKE IT *EASIER*

- Reduce movement speed
- Limit the number of corners
- Allow walk-through practice before increasing intensity

READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH



SQUASH STARS

6.7

SIMON SAYS

Simon Says is a fun, reaction-based game where players move quickly to different parts of the court based on instructions. The activity helps players learn court layout while developing listening skills, focus, and quick decision-making

LEARNING FOCUS

Players develop an understanding of different areas of the squash court while improving listening skills, reaction speed, and decision-making. The activity focuses on recognising court positions, responding to instructions, and moving quickly and safely.

SET UP

- **Space:** Use a full squash court.
- **Safety:** Ensure players are spread out and aware of others when moving quickly around the court.



PLAY:

- Players spread out across the court, ready to move on instruction.
- The coach calls out a part of the court, always starting with "Simon says" (e.g. "Simon says touch the front wall").
- Players move quickly to touch or stand in the named area.
- If the coach calls an instruction without saying "Simon says" first, any player who moves is out.
- Continue the game until one or only a few players remain, then restart.

EXAMPLE INSTRUCTIONS

"In this game, you'll listen carefully to instructions and move to different parts of the court. Only move when I say 'Simon says' first—if you move without hearing that, you're out! Stay focused, react quickly, and learn where all the key areas of the court are."

LEARNING QUESTIONS

- What helped you react quickly to the correct calls?
- Which parts of the court did you find hardest to remember?
- Why is it important to listen carefully before moving?

ENCOURAGE PLAYERS TO

- Listen carefully before reacting.
- Move quickly but under control.
- Stay aware of space and other players.
- Learn and recognise different parts of the court.
- Reset quickly and stay focused after mistakes.

POST ACTIVITY REFLECTIONS

- Did players listen carefully and respond correctly to instructions?
- Were players able to recognise and move to different areas of the court quickly?
- How well did players control movement when reacting at speed?
- Did focus and decision-making improve during the activity?

SKILL LINK

This activity develops court awareness, listening skills, and reaction speed. These skills support better positioning, decision-making, and movement during rallies.



MAKE IT *HARDER*

- Increase the speed of instructions.
- Add more specific or complex court areas (e.g. "backhand front corner").
- Include movement rules (e.g. lunge, side-step only).
- Introduce elimination rounds or scoring.



MAKE IT *EASIER*

- Slow down the pace of instructions.
- Use fewer, clearly defined court areas.
- Demonstrate each area before starting.
- Allow players to stay in the game after mistakes.

READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH



SQUASH STARS

6.8

BOUNCY BALL GHOSTING

Bouncy Ball Ghosting is a movement activity where players react to a ball being thrown to different areas of the court. The activity helps players learn to move efficiently, time their movement, and return to the T, developing coordination and court awareness.

LEARNING FOCUS

Players develop movement timing and coordination by responding to a moving ball. The activity focuses on reacting to an external stimulus, moving efficiently to different areas of the court, and recovering to the T between movements.

SET UP

- **Equipment:** One bouncy ball and six spot markers per pair.
- **Space:** Use a full court, working in pairs with enough space between groups.
- **Safety:** Ensure players are aware of others when moving quickly around the court and retrieving balls safely.



PLAY:

- Players work in pairs, with one player (Player A) holding a bouncy ball and the other (Player B) starting on the T.
- Player A tosses the ball into different areas of the court.
- Player B moves to catch the ball, then passes it back to Player A.
- Player B must return to the T between each toss before moving again.
- Player A continues to vary the direction, distance, and height of the tosses to move Player B around the court.



EXAMPLE INSTRUCTIONS

"This activity helps you learn how to move around the court and return to the T. One player will throw the ball into different areas, and the other will move to catch it. Focus on your timing—don't arrive too early or too late—and always recover back to the T ready for the next movement."

LEARNING QUESTIONS

- What helped you arrive at the ball at the right time?
- Why is it important to return to the T after each movement?
- How did watching the ball early help your movement?

ENCOURAGE PLAYERS TO

- Watch the ball closely from release to catch.
- Move quickly but under control to the ball.
- Time movement to arrive at the right moment.
- Recover quickly back to the T after each catch.
- Stay balanced when catching and passing the ball.

POST ACTIVITY REFLECTIONS

- Did players move efficiently to different areas of the court?
- Were players able to time their movement to meet the ball?
- Did players consistently return to the T between movements?
- How well did players maintain balance and control when catching?

SKILL LINK

This activity develops movement timing, coordination, and recovery to the T. These skills support efficient court coverage and preparation for shots during rallies.



MAKE IT *HARDER*

- Increase the speed and variation of throws.
- Throw the ball to more challenging or wider areas.
- Reduce time between throws to increase intensity.
- Add directional or movement constraints (e.g. lunge to catch).



MAKE IT *EASIER*

- Slow down the speed of the throws.
- Use underarm throws with a predictable bounce.
- Reduce the distance the player has to move.
- Start with pointing to areas instead of throwing the ball.

READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH



Cat & Mouse Box is a fast-paced chasing game where players move around a defined space while facing the front wall. The activity helps players develop movement in multiple directions, spatial awareness, and the ability to react quickly to changing situations.

LEARNING FOCUS

Players develop confidence in moving forwards, backwards, and laterally while maintaining awareness of space and an opponent. The activity focuses on controlled movement, quick reactions, and the ability to change direction efficiently.

SET UP

- **Equipment:** Spot markers or cones to create a square or box.
- **Space:** Use one quarter or half of the court per pair.
- **Safety:** Ensure sufficient space between pairs and reinforce controlled movement to avoid collisions.



PLAY:

- Players work in pairs, starting at opposite corners of a marked-out box.
- One player is the 'cat' and the other is the 'mouse'.
- Players move around the box while facing the front wall, attempting to catch or avoid their partner.
- Movement should include forwards, backwards, and lateral steps.
- The coach (or another player) can call "change" at any time, requiring players to immediately switch direction.
- Swap roles regularly to ensure both players experience chasing and evading.

EXAMPLE INSTRUCTIONS

"In this activity, one of you is the cat and one is the mouse. You'll move around the box while facing the front wall, trying to catch or avoid your partner. You must stay controlled and be ready to change direction when you hear 'change'. This will help you move better in all directions on the court."

LEARNING QUESTIONS

- What helped you change direction quickly?
- Why is it important to stay facing the front wall?
- How did you move differently when chasing compared to evading?

ENCOURAGE PLAYERS TO

- Stay low with a balanced body position.
- Keep their head up and eyes forward.
- Move under control in all directions.
- React quickly to changes in direction.
- Be aware of their partner's position at all times.

POST ACTIVITY REFLECTIONS

- Did players demonstrate controlled movement in all directions?
- Were players able to react quickly to the "change" call?
- How effectively did players maintain awareness of their partner?
- Did movement quality remain consistent at higher speeds?

SKILL LINK

This activity develops multi-directional movement, spatial awareness, and reaction skills. These support effective court coverage, recovery, and positioning during rallies.



MAKE IT *HARDER*

- Reduce the size of the box to limit space.
- Increase speed and frequency of "change" calls.
- Add movement rules (e.g. lunge to corners, no crossing feet).
- Introduce scoring or timed chase rounds.



MAKE IT *EASIER*

- Increase the size of the box.
- Slow down movement tempo.
- Allow players to face any direction initially.
- Remove the "change" call until players are confident.

READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH



SQUASH STARS

6.10

COMPETITIVE CATCH SQUASH

Competitive catch squash is a fun and interactive squash-like game with a twist: no rackets! Players are encouraged to compete and improve their tactical skills while developing accuracy and hand-eye coordination by throwing and catching the ball after it bounces once.

LEARNING FOCUS

The activity encourages players to think tactically and adapt to their opponent's actions, improving their throwing and catching skills.

SET UP

- **Equipment:** Soft or tennis balls and cones, throw-down lines or spot markers for marking boundaries.
- **Space:** Use cones or throw-down lines to divide the court into sections. Place a spot in the centre of each area to represent the T Zone.
- **Safety:** Always make sure there is enough space for the number of people taking part in the activity.



PLAY:

- Organise the court into four sections and pair up the players.
- Use cones or throw-down lines to split the court into four sections. If not on a squash court, use throw-down lines or cones to mark out playing areas, with two players playing per court.
- Ensure that each court has a suitable ball.
- Place a spot in the centre of the defined floor area; this acts as the T Zone.
- In pairs, Player 1 throws a squash ball underarm to hit a wall (at least waist height). Player 2 lets it bounce once and then catches it before throwing it back.
- Players win a point if the ball bounces twice or goes out of the court.
- Play for an allotted time or to a certain number of points. Then swap winners and losers around courts.

EXAMPLE INSTRUCTIONS

"Your mission is to outsmart your opponent to score more points by winning the rallies. Throw the ball against the wall and catch it after one bounce. Ready to test your catching skills and outplay your opponent? Ready, set, go!"

POST GAME REFLECTIONS

- How did players adapt their play during the game based on their opponent's positioning?
- The effectiveness of players' shot placement in winning rallies.
- Their ability to maintain focus and control throughout the competitive rallies?

LEARNING QUESTIONS

- How can you improve your catching and throwing skills?
- What tactics can you use to win more points?

SKILL LINK

This game encourages and improves the accuracy of players' hand-eye coordination while developing throwing and catching skills. The game also develops their attack and defence tactics.

ENCOURAGE PLAYERS TO

- Move to the T Zone after each throw.
- Think about tactics and make their partner work harder.



MAKE IT **HARDER**

- If players can complete the skill games (catching and throwing with ease), give them modified equipment and get them to try with that.
- Use a faster/bouncier ball.



MAKE IT **EASIER**

- Allow players two bounces before they have to catch the ball.

READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH



LEARNING OUTCOME

Develop an understanding of the basic rules on how to play squash, including understanding the court layout.

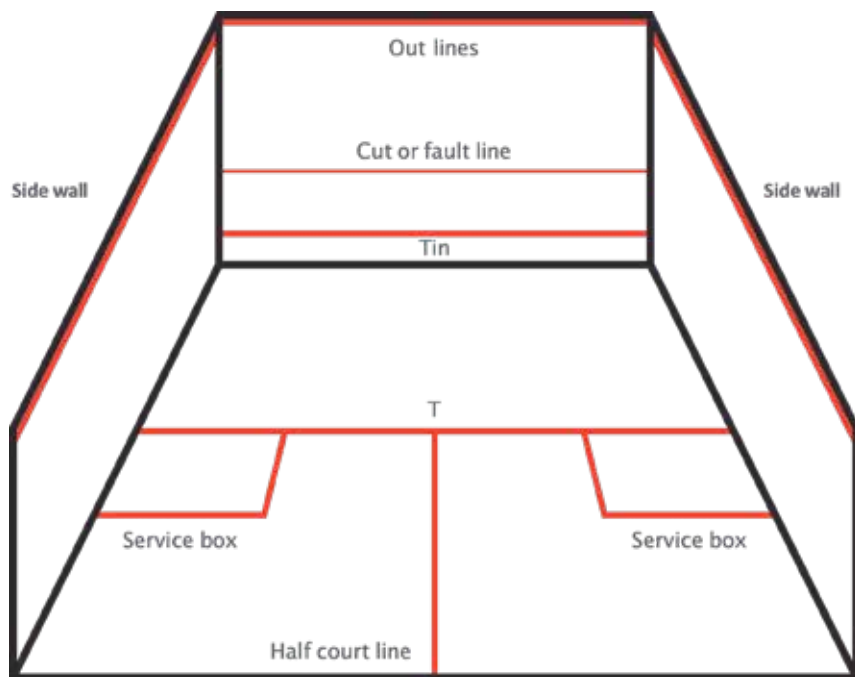
THE COURT

It is important that participants have an understanding of the squash court before coaching begins.

It is not important to know the dimensions but it is essential that players know the simple terms. Coaches will use these terms throughout their coaching sessions so players must understand what these terms mean.

THE BASIC RULES

As with the court, in order to begin coaching, the coach needs to be confident the players have a basic understanding of the rules. There is no point teaching players the technical aspects of squash if the players don't yet understand how the game works.



THE SCORING

- In most cases, a match is the best of five games.
- Each game is played scoring one point per rally, until one player reaches 11 points (unless the score reaches 10-10). At 10-all, one player needs to win by two clear points to win the game, e.g. 12-10, 13-11, 17-15.
- Some matches are played with games to 15 points (rather than 11).
- At the end of each game (to 11 or 15 points), players are allowed to take up to 2 minutes to go off court, have a drink, speak to a coach/ parent/ friend, change equipment or anything else that needs doing. Players must be back on court and ready to play at the end of the 2 minutes.
- At the end of the match, players shake each other's hand and thank them for the game (often comments like, good game or well played are exchanged), then both players look up at the marker and referee and thank them. In a tournament setting, both players would then go up and mark/ referee the next match on the court.

THE WARM UP

Before the start of a match, both players are allowed up to four minutes (2 minutes on each side) to warm up both themselves and the ball, on the match court. Good warm up etiquette is for a player to hit the ball no more than 2-3 times to themselves before hitting it across to their opponent.

When a ball has been changed during a match, or if the match has been resumed after some delay, the players warm up the ball to playing condition.

THE SERVICE

- The player to serve first is decided by the spin of a racket.
- Play commences with a service.
- The server continues serving until losing a rally, when the opponent becomes the server.
- The player who wins the preceding game serves first in the next game.
- At the beginning of each game and when the service changes from one player to the other, the server can serve from either service box (handout should be called by the marker when announcing the score). After winning a rally the server then continues serving from the alternate box.
- To serve, a player stands with at least one foot on the floor within the service box.
- For a service to be allowed, it must hit the front wall directly, above the service line and below the out-of-court line, and it must reach the floor within the back quarter of the court opposite to the server's box (unless volleyed first).

ACCEPTABLE RETURN AND RALLIES

- A return is acceptable if the ball, before it has bounced twice on the floor, is returned correctly by the striker onto the front wall above the tin and below the out of court line, without first touching the floor.
- The ball may hit the side walls and/or the back wall before reaching the front wall.
- A return is not acceptable if it is:
 - Not up (ball struck after bouncing more than once on the floor, or not struck correctly, or a double hit).
 - Down (the ball after being struck, hits the floor before the front wall or hits the tin).
 - Out (the ball hits a wall on or above the out of court line).

LETS

A let is an undecided rally. The rally does not count and the server serves again from the same box, e.g. a let may be allowed if the ball in play touches any article lying on the floor, or if the striker refrains from hitting the ball owing to a reasonable fear of injuring the opponent.

A let must be allowed if the receiver is not ready and does not attempt to return the service, or if the ball breaks during play.

INTERFERENCE

When it is their turn to play the ball, a player is entitled to freedom from interference by the opponent.

To avoid interference, the opponent must try to provide the player with unobstructed direct access to the ball, a fair view of the ball, space to complete a swing at the ball and freedom to play the ball directly to any part of the front wall.

A player, finding the opponent interfering with the play, can accept the interference and play on, or stop play. It is preferable to stop play if there is a possibility of colliding with the opponent, or of hitting him or her with the racket or the ball. Upon the player stopping due to interference, they must call "let please" to show their opponent and the referee that they are asking for a let.

READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH



**SQUASH
STARS**

SKILL DEVELOPMENT GAMES



Bench Ball is a target-based game where players take turns attacking and defending a bench or line of cones. Attackers aim to score by hitting the target, while defenders work together to block the ball, developing teamwork, accuracy, and decision-making.

LEARNING FOCUS

Players will learn the importance of communicating, collaborating and competing with each other. They will develop throwing, catching and striking skills. The activity also encourages numeracy skills.

SET UP

- **Equipment:** One racket and ball per player. Place a bench or line of cones opposite a wall.
- **Space:** Use a full court.
- **Safety:** Always make sure there is enough space for the number of people taking part in the activity.



PLAY:

- Nominate one attacker. The attacker plays the ball against wall and aims for it to rebound onto the bench / cones opposite.
- Other players use rackets to defend the bench / cones.
- The attacker can have a set number of shots or players can swap each time they are unsuccessful.
- This game can be played 1v1 or 2v1 or more, and can be scored.

EXAMPLE INSTRUCTIONS

"In this game one player is the attacker, aiming to rebound the ball off the wall so it lands on the bench or across the line of cones. The rest of you are defenders, using your rackets to protect the bench or cones and stop the ball from landing there. Let's see who can outsmart the defenders or make the best saves!"

LEARNING QUESTIONS

- What happens if you hit the ball too hard or too softly?
- Is it easier to hit the ball higher or lower?

ENCOURAGE PLAYERS TO

- Explore different hitting forces to create various heights, be aware of their surroundings, and move efficiently to maintain control of the ball.

POST ACTIVITY REFLECTIONS

- How well did players adjust their hitting technique for different heights?

SKILL LINK

This game encourages and improves hand-eye coordination while developing individual racket skills, court awareness, and accuracy.



MAKE IT *HARDER*

- Add extra defenders.
- Increase the distance between the wall and the bench/cones.
- Limit the attacker to a set number of shots or a time limit to score.
- Mark a smaller target area on the bench/cones for the attacker to aim for.



MAKE IT *EASIER*

- Add extra attackers or increase target size.
- Use a larger or softer ball.
- Reduce the number of defenders.
- Shorten the distance to the target.

READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH



SQUASH STARS

7.2

TARGET TRAINER

Target Trainer is an accuracy-focused rallying game where players aim to hit the ball into different areas of the court. Players must vary their shot placement and avoid repeating the same target, helping develop control, consistency, and tactical awareness.

LEARNING FOCUS

The focus of this activity is on developing consistency and accuracy when hitting the ball into different areas of the court. Players are encouraged to vary their shot placement and avoid repeating the same target area, which promotes tactical awareness and control. This activity supports key squash skills such as shot variation, spatial awareness, and adaptability under pressure.

SET UP

- **Equipment:** One racket per player and one ball per pair. Use throw-down lines or court markings to set up enough playing areas to accommodate groups of players.
- **Space:** Use a full court.
- **Safety:** Always make sure there is enough space for the number of people taking part in the activity.



PLAY:

- Divide each side of the court into four areas.
- Players rally without hitting the same area twice in a row.
- Hit after one bounce.
- Add progressions such as forehand, backhand, or directional calls.
- Partners can call target areas to increase decision-making.

EXAMPLE INSTRUCTIONS

"We're going to focus on accuracy and consistency by hitting the ball into different areas of the court. Each side of the court is divided into four squares using markers. Your challenge is to rally with your partner without hitting the ball into the same square twice in a row. Make sure you hit the ball after the first bounce to keep the rally flowing. As you get more confident, we'll add progressions to make it more challenging. The goal is to improve your shot variation and tactical awareness while maintaining control."

LEARNING QUESTIONS

- What did you do to hit the ball to their forehand?
- What did you do to hit the ball to their backhand?
- What were the key differences between these two shots?

ENCOURAGE PLAYERS TO

- Return to the middle at the back of their playing area after sending the ball.
- Be aware of the position of their opponent.
- Make it difficult for their opponent to return the ball when playing competitively.
- Direct the ball into spaces and move their opponent around the court.

POST ACTIVITY REFLECTIONS

- How accurate and consistent were players across targets?
- Did players vary placement effectively?
- How well was timing controlled after the first bounce?
- What adjustments supported improvement?

SKILL LINK

This activity develops key squash skills by focusing on accuracy, consistency, and tactical awareness. Adapting to progressions builds flexibility and decision-making under pressure. The activity also enhances spatial awareness and movement.



MAKE IT *HARDER*

- Reduce the size of the targets.
- Place targets inside areas.
- Play doubles, taking turns to hit the ball.



MAKE IT *EASIER*

- Increase the size of the targets.
- Allow players to throw and catch.
- Use larger balls.
- Play in pairs.

READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH



SQUASH STARS

7.3

RADICAL RALLIES

Radical Rallies is a cooperative game played in pairs, where the aim is to keep the rally going for as long as possible within a defined area. Players focus on control, accuracy, and communication while building consistency and resilience.

LEARNING FOCUS

Players will develop their ability to control the ball with the racquet, improve hand-eye coordination, and work cooperatively with a partner to maintain a rally. The activity encourages accuracy, consistency, and spatial awareness, as well as resilience when starting over after a mistake.

SET UP

- **Equipment:** One racket and one ball per pair, plus throw-down lines or cones if defining playing areas.
- **Space:** Define an area for each pair to play within using court or marked zones.
- **Safety:** Always make sure there is enough space for the number of people taking part in the activity.



PLAY:

- The aim of this activity is to keep a rally going with a partner within a defined area.
- Define an area for each pair to play within.
- Pairs hit a ball to each other using the racquet.
- The ball must be hit up in the air and can only bounce once before it must be hit again.
- If the ball goes outside of the area on the full, the rally stops and the pair starts counting from zero.
- The winning pair will keep the rally going and accumulate the highest number of hits.

EXAMPLE INSTRUCTIONS

"We're going to work in pairs to see how long we can keep a rally going! Each pair will have their own area to play in. The aim is to hit the ball up in the air to your partner, making sure it only bounces once before it's hit again. If the ball goes out of your area without bouncing, you'll start your count from zero. Let's see which pair can work together to get the highest number of hits!"

LEARNING QUESTIONS

- What did you think about before hitting the ball?
- How did positioning help you prepare?
- How did swing size affect the ball's flight?
- Why is standing side-on important?

ENCOURAGE PLAYERS TO

- Be side-on when striking.
- Hit the ball into spaces.
- Leave balls that will go out on the full.

POST ACTIVITY REFLECTIONS

- How well did pairs cooperate to maintain rallies?
- Did players show consistent control?
- How did players react after mistakes?
- What strategies increased rally length?

SKILL LINK

This game encourages focus, improves the accuracy of players' hand-eye coordination and develops teamwork and problem-solving skills.



MAKE IT *HARDER*

- Reduce the size of the area.
- Strike the ball after one bounce
- Choose whether to let the ball bounce or volley it
- Play 2v2 (doubles)
- Play against each other, attempting to place the ball so that the partner cannot hit it before it bounces twice.



MAKE IT *EASIER*

- Increase the size of the area.
- Roll the ball and trap it.
- Use medium sized balls.
- Allow two bounces before the ball must be hit.

READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH



SQUASH STARS

7.4

TEAM RALLY CHALLENGE

Team Rally Challenge is a cooperative team game where groups work together to hit as many consecutive shots as possible against the wall. Players take turns striking the ball, supporting each other while developing consistency, teamwork, and focus.

LEARNING FOCUS

Players develop consistency and control when striking the ball in a team environment. The activity focuses on maintaining rallies, supporting teammates, and working cooperatively to achieve a shared goal.

SET UP

- **Equipment:** One racket per player and one ball per team, plus throw-down lines if needed.
- **Space:** Use wall space to set up multiple playing areas.
- **Safety:** Always make sure there is enough space for the number of people taking part in the activity.



PLAY:

- Split the players into two teams.
- As a team, players hit the ball against a wall and rally continuously to try to make as many consecutive shots as possible in the allocated time.
- Ensure both teams are evenly matched. Players should line up and take it in turns to play a shot.
- Players cooperate in their teams as they attempt to outscore their opponents.
- Alternate forehand, backhand and volley games.

EXAMPLE INSTRUCTIONS

"Today we're going to play a team rally challenge! You'll be split into teams, and your goal is to work together to hit the ball against the wall as many times in a row as you can within the time limit. Each player will take turns playing a shot, so it's all about teamwork, focus, and keeping the rally going. We'll switch between forehand, backhand, and volley games to test all your skills. Let's see which team can set the highest score and support each other along the way!"

LEARNING QUESTIONS

- What helped your team keep the rally going for a long time?
- How did you support each other after a mistake or missed shot?
- What strategies did your team use to improve your score each round?
- How did you adjust your positioning or timing to help your team succeed?

ENCOURAGE PLAYERS TO

- Track the ball closely.
- Move in promptly for each shot.
- Support teammates after mistakes.
- Reflect and adapt tactics.
- Maintain a positive attitude.

POST ACTIVITY REFLECTIONS

- How well did teams communicate?
- Was technique consistent across shots?
- How did teams respond to errors?
- Which strategies improved scores?

SKILL LINK

This game encourages and improves the accuracy of players' hand-eye coordination and develops teamwork skills.



MAKE IT *HARDER*

- Position players further from the wall.
- Introduce movement requirements, such as having players move to a specific spot before playing their shot.
- Add a rule that a missed shot results in a time penalty or loss of points.



MAKE IT *EASIER*

- Use a different ball to help reduce the speed.
- Use the modified equipment to encourage better hand-eye coordination or even let children throw and catch the ball.

READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH



SQUASH STARS

7.5

GAME OF LIVES

Game of Lives is a competitive rallying game where players take turns keeping a rally alive, with each player starting with a set number of lives. The aim is to last as long as possible by controlling shots, staying focused, and adapting under pressure.

LEARNING FOCUS

Players develop their ability to maintain consistent rallies while performing individually within a group. The activity focuses on control, concentration, and sustaining performance under pressure.

SET UP

- **Equipment:** One racket per player and one ball per group, plus throw-down lines if needed.
- **Space:** Use wall space to set up a court to accommodate a group of players (maximum eight per court).
- **Safety:** Always make sure there is enough space for the number of people taking part in the activity.



PLAY:

- Players line up, each with three lives.
- Players take turns keeping the rally going.
- Missed shots lose a life.
- Eliminated players exit once lives are gone.
- Rotate courts by ability and alternate shot types.

EXAMPLE INSTRUCTIONS

"In this activity we're playing a rally survival game! Everyone will line up with their racket and take turns keeping the rally going. Each of you starts with three lives—if you miss your shot, you lose a life, but if you make it, you join the back of the line and keep playing. The last player left in the game is the winner! As we go, we'll use both forehand and backhand shots. Let's see who can keep all their lives the longest!"

LEARNING QUESTIONS

- What helped you stay in the game longer?
- How did movement affect recovery?
- What adjustments helped after losing a life?
- How did court progression affect motivation?

ENCOURAGE PLAYERS TO

- Stay focused and anticipate rebounds.
- Move quickly and recover efficiently.
- Learn from mistakes.
- Stay positive and supportive.
- Aim for consistency each turn.

POST ACTIVITY REFLECTIONS

- Did players show good movement and resilience?
- How did players respond to pressure?
- Were players supportive of each other?
- What skills improved through play?

SKILL LINK

This game encourages and improves the accuracy of players' hand-eye coordination and develops individual competition skills helping players achieve their personal bests.



MAKE IT *HARDER*

- Alternate forehand and backhand shots every turn, or require specific shot types (e.g., only volleys).
- Require players to move to a specific spot after their shot before rejoining the line.



MAKE IT *EASIER*

- Use a different ball to help reduce the speed.
- Use modified equipment to encourage better hand-eye coordination.
- Coaches can play alternate shots to keep the rally going.

READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH



Caterpillars is a fun team relay game where players pass a ball along a line using their rackets. After passing the ball, players move to the front of the line, working together to keep the ball moving smoothly while developing coordination and teamwork.

LEARNING FOCUS

Players take part in competitive games to improve teamwork skills whilst demonstrating improvement to achieve their personal best. They will develop communication and coordination skills.

SET UP

- **Equipment:** Use throw-down lines to mark start and end points. Players have one racket each and one ball per team.
- **Safety:** Always make sure there is enough space for the number of people taking part in the activity..



PLAY:

- Split players into teams of equal numbers.
- Mark a start point and an end point – this could be done with throw down lines, cones or just the court itself.
- Players have one racket each and one ball per team.
- Each team lines up one behind another behind the start line.
- The ball is passed from player to player by rolling the ball from one racket onto another.
- After passing the ball, the last player runs to the front of the line to keep the 'Caterpillar' moving.
- If the ball is dropped, players quickly pick it up and continue.
- The first team to reach the end point, or do the highest number of passes wins.

EXAMPLE INSTRUCTIONS

"Work together as a team to move the ball smoothly along your line using your rackets. Each time you pass the ball, run to the front to keep your caterpillar moving. Focus on gentle, controlled passes and staying ready for your turn. If the ball drops, stay positive, reset quickly, and keep going."

LEARNING QUESTIONS

- How did teamwork improve success?
- What helped control the ball?
- How did communication affect performance?
- What worked well after errors?

ENCOURAGE PLAYERS TO

- Watch the ball closely.
- Be ready early for each pass.
- Move quickly after passing.
- Pass gently for teammates.
- Reset positively after mistakes.

POST ACTIVITY REFLECTIONS

- Were players focused and prepared?
- Did teams adapt after mistakes?
- How well did teams cooperate?
- Was attitude maintained under pressure?

SKILL LINK

Develops hand-eye coordination, accuracy, teamwork, focus, and movement awareness through repeated passing and continuous repositioning.



MAKE IT *HARDER*

- The last player runs with the ball balanced on their racket to the front of the line and restarts the 'Caterpillar' by passing the ball backwards as before.
- Progress the game having each player complete a challenge before passing the ball. e.g. Bounce the ball 5 times on the racket, or sit down and stand up with the ball balanced on the racket.



MAKE IT *EASIER*

- Use a different size ball or let players use their hands and pass the ball to each other.

READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH



SQUASH STARS

7.7

AROUND THE SUN

Around the Sun is a target-based activity where players strike the ball from different positions around a central target. The activity encourages players to explore how changing angle, height, and pace affects where the ball lands, developing control and creativity.

LEARNING FOCUS

Players develop an understanding of how to control angle, height, and pace to direct the ball towards a target. The activity focuses on accuracy, adaptability, and exploring different shot outcomes from a range of positions.

SET UP

- **Equipment:** One racket and one ball per player, one central target (e.g. bucket or cone)
- **Space:** Use a front or mid-court area with space to move around the target.
- **Safety:** Ensure players are aware of others when moving around the target and retrieving balls.



PLAY:

- A central target ("sun") is placed on the floor.
- Players move to different positions around the target ("around the sun").
- From each position, players hit the ball against the wall, aiming for the ball to rebound and land in the target.
- Players continue moving around the target, attempting shots from different angles and distances.
- Players count how many successful shots they can land in the target within a set time.
- The emphasis is on control and exploration rather than power.



EXAMPLE INSTRUCTIONS

"In this activity, you'll move around the target and try to hit the ball so it lands inside it. Each position gives you a different angle, so think about how you adjust your shot to be successful. Focus on control and experiment with what works best."

LEARNING QUESTIONS

- What did you change to hit the target from different angles?
- How did your position affect the difficulty of the shot?
- What helped you control where the ball landed?

ENCOURAGE PLAYERS TO

- Focus on accuracy rather than power.
- Adjust angle, height, and pace depending on position.
- Move quickly and get balanced before striking.
- Watch how the ball reacts off the wall.
- Experiment with different solutions to hit the target.

POST ACTIVITY REFLECTIONS

- Were players able to adjust technique from different positions?
- Did players improve accuracy with repetition?
- How well did players control height and angle?
- Did players experiment with different ways to reach the target?

SKILL LINK

This activity develops control of angle, height, and shot placement. These skills support accurate targeting, adaptability, and creative shot selection during rallies.



MAKE IT *HARDER*

- Reduce the size of the target.
- Increase the distance from the target.
- Require consecutive successful shots.
- Limit shot types (e.g. backhand only).



MAKE IT *EASIER*

- Increase the size of the target.
- Move closer to the target.
- Allow throw-and-catch before using rackets.
- Allow players to repeat the same position before moving.

READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH



SQUASH STARS

7.8

WALL TAPS

Wall Taps is a simple control game, where players hit the ball against the wall using gentle strokes. The aim is to keep the ball going while controlling height, pace, and accuracy using forehand, backhand, and volley shots.

LEARNING FOCUS

Players develop basic ball control, racket familiarity, and hand-eye coordination. The activity focuses on controlling height and pace of the ball against the wall while using forehand, backhand, and volley techniques.

SET UP

- **Equipment:** One racket per player and one ball per player.
- **Space:** Two players per wall.
- **Safety:** Ensure enough space between players and remind players to be aware of others and stray balls.



PLAY:

- Players hit the ball against the side wall allowing one bounce.
- Start with forehand only, then backhand only, then alternate forehand / backhand.
- Progress by repeating the activity without letting the ball drop (volleys only).
- Further progress by alternating one bounce and one volley using both forehand and backhand strokes.

EXAMPLE INSTRUCTIONS

"We're going to practice controlling the ball against the wall. Try to keep a solo rally going by using gentle strokes.. Start with forehands, then backhands, then both. As you get better, we'll try volleys and mixes of volleys and bounces. Focus on control rather than power."

LEARNING QUESTIONS

- Was it easier to control the ball when you kept it at chest height on the wall?
- How did your racket face affect where the ball went?
- What helped you stay consistent during volleys?

ENCOURAGE PLAYERS TO

- Watch the ball carefully from wall to racket.
- Use controlled swings rather than power.
- Adjust racket face and wall height.
- Stay balanced and recover quickly.
- Adapt technique as progressions change.

POST ACTIVITY REFLECTIONS

- Did players maintain control and consistency?
- Were players able to alternate between forehand and backhand smoothly?
- How well did players adapt when progressing from bounce to volley?
- Did players stay balanced and focused throughout the activity?

SKILL LINK

Develops hand-eye coordination, basic ball control, racket control, and preparation for rallying skills in squash.



MAKE IT *HARDER*

- Use volleys only. Increase rally target.
- Alternate forehand/backhand every shot.
- Stand closer to the wall.
- Reduce allowed wall height target.



MAKE IT *EASIER*

- Allow extra bounce.
- Use larger or softer ball.
- Reduce distance to the wall.
- Work cooperatively without scoring.

READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH



SQUASH STARS

7.9

LINED UP

Lined Up is an accuracy challenge where players hit the ball onto coloured targets placed at different distances from the wall. Players aim to complete sequences and beat personal bests while developing control, focus, and consistent striking.

LEARNING FOCUS

Players will develop ball control, accuracy, and awareness of targeting specific areas on the wall. The activity encourages players to compare their performance with previous attempts and strive to achieve personal bests through controlled repetition and precision.

SET UP

- **Equipment:** One racket, one ball, three coloured spot markers per player.
- **Space:** Wall space with players spread safely. Place three markers in a straight line at staggered distances.
- **Safety:** Ensure sufficient space between players and stop play for stray balls.



PLAY:

- Each player works independently with their own set of coloured spot markers. Players hit the ball against the wall, aiming to make the ball land on the targets in orders or patterns set by the coach.

Example challenges include:

- Forehand: One successful hit onto green, yellow, then red
- Backhand: Five successful hits onto green, five onto yellow, five onto red
- Forehand: Alternate shots from red to green
- Backhand: Alternate shots from yellow to red
- Players count successful hits and reset the sequence if they miss. The focus is on accuracy, control, and beating personal bests.



EXAMPLE INSTRUCTIONS

"In this activity we're focusing on accuracy and control. You each have three coloured targets set at different distances from the wall. Your challenge is to hit the ball so it lands on the targets in the order given. Keep track of your successful hits and try to beat your own personal best each round. Remember, control is more important than power."

LEARNING QUESTIONS

- What did you change to improve your accuracy?
- How did adjusting height or pace affect your success?
- Which target was most challenging and why?
- How did your body position affect your shots?

ENCOURAGE PLAYERS TO

- Focus on accuracy over power.
- Use correct side on positioning.
- Adjust height, angle, or pace when needed.
- Stay balanced with soft knees.
- Reset quickly after a miss.

POST ACTIVITY REFLECTIONS

- Did players show improved control over repeated attempts?
- Were players able to adapt technique after errors?
- Did players remain focused and motivated when aiming for personal bests?

SKILL LINK

This activity develops ball control, accuracy, and targeting awareness. It reinforces correct body position, racket control, and consistency required for effective rallying and tactical shot placement in squash.



MAKE IT *HARDER*

- Reduce the size of the targets.
- Increase target distance from the wall.
- Require sequences to be completed without any misses.
- Alternate forehand and backhand every shot.
- Introduce a time challenge.



MAKE IT *EASIER*

- Increase target size.
- Move targets closer to the wall.
- Reduce number of required successful hits.
- Allow extra bounces or throw-and-catch before using rackets.

READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH



SQUASH STARS

7.10

1,2,3,4

1,2,3,4 is a target-based wall game where players aim to hit numbered boxes in set patterns. The activity helps players practise accuracy, ball control, and focus while adapting technique to hit different targets successfully.

LEARNING FOCUS

Players develop ball control, accuracy, and awareness of targeting specific areas on the wall. The activity encourages players to repeat actions with control, adapt technique, and aim for personal bests when completing accuracy-based challenges.

SET UP

- **Equipment:** One racket and one ball per player. Tape or markers for four wall targets.
- **Space:** Use wall space with players spread safely along the wall. Tape four large boxes on the wall in a window configuration and label them 1, 2, 3, and 4.
- **Safety:** Ensure adequate distance between players. Stop play if balls roll into another player's area.



PLAY:

- Players work individually using one wall.
- Hit the ball into numbered wall targets set by the coach.
- Use a mix of forehand, backhand, volley, and bounce shots.
- Sequence challenges may include hitting boxes in order.
- Count successful hits and reset after a miss, aiming to beat personal bests.

EXAMPLE INSTRUCTIONS

"In this activity, you're working on accuracy and ball control by aiming for specific targets on the wall. Each box is numbered, and your challenge is to hit the ball into the correct box using different shots. Keep track of how many successful hits you make and try to improve your personal best each round. Focus on good technique, balance, and control."

LEARNING QUESTIONS

- How did your foot position help you stay balanced?
- What helped you hit the correct box more consistently?
- How did volleying compare to hitting after the bounce?
- What adjustments helped you improve your accuracy?

ENCOURAGE PLAYERS TO

- Focus on accuracy rather than power when striking the ball.
- Adjust height, angle, or pace to hit the correct target box.
- Use good side-on positioning and balance before striking.
- Track the ball carefully from wall to racket.

POST ACTIVITY REFLECTIONS

- Did players demonstrate good balance and control when striking the ball?
- Were players able to adapt technique to hit different targets?
- Did accuracy improve over repeated attempts?
- Were players focused on beating their own scores?

SKILL LINK

This activity develops ball control, accuracy, and targeting awareness. It reinforces correct body positioning, balance, racket preparation, and controlled swing mechanics that support effective rallying and tactical shot placement in squash.



MAKE IT *HARDER*

- Reduce the size of the boxes.
- Add specific shot rules (e.g. volleys only or backhand only).
- Require box sequences to be completed without any misses.
- Introduce a time challenge.
- Increase distance from the wall.



MAKE IT *EASIER*

- Increase the size of the boxes.
- Allow extra bounces before returning the ball.
- Use larger or softer balls.
- Allow throw-and-catch before progressing to rackets.

READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH



SQUASH STARS

7.11

SERVICE PREPARATION

Service Preparation is a skill activity focused on developing a consistent ball toss and serve action. Players practice controlled movements to improve timing, balance, and accuracy, helping build confidence and reliability when serving in games

LEARNING FOCUS

Players develop coordination of the ball toss and timing required for an effective squash serve. The activity focuses on control of the toss, strike height, and repeatable preparation to support consistent serving technique.

SET UP

- **Equipment:** One racket and one ball per player.
- **Space:** Front wall area with clear service line markings, and players spread safely along the wall.
- **Safety:** Ensure sufficient space between players, and emphasise controlled swings and awareness of others.



PLAY:

- Each player has a racket and ball and completes the following activities approximately ten times each.
- Toss the ball up with the non-racket hand and catch it with the racket hand.
- Toss the ball up with the non-racket hand and catch it on the racket strings.
- Stand approximately two metres from the front wall and hit the ball above the service line, then catch it on the rebound.
- Stand approximately two metres from the front wall and serve the ball to a partner, who catches the serve.
- The emphasis throughout is on consistency, control, and timing rather than power.



SERVICE PREPARATION

EXAMPLE INSTRUCTIONS

"A strong squash serve starts with a good ball toss and good timing. In this activity, focus on keeping your toss consistent and striking the ball at the same height each time so your serve becomes reliable and repeatable."

LEARNING QUESTIONS

- How high should you toss the ball?
- Where is the best position to strike the ball?
- How does a consistent toss help your serve accuracy?

ENCOURAGE PLAYERS TO

- Keep the ball toss smooth and consistent.
- Aim to strike the ball just below shoulder height.
- Keep a relaxed, stable stance throughout the action.
- Allow the ball to fall into the strike zone naturally.

POST ACTIVITY REFLECTIONS

- Did players demonstrate a consistent and controlled ball toss?
- Were players striking the ball at an appropriate and repeatable height?
- Did timing improve as repetitions increased?

SKILL LINK

This activity develops the key components of an effective squash serve, including ball toss control, timing, and strike height. These skills support consistent serves that help players start rallies confidently and under control.



MAKE IT *HARDER*

- Serve to specific target areas in the service box.
- Increase distance from the front wall.
- Introduce accuracy-based challenges using cones or targets.



MAKE IT *EASIER*

- Begin with toss-and-catch only.
- Allow players to throw the ball to the wall before using the racket.
- Reduce distance to the wall.

READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH



Service Games is a paired activity where players practice serving to different target areas on the front wall. The focus is on accuracy and decision-making, helping players understand how serve placement affects the rally.

LEARNING FOCUS

Players develop an understanding of effective serving and how to target specific areas of the front wall. The activity focuses on serve accuracy, target selection, and consistency to help players create effective serves.

SET UP

- **Equipment:** One racket and one ball per pair.
- **Space:** Full court with one player serving from the service box and one player positioned on the short line as the receiver.
- **Safety:** Ensure players are aware of each other when serving and retrieving balls, and emphasise controlled serving actions.



PLAY:

- Players work in pairs. Player 1 serves to the opposite side of the court where Player 2 is standing on the short line.
- Player 2 attempts to catch the ball. Scoring is awarded as follows:
- Player 2 catches the ball: no points.
- Player 2 stops the ball but does not catch it: one point.
- The ball lands behind the service box and Player 2 catches it: one point.
- The ball lands behind the service box and Player 2 does not catch it: two points.
- The ball hits the side wall: one bonus point.
- Each player completes ten serves. When both players have had a turn, repeat the activity from the opposite service box.
- With larger groups you can add more receivers attempting to catch the serves.

EXAMPLE INSTRUCTIONS

"In this activity we will practice serving accurately and aiming for different target areas on the front wall. Take your time before each serve, vary the height and target you use, and try to make your serve difficult for your partner to control."

POST ACTIVITY REFLECTIONS

- Did players take their time before serving?
- Were players able to vary height and target areas effectively?
- Did serve accuracy improve over repeated attempts?

LEARNING QUESTIONS

- Where on the front wall should you be aiming?
- How does changing the height affect where the ball lands?
- Which target areas made it hardest for your partner to catch the serve?

SKILL LINK

This activity develops serve accuracy and tactical awareness by encouraging players to vary height and target areas. These skills support effective serving and help players start rallies with control.

ENCOURAGE PLAYERS TO

- Set up calmly before serving.
- Vary the height of contact on the front wall.
- Aim for different areas of the front wall to change the serve outcome.



MAKE IT *HARDER*

- Ask Player 2 to try to return the serve instead of catching it.
- Reduce the target areas on the front wall.



MAKE IT *EASIER*

- Allow Player 2 to catch the ball on the racket.
- Reduce the serving distance.

READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH



SQUASH STARS

7.13

LOB GAME

Lob Game is a front-court rallying activity where players aim to use height on the front wall to gain time in a rally. Players focus on control, balance, and racket face awareness while learning how height can influence rallies.

LEARNING FOCUS

Players develop ball control and an understanding of how using height on the front wall creates more time during a rally.

SET UP

- **Equipment:** One racket and one ball per pair.
- **Space:** Play is restricted to the front half of the court.
- **Safety:** Ensure players are aware of boundaries and other players waiting in rotation.



PLAY:

- Two players play within the front half of the court only.
- Players take alternate shots, aiming to hit the ball as high as possible on the front wall while keeping the ball within the front half of the court.
- If the ball hits above the out line on the front wall, play continues to encourage the use of height.
- A player scores a point if they hit the out line on the front wall or if their opponent's shot lands in the back half of the court.
- Play to five points.

EXAMPLE INSTRUCTIONS

"This activity helps you learn how using height can give you more time in squash. Focus on getting low, opening the racket face, and sending the ball high on the front wall while keeping it in the front half of the court."

POST ACTIVITY REFLECTIONS

- Were players consistently using height on the front wall?
- Did players get into low, balanced positions before striking?
- Did awareness of the court boundaries improve during play?

LEARNING QUESTIONS

- What can you change in your body position to create more height?
- How does using height affect how much time you have between shots?

SKILL LINK

Develops ball control, racket face awareness, and tactical use of height to create time in rallies.

ENCOURAGE PLAYERS TO

- Bend knees to get low to the ball.
- Get under the bounce before striking.
- Use an open racket face.
- Follow through towards the target.
- Stay balanced and controlled.



MAKE IT *HARDER*

- Reduce the front-court playing space further.
- Require players to hit above a designated height target.
- Increase point target.



MAKE IT *EASIER*

- Allow one extra bounce.
- Increase the size of the front-court area.
- Use softer or larger balls.

READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH



SQUASH STARS

7.14

CORNER TO CORNER

Corner to Corner is an individual accuracy game where players use the side wall and front wall together to control ball direction. The activity helps players understand angles, improve ball control, and develop precision in shot placement.

LEARNING FOCUS

Players develop an understanding of angles and ball control by learning how to use the side wall and front wall together to control direction, pace, and placement of the ball.

SET UP

- **Equipment:** One racket and one ball per player.
- **Space:** Use a front corner of the court. Make two targets on the front and side wall approximately one metre either side of the corner.
- **Safety:** Ensure players are aware of others and retrieve balls safely.



PLAY:

- Players work individually.
- Players hit the ball from the side wall to the front wall, aiming to hit the ball into the targets.
- Once consistent, players attempt to return their own shot by hitting the front wall to the side wall so it lands on a spot marker on the floor.
- Focus is on control and accuracy rather than power.

EXAMPLE INSTRUCTIONS

"This activity helps you understand how angles work in squash. By using the side wall and front wall together, you can control where the ball goes. Focus on footwork, balance, and choosing the right height and pace to hit the ball on the targets."

POST ACTIVITY REFLECTIONS

- Were players able to hit the ball accurately into the targets?
- Did players demonstrate good balance and foot movement?
- Could players use angles to control the ball effectively?

LEARNING QUESTIONS

- Where is the best place on the side wall to hit the ball?
- What is the best height to hit the ball?

SKILL LINK

Develops ball control, spatial awareness, and understanding of angles, supporting effective shot placement and rally construction in squash.

ENCOURAGE PLAYERS TO

- Move their feet to get into position.
- Stay low with a balanced body position.
- Use an open racket face when needed.
- Adjust height and pace to control the ball.
- Observe how the ball comes off the walls.



MAKE IT *HARDER*

- Add spot markers for floor targets.
- Reduce spot size.
- Add a partner and alternate shots.



MAKE IT *EASIER*

- Move targets closer together.
- Allow throw-and-catch before racket use.
- Use larger or softer balls.

READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH



SQUASH STARS

7.15

VOLLEY HITTING

Volley Hitting is a control-focused activity where players practice volleying against the wall from different distances. Players aim to maintain accuracy and consistency while adjusting height, pace, and balance to keep the ball in play.

LEARNING FOCUS

Players develop ball control and an understanding of targeting by practicing controlled volleying against the wall, using different distances and maintaining accuracy and consistency.

SET UP

- **Equipment:** One racket and one ball per player. Three coloured spot markers
- **Space:** Wall space with players spread safely along the wall. Place three spot markers in a straight line at staggered distances from the wall (e.g. 1m, 1.5m, 2m).
- **Safety:** Ensure sufficient space between players and awareness of stray balls.



PLAY:

- Players work individually.
- Standing on the first spot marker, players hit the ball on the volley against the wall, aiming to complete five consecutive volleys.
- Players then repeat the task standing on the second marker and then the third marker.
- Once consistent, players move between the spot markers while volleying, travelling up and down the line without letting the ball drop.
- Repeat all progressions using backhand volleys.
- The focus is on control, balance, and accuracy rather than power.

EXAMPLE INSTRUCTIONS

"This activity focuses on controlling the ball on the volley and improving your accuracy against the wall. By changing your distance from the wall and adjusting height and pace, you'll learn how to keep the ball in the air with control. Focus on staying balanced, using good footwork, and keeping your swings smooth."

LEARNING QUESTIONS

- What aspects can you change to help you control the ball?
- How does height on the wall affect your accuracy?
- What position should your shoulders be in relation to the wall when volleying?

ENCOURAGE PLAYERS TO

- Change the height they hit on the wall to improve accuracy.
- Bend their knees and stay in a low, balanced position.
- Turn side on to the wall with shoulders aligned.
- Get underneath the ball before striking.
- Control swing angle and pace rather than hitting hard.

POST ACTIVITY REFLECTIONS

- Were players able to maintain consecutive volleys with control?
- Did players adjust height and pace to improve accuracy?
- Were players balanced and side on to the wall while volleying?

SKILL LINK

This activity develops volley control, racket preparation, balance, and targeting awareness. These skills support faster play, improved reactions, and effective attacking opportunities in squash.



MAKE IT *HARDER*

- Increase the distance of the furthest spot marker.
- Reduce the allowed target area on the wall.
- Require alternating forehand and backhand volleys.
- Set higher consecutive volley targets.



MAKE IT *EASIER*

- Move spot markers closer to the wall.
- Allow one bounce before returning the ball.
- Use softer or larger balls to slow the pace.

READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH



Serving is an accuracy-based activity where players practise delivering effective serves into key target areas. The activity helps players understand how serve placement, height, and direction can make the return more difficult for an opponent.

LEARNING FOCUS

Players develop an understanding of what makes an effective serve and how to target specific areas of the court. The activity focuses on serve accuracy, height, placement, and consistency to improve serve effectiveness and control.

SET UP

- **Equipment:** One racket and one ball per player.
- **Space:** Full court with players rotating through the service boxes.
- **Safety:** Ensure players are aware of others when serving and retrieving balls.



PLAY:

- Players take turns serving from the service box, aiming to score points for successful serves.
- Points are awarded based on serve outcomes:
 - 1 point for a serve that lands in (above the service line and into the correct service box)
 - 1 point if the ball hits the side wall
 - 1 point if the ball lands behind the service box
 - 1 point if the ball bounces before hitting the back wall
- Players rotate after a set number of serves or attempts.
- The aim is to accumulate the highest score through consistent and accurate serving.

EXAMPLE INSTRUCTIONS

"In this activity, we're focusing on improving our serves. You'll score points based on how effective your serve is—aiming for height, depth, and accuracy. Think about how to make your serve difficult for your opponent to return, and try to build a consistent serving action."

LEARNING QUESTIONS

- What makes a serve harder to return?
- How can you adjust your serve to reach better areas?

ENCOURAGE PLAYERS TO

- Set up in a balanced starting position.
- Use a consistent ball toss.
- Aim for height on the front wall.
- Target deep areas of the court.
- Focus on control rather than power.

POST ACTIVITY REFLECTIONS

- Were players able to serve consistently into the correct areas?
- Did players vary height and placement effectively?
- How well did players control their serve under repetition?
- What adjustments led to improved accuracy?

SKILL LINK

This activity develops serve accuracy, consistency, and tactical awareness. These skills support strong rally starts and help players gain an advantage from the first shot.



MAKE IT *HARDER*

- Reduce the target areas for serves.
- Add scoring penalties for inaccurate serves.
- Increase pressure through timed challenges or competition.



MAKE IT *EASIER*

- Allow players to serve from a reduced distance.
- Use larger or softer balls.
- Focus on fewer scoring criteria.
- Allow players to practice toss and contact before scoring.

READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH



SQUASH STARS

7.17

SERVE & RETURN

Serve & Return is a paired activity that focuses on both delivering effective serves and returning them with control. Players explore how serve placement influences the return, developing tactical awareness, positioning, and shot selection.

LEARNING FOCUS

Players develop an understanding of how to deliver effective serves and return them with control and accuracy. The activity focuses on body position, shot selection, and targeting key areas of the court to gain an advantage in the rally.

SET UP

- **Equipment:** One racket and one ball per group.
- **Space:** Full court with one server and one returner at a time.
- **Safety:** Ensure players are aware of others when serving and retrieving balls, and allow safe rotation between roles.



PLAY:

- Players work in small groups with one server and one returner.
- The server serves from the service box, aiming to score points for effective serve placement (e.g. in, hitting side wall, landing deep).
- The returner attempts to return the serve and score points for quality returns (e.g. straight, above service line, landing deep).
- After a set number of serves, players rotate roles so all players practice serving and returning.
- The aim is to develop consistency and accuracy in both serving and returning under simple scoring conditions.

EXAMPLE INSTRUCTIONS

"In this activity, you'll practice both serving and returning. Think about how to make your serve difficult to return, and how to respond with a controlled and accurate return. Focus on your body position, where you hit the ball, and where you want it to go."

LEARNING QUESTIONS

- What made a serve harder to return?
- How can we hit the ball into those areas?
- Where do we want our returns to go and why?
- How does body position affect your return?

ENCOURAGE PLAYERS TO

- Set up in a balanced position before serving and returning.
- Watch the ball closely and prepare early.
- Aim to return serves straight and with control.
- Target deep areas of the court.
- Stay composed and reset quickly between attempts.

POST ACTIVITY REFLECTIONS

- Were players able to serve accurately and consistently?
- Did players demonstrate control and direction on returns?
- How effectively did players target key areas of the court?
- Did decision-making improve between attempts?

SKILL LINK

This activity develops serve and return effectiveness, shot control, and tactical awareness. These skills support stronger rally starts and improved positioning in match situations.



MAKE IT *HARDER*

- Reduce target areas for both serving and returning.
- Introduce specific return requirements (e.g. straight only).
- Add scoring pressure or competitive formats.
- Increase pace between serves to reduce preparation time.



MAKE IT *EASIER*

- Allow returners to catch before progressing to hitting.
- Use larger or softer balls.
- Reduce serving distance.
- Focus on one element at a time (serve only or return only).

READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH



Target Rotations is an accuracy-based activity where players rotate through different targets and challenges. Players explore how to control height, pace, and direction to hit a variety of targets, developing consistency and adaptability.

LEARNING FOCUS

Players develop an understanding of how to control the ball using different heights, angles, and pace. The activity focuses on accuracy, consistency, and adapting technique to successfully hit a range of targets.

SET UP

- **Equipment:** One racket and one ball per player, plus a variety of targets (e.g. cones, spots, zones on the wall and floor).
- **Space:** Use full court and wall space, setting up multiple target stations.
- **Safety:** Ensure sufficient space between players and stop play if balls enter another area.



PLAY:

- Set up multiple targets around the court and/or on the walls.
- Players work individually or in small groups at each station.
- Players attempt to hit the ball to the target using controlled shots.
- Set specific challenges (e.g. hit a target 3 times, alternate targets, vary shot type).
- After a set time, players rotate to a new target station.
- Continue rotations so all players experience a range of targets and challenges.

EXAMPLE INSTRUCTIONS

"In this activity, you'll rotate around different targets and try to hit them using control and accuracy. Each station will challenge you in a different way, so think about how you adjust your height, pace, and direction to be successful."

LEARNING QUESTIONS

- What did you change to hit the target more accurately?
- How did height or pace affect your success?
- Which targets were most challenging and why?

ENCOURAGE PLAYERS TO

- Focus on accuracy rather than power.
- Adjust height, angle, and pace to hit targets.
- Use balanced body position when striking.
- Watch the ball closely from bounce to contact.
- Reset quickly and try again after each attempt.

POST ACTIVITY REFLECTIONS

- Were players able to adapt technique to different targets?
- Did accuracy improve with repetition?
- How well did players control height and pace?
- Were players focused and consistent across stations?

SKILL LINK

This activity develops ball control, accuracy, and adaptability. These skills support effective shot selection, targeting, and consistency during rallies.



MAKE IT *HARDER*

- Reduce the size of targets.
- Increase distance from targets.
- Add specific shot requirements (e.g. backhand only, volleys).
- Set time or scoring challenges.



MAKE IT *EASIER*

- Increase the size of targets.
- Move targets closer.
- Allow extra bounces or throw-and-catch before using rackets.
- Let players repeat the same target before rotating.

READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH



SQUASH STARS

7.19

BOASTING ABOUT

Boasting About is a skill activity where players practice hitting boasts from different areas of the court. Players explore how angle, height, and body position influence the ball's path, helping them develop control and accuracy when using the side wall.

LEARNING FOCUS

Players develop an understanding of how to adjust racket angle, body position, and contact point to play effective boasts. The activity focuses on controlling direction and height to guide the ball from the side wall into a target area.

SET UP

- **Equipment:** One racket and one ball per player, plus floor targets (e.g. spots or cones).
- **Space:** Use one front corner per player or pair.
- **Safety:** Ensure sufficient space between players and safe retrieval of balls, especially near walls.



PLAY:

- The coach feeds the ball (by hand or racket) into the front court area.
- Players attempt to hit a boast, striking the ball onto the side wall and then the front wall so it travels into or towards a target on the floor.
- Players focus on controlling the angle and height to guide the ball accurately to the target.
- After a set number of repetitions, players rotate or continue with new feeds.
- The emphasis is on control and understanding of angles rather than power.

EXAMPLE INSTRUCTIONS

"In this activity, we're focusing on the boast. You'll try to hit the ball onto the side wall so it travels to a target on the floor. Think about your body position, where you aim on the side wall, and how you control the angle to guide the ball."

LEARNING QUESTIONS

- Was the target on the side wall too close, too far away, or just right?
- How did your body position affect the direction of the ball?
- What changes helped you guide the ball to the target more accurately?

ENCOURAGE PLAYERS TO

- Find a consistent target area on the side wall.
- Use a balanced body position when setting up.
- Step into the ball with the front foot.
- Rotate the body slightly towards the side wall.
- Follow through towards the intended target.

POST ACTIVITY REFLECTIONS

- Were players able to control the angle of the boast?
- Did players adjust body position and racket path effectively?
- How accurate were players at reaching the floor targets?
- Did consistency improve with repetition?

SKILL LINK

This activity develops control of angles, racket path, and shot placement when using the side wall. These skills support effective use of boasts to change direction and create opportunities during rallies.



MAKE IT *HARDER*

- Reduce the size of the floor target.
- Move the target further away.
- Require consecutive successful shots.
- Feed balls with more pace or variation.



MAKE IT *EASIER*

- Increase the size of the target area.
- Allow players to practice without a feed first.
- Slow down or simplify the feed.
- Allow players to aim for a larger zone instead of a specific target.

READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH



SQUASH STARS

7.20

CROSS COURT CHALLENGE

Cross Court Challenge is a rally-based activity where players practice hitting straight and crosscourt shots in a controlled way. The activity helps players understand angles, positioning, and how to move the ball around the court.

LEARNING FOCUS

Players develop an understanding of how to control straight and crosscourt shots, and how shot selection influences positioning and pressure on an opponent. The activity focuses on accuracy, angle control, and adapting movement to different rally situations.

SET UP

- **Equipment:** One racket and one ball per pair
- **Space:** Use a full or modified court with clearly defined playing areas
- **Safety:** Ensure sufficient space between groups and awareness when balls enter another area.



PLAY:

- Players work in pairs within a defined playing area.
- Players play one shot to themselves (straight) and then one shot across to their partner into the designated area.
- The activity can be played cooperatively (to maintain rallies) or competitively.
- Vary the playing area to focus on different parts of the court (e.g. front court, mid court, back court, or half court left vs right).
- Progress by removing the self-hit so players hit directly to each other, creating a more realistic rally.

EXAMPLE INSTRUCTIONS

"In this activity, you'll practice hitting straight and crosscourt shots to control where the ball goes. Start by playing a shot to yourself, then send it across to your partner. Focus on accuracy, movement, and how you use different angles to move the ball around the court."

LEARNING QUESTIONS

- What helped you control the direction of your shots?
- How did straight and crosscourt shots feel different?
- How did your positioning affect your next shot?

ENCOURAGE PLAYERS TO

- Stay balanced and side-on when striking.
- Control shot direction rather than hitting with power.
- Move early to prepare for the next shot.
- Use different angles to place the ball into space.
- Recover to a ready position after each shot.

POST ACTIVITY REFLECTIONS

- Were players able to control straight and crosscourt shots effectively?
- Did players adjust positioning to prepare for each shot?
- How well did players maintain rallies with control?
- Did players begin to use angles to create space?

SKILL LINK

This activity develops shot control, understanding of angles, and movement between shots. These skills support rally construction, positioning, and tactical awareness during match play.



MAKE IT *HARDER*

- Reduce target areas or playing zones.
- Remove the self-hit earlier to increase difficulty.
- Add specific shot requirements (e.g. alternate forehand/backhand).
- Increase rally targets or introduce scoring.



MAKE IT *EASIER*

- Allow the self-hit to continue for longer.
- Increase the size of the playing area.
- Allow extra bounce before returning.
- Use larger or softer balls to improve control.

READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH



SQUASH STARS

7.21

FEEDER & HITTER

Feeder & Hitter is a cooperative skill game played in groups of three. One player feeds the ball, one hits it, and one keeps score. The goal is to work together to control the ball, develop striking accuracy, and improve communication and teamwork.

LEARNING FOCUS

Players will learn the importance of communicating, collaborating and competing with each other in sport. They will develop throwing, catching and striking skills.

SET UP

- **Equipment:** Provide rackets and foam balls for all players.
- **Space:** A large area with a flat wall available.
- **Safety:** Always make sure there is enough space for the amount of people taking part in the warm up.



PLAY:

- Players work in 3's and designate one feeder, one hitter and one counter.
- The feeder throws the ball against the wall, then moves out of the way while the hitter hits the ball against the same wall. Ideally the hitter should be hitting the ball so that the feeder can catch it.
- The counter keeps track of how many times this is completed in an allotted time period.
- Swap round twice so each player does each of the 3 roles.

EXAMPLE INSTRUCTIONS

"In this activity we'll practise working with a partner. In groups of three, one of you will feed the ball to the front wall, and the other will try to hit it back to a target. The third person will keep count. This will help us get better at controlling the ball and working together."

LEARNING QUESTIONS

- What makes a good feeder?
- How did you make sure your partner could hit the ball?
- What did you do to control your shot?
- How did you help each other improve?

POST ACTIVITY REFLECTIONS

- Did players communicate effectively with their partners?
- Were feeds and hits controlled and accurate?
- How well did players adapt to switching roles?

SKILL LINK

This activity encourages perception and striking skills and for players to use an open racket face close to the wall. It will help players develop accuracy and weight of shot



MAKE IT *HARDER*

- Get the hitter to hit it back towards the feeder and the feeder to catch it.
- Allow the feeder to use a racket as well and suggest areas to play the ball into.
- The player or team that completes the highest number of successful shots wins.
- Increase the distance between feeder and hitter.



MAKE IT *EASIER*

- Allow players to use modified equipment or use their hands as rackets.
- Allow the ball to bounce before hitting.
- Shorten the distance between feeder and hitter.

READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH



SQUASH STARS

7.22

KEEP IT BOILING

Keep It Boiling is a cooperative squash game that emphasises accuracy, effective returns, and focus during rallies. Players work together to keep the rally going, just like keeping a pot of water boiling. This game challenges players to maintain control while working with their partner, enhancing their rallying skills and ability to anticipate and adapt.

LEARNING FOCUS

The focus is on reading the flight of the ball and moving into position to strike the ball while developing accuracy, reaction time, and consistency during rallies. This is one of the most important skills in squash.

SET UP

- **Equipment:** Squash and/or foam balls, rackets, and throw-down markers.
- **Space:** Divide a court into two halves using throw-down lines.
- **Safety:** Ensure players have enough space to avoid collisions. Monitor for safe and controlled ball striking and ensure players are not getting too close to strikers.



PLAY:

- Use a court or designated play area.
- One player starts with the ball.
- To begin the rally, one player strikes the ball against the wall or barrier so that it rebounds into their partner's half of the court.
- The opponent must then return the ball either on the full or after one bounce.
- The rally continues until one player fails to return the ball inside the boundaries or before the second bounce.

EXAMPLE INSTRUCTIONS

"In this activity, you'll practice hitting straight and crosscourt shots to control where the ball goes. Start by playing a shot to yourself, then send it across to your partner. Focus on accuracy, movement, and how you use different angles to move the ball around the court."

LEARNING QUESTIONS

- What helped you control the direction of your shots?
- How did straight and crosscourt shots feel different?
- How did your positioning affect your next shot?

ENCOURAGE PLAYERS TO

- Stay balanced and side-on when striking.
- Control shot direction rather than hitting with power.
- Move early to prepare for the next shot.
- Use different angles to place the ball into space.
- Recover to a ready position after each shot.

POST ACTIVITY REFLECTIONS

- Were players able to control straight and crosscourt shots effectively?
- Did players adjust positioning to prepare for each shot?
- How well did players maintain rallies with control?
- Did players begin to use angles to create space?

SKILL LINK

This activity develops shot control, understanding of angles, and movement between shots. These skills support rally construction, positioning, and tactical awareness during match play.



MAKE IT *HARDER*

- Reduce target areas or playing zones.
- Remove the self-hit earlier to increase difficulty.
- Add specific shot requirements (e.g. alternate forehand/backhand).
- Increase rally targets or introduce scoring.



MAKE IT *EASIER*

- Allow the self-hit to continue for longer.
- Increase the size of the playing area.
- Allow extra bounce before returning.
- Use larger or softer balls to improve control.

READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH



**SQUASH
STARS**

GAMES 



SQUASH STARS

8.1

PAIRS ATTACK

Pairs Attack is a game where players work in groups to design and play their own game. Players agree on rules, equipment, and scoring, promoting teamwork, communication, and decision-making while practicing control, positioning, and shot selection.

LEARNING FOCUS

This activity focuses on cooperative learning in small groups. Players collaborate to select equipment, agree on rules, and establish scoring systems, supporting communication, decision-making, and teamwork.

SET UP

- **Equipment:** Range of rackets and balls, plus throw-down lines or court markings
- **Space:** Use enough playing areas to accommodate groups
- **Safety:** Always make sure there is enough space for the number of people taking part in the activity



PLAY:

- The aim of this activity is to work in small groups to improve game play.
- The game is played in groups of six (two players, two coaches and two umpires) on a modified court.
- Players select an appropriate racket and ball to play with.
- Groups should agree upon rules for starting the game, restarting the game after a point is won, finishing the game and determine a system for scoring.

EXAMPLE COACH INSTRUCTIONS

"You'll work in groups of six with players, coaches, and umpires on a modified court. Choose the equipment you think works best, then agree on the rules and how you'll score. The aim is to work together, make good decisions, and improve your play while keeping the game fair and fun."

LEARNING QUESTIONS

- What rules did you decide to play with?
- What equipment did you select? Why?
- What were your attacking strategies?
- What were your defending strategies?
- What would you do differently next time?

ENCOURAGE PLAYERS TO

- Select appropriate shots for the situation.
- Recover to a balanced ready position.
- Communicate clearly with partners and officials.
- Apply rules honestly and consistently.
- Reflect and adjust tactics during play.

POST GAME REFLECTIONS

- How well did players collaborate on rules and roles?
- Did communication support fair and effective play?
- How well did players control positioning and shot choice?
- Were tactics adjusted as the game progressed?

SKILL LINK

This activity develops technical skills such as control and positioning, alongside teamwork and communication through shared rule-setting and cooperative decision-making.



MAKE IT *HARDER*

- Reduce the size of the playing area.
- After the ball is struck, swap positions with the other player.
- Play 1 v 1 or uneven sides



MAKE IT *EASIER*

- Increase the size of the playing area.
- Use throwing and catching skills.
- Use large balls.
- Play 3 v 3

READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH



SQUASH STARS

8.2

SCORE ON 5

Score on 5 is a tactical rallying game played in pairs, where players aim to win the point on a specific shot in the rally. The focus is on building the rally with purpose, choosing smart shots, and developing tactical awareness and decision-making.

LEARNING FOCUS

The focus of this activity is on developing tactical awareness and decision-making by planning and executing a winning shot at a specific point in the rally.

SET UP

- **Equipment:** One racket and one ball per pair, plus throw-down lines or barriers.
- **Space:** Use enough playing areas to accommodate pairs.
- **Safety:** Always make sure there is enough space for the number of people taking part in the activity.



PLAY:

- The aim of this activity is to score a point by finishing the rally on the fifth shot.
- In pairs, players decide the size and shape of their playing area and place a barrier across the middle.
- Players rally in pairs.
- On the fifth shot, the player attempts to win the rally by striking the ball so that their opponent cannot return it (within the boundaries of the court or before the second bounce).
- If the rally is not won on the fifth shot, they continue to rally and try to win on the 10th, 15th or 20th shot.
- Players take turns to start each rally.

EXAMPLE COACH INSTRUCTIONS

"In this activity you'll play in pairs and build a rally with a goal. The challenge is to try and win the point on the fifth shot. Use your early shots to move your partner, then choose a good shot to finish the rally. If you don't win it on shot five, keep going and try again on the 10th shot. Focus on control, movement, and smart shot choices."

LEARNING QUESTIONS

- How did you build the rally to prepare for the fifth shot?
- What shot did you choose to try and win the rally, and why?
- How did your positioning and movement help (or limit) your shot choices?
- What would you do differently next time to improve your chance of scoring on the fifth shot?

ENCOURAGE PLAYERS TO

- Stay aware of the rally count.
- Build rallies to create finishing opportunities.
- Choose shots carefully rather than rushing.
- Recover to a balanced ready position.
- Reset calmly if the rally continues.

POST GAME REFLECTIONS

- How well did players build rallies before the finishing shot?
- Did players show tactical awareness on shot five?
- How effectively did players use space and movement?
- How did players respond after missing a winning opportunity?

SKILL LINK

This activity develops tactical awareness and point construction by encouraging players to plan and execute a winning shot at a set stage of the rally while adapting to missed chances.



MAKE IT *HARDER*

- Increase the size of the area.
- Increase height of barrier
- Players have to volley each shot.
- Play 1 v 1.



MAKE IT *EASIER*

- Reduce the size of the area.
- Reduce height of barrier.
- Use throwing and catching skills.
- Score on 3rd, 6th or 9th shots.
- Use short-handled rackets and larger balls.
- Play 2 v 2.

READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH



SQUASH STARS

8.3

COMPETITIVE PAIRS HITTING

Competitive Pairs Hitting is a station-based game where players compete in pairs across different rally challenges. Each station focuses on specific skills such as forehands, volleys, or corners, helping players adapt technique and compete fairly.

LEARNING FOCUS

Players will learn the importance of communicating, collaborating and competing with each other in sport. They will also develop numeracy skills.

SET UP

- **Equipment:** One racket per player, one ball per pair, plus throw-down lines for stations.
- **Space:** Set up multiple courts or stations.
- **Safety:** Ensure there is adequate space between courts and stations.



PLAY:

- Set up multiple rally stations with different rules.
- Players compete in pairs at each station.
- Stations may include forehand only, volleys, or corner play.
- Score points during timed rallies.
- Rotate pairs between stations and repeat with new partners.



EXAMPLE COACH INSTRUCTIONS

"You'll work in pairs and move around different stations, each with a different challenge. You'll have one minute to practice, then compete to win points against your opponent. Focus on control, good movement, and adjusting your shots to suit each station. Play hard, play fair, and reset quickly after each rally."

LEARNING QUESTIONS

- What helped you win rallies at each station?
- How did positioning prepare you for the next shot?
- What changed after losing a rally?
- Which station was most challenging and why?

ENCOURAGE PLAYERS TO

- Stay in control and reduce errors.
- Recover quickly to a ready position.
- Adjust shots to suit each station.
- Reset calmly after losing a rally.
- Compete fairly and self-officiate honestly.

POST GAME REFLECTIONS

- Did players adapt shot selection to station rules?
- Were movement and recovery consistent?
- How did players respond to pressure?
- Was fair play maintained throughout?

SKILL LINK

This activity develops shot control, movement efficiency, tactical awareness, and competitive focus by requiring players to adapt technique under varied constraints.



MAKE IT *HARDER*

- Restrict shot options further (e.g. alternate forehand and backhand, or specific targets only).
- Reduce reaction time by limiting bounces or increasing rally pace expectations.
- Increase scoring pressure by setting point targets or rewarding longer rallies within a time limit.



MAKE IT *EASIER*

- Allow the ball to bounce more than once.
- Increase the size of the playing area.
- Simplify station rules (e.g. allow all shots instead of forehand only or allow one bounce in volley station).

READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH



SQUASH STARS

8.4

PAIR RALLIES (COOPERATIVE)

Pair Rallies is a cooperative rallying activity played in pairs, where the aim is to keep the ball going for as long as possible. Players focus on control, communication, and consistency while trying to beat their own personal best scores.

LEARNING FOCUS

Players can compare their performance with previous efforts and observe improvements to achieve their personal best. This activity also encourages numeracy skills.

SET UP

- **Equipment:** One racket per player and one ball per pair, plus throw-down lines if needed.
- **Space:** Set up enough courts with wall space for the group.
- **Safety:** Ensure sufficient space between courts and wall areas.



PLAY:

- Set up enough courts with wall space for the size of group you have.
- Split players into pairs and encourage them to work together.
- Time the rallies and see how many continuous shots each pair can complete.
- Players should play cooperatively trying to score as many shots per rally as possible.
- If they make a mistake, they should start again from zero.
- If using rackets, encourage players to try different shots including backhand and forehand.

EXAMPLE COACH INSTRUCTIONS

"Work in pairs to see how many shots you can keep going together. Your focus is cooperation, not winning. Time each rally, reset if the ball stops, and try to beat your own best score. Concentrate on control, communication, and consistency."

POST GAME REFLECTIONS

- Did players cooperate effectively to maintain rallies?
- Were players able to reset quickly after errors?
- Did consistency improve across attempts?
- How well did pairs communicate and adjust positioning?

LEARNING QUESTIONS

- What helped you keep the rally going longer?
- How did positioning support your partner?
- What adjustment helped after a mistake?
- How did cooperation affect your play?

SKILL LINK

This activity develops consistency, cooperative play, control, communication, and movement awareness while encouraging accuracy over power and sustained rallying skills.

ENCOURAGE PLAYERS TO

- Focus on accuracy rather than power.
- Recover quickly to a ready position.
- Play shots that help your partner succeed.
- Communicate positively during rallies.
- Reset quickly after mistakes.



MAKE IT **HARDER**

- Set a higher rally target and require pairs to beat their personal best before finishing.
- Players must alternate between forehand and backhand shots during each rally.
- Narrow the target area on the wall to demand greater accuracy and consistency.



MAKE IT **EASIER**

- Change the ball.
- Allow players to use their hands as rackets.
- Allow the ball to bounce more than once.

READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH



SQUASH STARS

8.5

HEIGHT GAME

Height Game is a rally-based game where players focus on using height on the front wall to create time and improve control. By aiming above the service line, players develop awareness of how height, pace, and angles can influence the rally and make shots more effective.

LEARNING FOCUS

Players learn how to use the higher part of the front wall more effectively, exploring the use of different height, pace and angles. This progression of this game also encourages players to push up and look to play the volley.

SET UP

- **Equipment:** One racket and one ball per pair.
- **Space:** Full court with pairs spread across available courts.
- **Safety:** Ensure there is enough space between pairs and reinforce awareness when moving forward to volley.



PLAY:

- Players play a game using the full floor space of the court but must hit the ball above the service line (between the service line and outline).
- Players rally cooperatively or competitively within these constraints.
- As a progression, encourage players to volley the ball by allowing a volley to be hit anywhere on the front wall (between the tin and the top outline).
- Players aim to maintain rallies while adjusting height, pace, and positioning.

EXAMPLE COACH INSTRUCTIONS

"In this activity, we're focusing on using height on the front wall to give ourselves more time in a rally. Try to hit the ball above the service line and control the height and pace of your shots. As you improve, start moving forward and looking for volley opportunities. Focus on control and smart shot choices rather than power."

LEARNING QUESTIONS

- How did using more height affect the time you had in the rally?
- What helped you control the height of your shots?
- When was a good time to move forward and volley?
- How did your positioning change when aiming higher?

ENCOURAGE PLAYERS TO

- Use height on the front wall to create more time.
- Get under the ball and use an open racket face.
- Move forward to take volley opportunities.
- Stay balanced when striking the ball.
- Adjust pace and angle to control the rally.

POST GAME REFLECTIONS

- Did players consistently use height on the front wall?
- Were players able to control pace and direction when hitting higher?
- Did players begin to recognise opportunities to volley?
- How well did players maintain balance when striking at different heights?

SKILL LINK

This activity develops control of height, pace, and shot selection. These skills support rally management, creating time under pressure, and recognising opportunities to attack with volleys.



MAKE IT *HARDER*

- Set a higher rally target and require pairs to beat their personal best before finishing.
- Players must alternate between forehand and backhand shots during each rally.
- Narrow the target area on the wall to demand greater accuracy and consistency.



MAKE IT *EASIER*

- Change the ball.
- Allow players to use their hands as rackets.
- Allow the ball to bounce more than once.

READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH



SQUASH STARS

8.6

ESCAPE THE CORNER

Escape the Corner is a tactical rallying game played in the front corner, where players explore how to move an opponent and create space. Players learn when to play short to apply pressure and when to lift the ball high to escape into a full-court rally.

LEARNING FOCUS

Players learn how to play creatively within a small area of the court (front corner) as well as trying to use height to get the ball into the back of the court. This game encourages players to think strategically about their positioning, opponent's positioning and when to go short or try to lift (using a lob) out of the front corner.

SET UP

- **Equipment:** One racket and one ball per pair.
- **Space:** Use one front corner per pair.
- **Safety:** Ensure pairs are spaced safely and players move under control when lifting out of the corner.



PLAY:

- Players begin a rally in one of the front corners.
- Players can only play within the front corner until one player chooses to 'escape'.
- Players can escape by lifting the ball out of the front corner using a straight lob.
- Once a player escapes, the rally continues using the full length of the court.
- Players reset back to the corner after each rally.



The players are playing in the front area until one lobs it out

EXAMPLE COACH INSTRUCTIONS

"In this activity, you'll start in the front corner and try to control the rally using short shots. When the opportunity comes, you can escape by lifting the ball high and straight into the back of the court. Think about when to keep the ball low and when to use height to create space and reset the rally."

POST GAME REFLECTIONS

- Did players recognise the right moment to escape the corner?
- Were players able to control short shots under pressure?
- Did players use height effectively to reset the rally?
- How well did players adapt after escaping into full court?

LEARNING QUESTIONS

- When was the best time to escape the corner?
- What helped you control the ball in a small space?
- How did using height change the rally?
- What did you notice about your opponent's position?

SKILL LINK

This activity develops decision-making, control in tight spaces, and the ability to use height to reset rallies. These skills support effective front-court play, pressure management, and tactical awareness in match situations.

ENCOURAGE PLAYERS TO

- Stay low and balanced in the corner
- Control short shots with precision
- Recognise when to lift the ball
- Use height to create space
- Watch opponent positioning



MAKE IT *HARDER*

- Reduce the size of the front-court area
- Require a sequence before escaping
- Limit escapes to forehand/backhand only
- Reward successful escapes with points



MAKE IT *EASIER*

- Increase the size of the front-court area
- Allow more time before escaping
- Use softer or larger balls
- Allow players to call when to escape

READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH



Half-Court Variations is a tactical rallying activity where players play within restricted areas of the court. By limiting space, players learn to solve problems, create opportunities, and explore how positioning and shot selection can influence the rally.

LEARNING FOCUS

Players learn how to problem solve and play creatively while developing tactical awareness with only being able to play within designated areas of the court. These games encourage players to think about creating positional advantages on the court within the designated areas - creating space and hitting it into there.

SET UP

- **Equipment:** One racket and one ball per pair.
- **Space:** Use half-court designated areas depending on variation (front, straight, alley, or split zones).
- **Safety:** Ensure pairs are spaced safely and reinforce controlled movement within restricted areas.

PLAY:

Players play a rally within a designated half of the court. The purpose of this is to encourage specific shots and movements that have been introduced earlier in the session.

Examples:

- **Front ½ court:** Players rally in the front half (in front of the short line). Start with a serve or an alternative (e.g. boast or controlled shot above the service line landing short). This develops front-court control.
- **Straight ½ court:** Players rally on one side only (forehand or backhand). All shots must be straight. This promotes control of both short and deep shots down one line.
- **Alley ½ court:** Players rally within two narrow channels along each side wall. The ball can be long or short but must stay within the width of the service box. This develops accuracy along the wall.
- **Two quarters court:** Select two quarters (e.g. front left and back right). Players rally with the ball landing only in those areas. This encourages movement and use of angles.



Play on the right half of the court



Play the alley on either side



Play left front and right back

EXAMPLE COACH INSTRUCTIONS

"In this activity, you'll play within a restricted area of the court to help you focus on specific shots and positioning. Think about how to create space and move your opponent within the area. Focus on control, smart shot selection, and adapting your movement to suit the space."

LEARNING QUESTIONS

- How did the smaller playing area change your shot choices?
- What helped you create space in the rally?
- Which areas were hardest to control and why?
- How did your positioning affect your next shot?

ENCOURAGE PLAYERS TO

- Use space to move opponents
- Stay balanced when striking
- Control direction over power
- Recover quickly to position
- Adapt shots to restrictions

POST GAME REFLECTIONS

- Were players able to adapt shot selection to the restricted space?
- Did players use positioning effectively to create space?
- How well did players maintain control during rallies?
- Did decision-making improve as players adjusted to constraints?

SKILL LINK

This activity develops tactical awareness, shot control, and positioning. These skills support effective rally construction, movement efficiency, and decision-making under pressure.



MAKE IT *HARDER*

- Reduce the size of the playing area
- Limit shot types (e.g. straight only)
- Add target zones within the area
- Increase rally speed or scoring pressure



MAKE IT *EASIER*

- Increase the size of the playing area
- Allow extra bounce before returning
- Use larger or softer balls
- Allow full-court reset after errors

READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH



SQUASH STARS

8.8

THREE QUARTER-COURT VARIATIONS

Three quarter-court Variations is a tactical rallying activity where players play within modified areas of the court. By removing or rewarding certain zones, players learn to control where the ball lands, use height effectively, and make better decisions about positioning and shot selection.

LEARNING FOCUS

Players learn how to problem solve and play creatively while developing tactical awareness with only being able to play within designated areas of the court. These games encourage players to think about creating positional advantages on the court within the designated areas—creating space and hitting into it.

SET UP

- **Equipment:** One racket and one ball per pair.
- **Space:** Use three quarter-court configurations depending on variation (e.g. removing a corner or middle strip).
- **Safety:** Ensure pairs are spaced safely and reinforce controlled movement when changing direction.

PLAY:

Players play a rally within a modified three-quarter court area to encourage specific shots and tactical decisions developed earlier in the session.

Examples:

- **Normal $\frac{3}{4}$ court:** Players rally with one back corner removed (e.g. back right is out of play). The ball must land in the remaining three quarters. This encourages players to use space and adjust positioning.
- **No back $\frac{1}{4}$ strip:** Players rally with a strip across the back of the court (behind the service boxes) out of play. This encourages players to focus on short and mid-court play.
- **Protect the back $\frac{3}{4}$ court:** Players rally on a full court, but score a point if the ball lands in the back strip (before the back wall). This encourages use of height and early volleying to prevent the ball reaching this area.
- **No man's land $\frac{3}{4}$ court:** Players rally while avoiding a central strip (mid-court). The ball must be played either short or deep. This develops control of length and shot selection.

Normal $\frac{3}{4}$ court



No back $\frac{1}{4}$ strip



No man's land



EXAMPLE COACH INSTRUCTIONS

"In this activity, you'll play with part of the court removed or changed. This means you'll need to think carefully about where you hit the ball and how you move. Use height, angles, and positioning to create space and make it difficult for your opponent."

LEARNING QUESTIONS

- How did removing an area change your shot choices?
- What helped you move your opponent into space?
- When was it useful to use more height?
- How did your positioning affect your decisions?

ENCOURAGE PLAYERS TO

- Use height to reach deep areas
- Hit into open spaces
- Stay balanced when striking
- Adapt shots to restrictions
- Watch opponent positioning

POST GAME REFLECTIONS

- Were players able to adapt to the modified court areas?
- Did players use height and space effectively?
- How well did players control shot direction and placement?
- Did decision-making improve as constraints changed?

SKILL LINK

This activity develops tactical awareness, shot placement, and use of space. These skills support effective rally construction, court positioning, and decision-making during match play.



MAKE IT *HARDER*

- Reduce playable areas further
- Add scoring for specific target zones
- Limit shot types or options
- Increase rally speed or constraints



MAKE IT *EASIER*

- Increase the playable space
- Allow extra bounce before return
- Use larger or softer balls
- Remove scoring pressure

READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH • READY SET SQUASH