



BLUEPRINT BOYS & GIRLS YOUTH RUGBY

Coaching Resource

Player
Identification
& Development
(GASPS)

SCOTS

Learning
Environments
(LEARN)

BLUEPRINT
Change Our Game

Coaching

Coaching
Skills



Core Games



STEP



Session Design
& Intent



Physical
Skills

Rugby
Skills

COGS

Life
Skills

Brain
Skills

November 2024

INTRODUCTION

The Blueprint is the playing and coaching philosophy for Scottish Rugby, aiming to improve the standard of rugby at all levels of the game. The Blueprint has evolved from the original (launched in 2016), to expand beyond the technical / tactical focus of the game.

Developed by Scottish Rugby in conjunction with coaches from the club and school game, the Blueprint's overriding message is 'Change Our Game'. In order for Scottish Rugby to compete and win on the international stage, the game in Scotland needs to further develop and think differently. Our intention is to create amazing learning environments with the appropriate level of stretch and support to enable players to be more tactically adaptable.

The Blueprint is Scottish Rugby's vision for elevating the game at every level, from grassroots to the international stage. Created in collaboration with coaches across clubs and schools, its message is clear: Change Our Game. To compete and succeed globally, rugby in Scotland needs to evolve with fresh thinking and innovation.

At the heart of the Blueprint is the goal of creating exceptional learning environments that challenge and support players, helping them become tactically adaptable. This philosophy is driven by the SCOTS principles: Selfless, Creative, Optimistic, Tenacious, and Self-Organised—essential traits for players to thrive.

The Blueprint Curriculum is a powerful resource designed to guide players, coaches, referees, and parents in the youth game. It lays out the key areas of focus at each age and stage, ensuring that everyone is on the same page when it comes to training and match priorities.

The SCOTS principles (Selfless, Creative, Optimistic, Tenacious, Self-Organised) underpin the Blueprint, and are key behaviours, enabling players to thrive in their playing pathway.

The aim of this Blueprint resource is to help coaches at all levels develop their coaching practice with practical help to bring the Blueprint principles to life.

For updates please follow Scottish Rugby Game Development of social media channels.

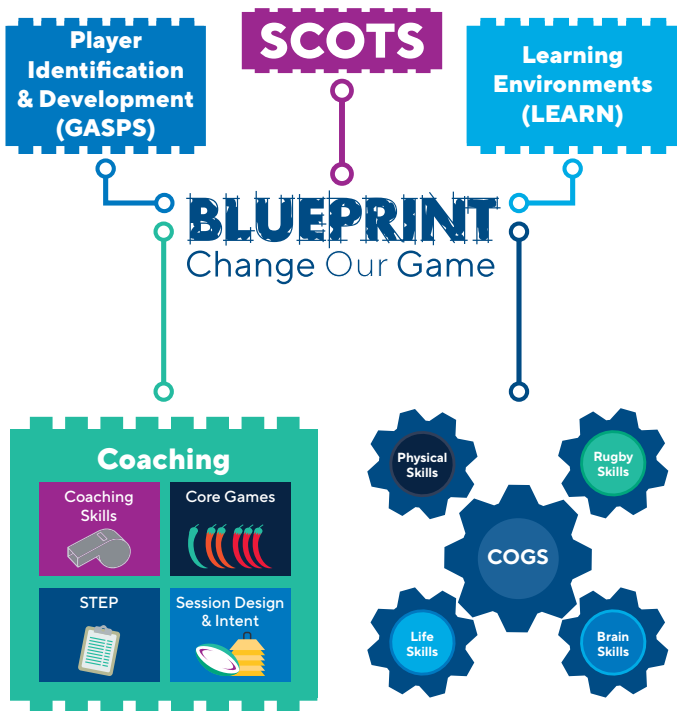
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BLUEPRINT OVERVIEW

The Blueprint includes several interconnected parts, each having a unique role to play in helping to 'Change Our Game'.



BLUEPRINT

SCOTS Priority Skills and Behaviours

The SCOTS priority skills and behaviours are what underpin everything within the Blueprint both on and off the field.

The SCOTS principles will be integrated throughout this resource with practical hints and tips on how to apply them into your environment.

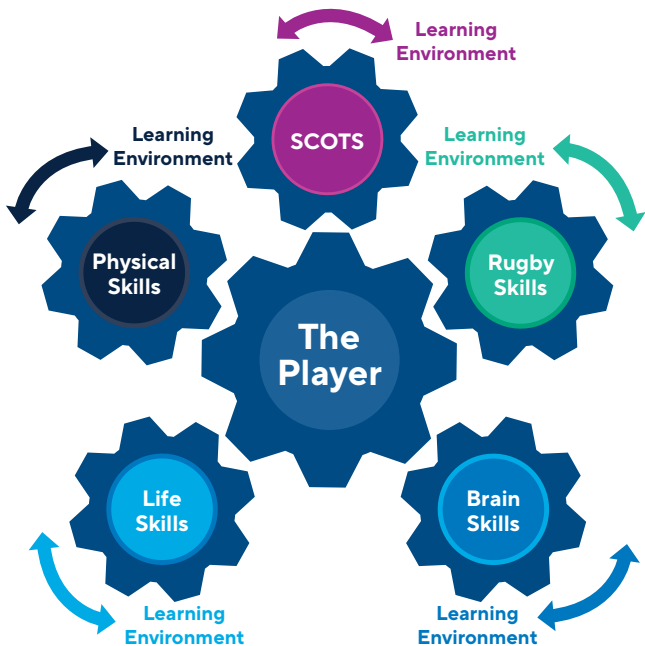
S SELFLESS help the team		A SCOTS player will put the team first before individual success.
C CREATIVE problem solve in different ways		A SCOTS player will have a positive mindset on mistakes and the role they play in learning.
O OPTIMISTIC hopeful and confident about the future		A SCOTS player will actively seek a positive outcome to all situations and use them as learning experiences.
T TENACIOUS persistent in pursuit of excellence		A SCOTS player will have a high work ethic and push themselves to improve.
S SELF-ORGANISE use information to effectively coordinate as a team		A SCOTS player will work as a team to find solutions to tactical challenges without coach intervention.

BLUEPRINT

Change Our Game (COGs)

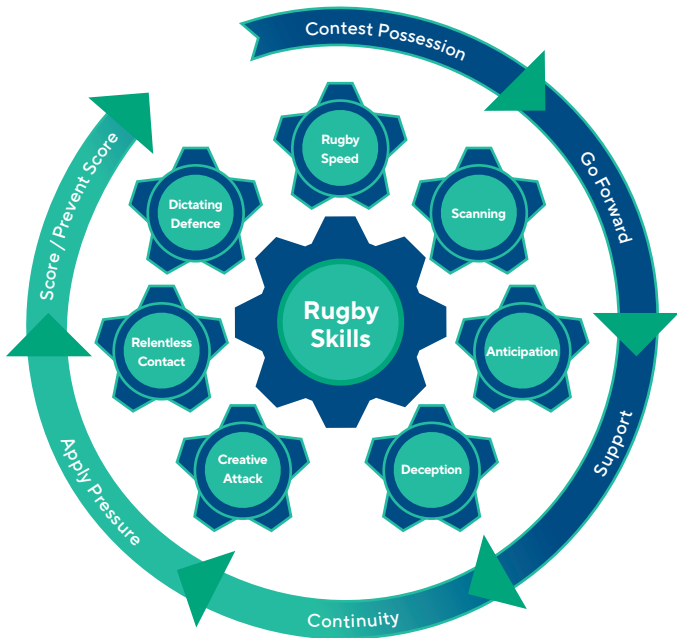
The interconnected Blueprint COGs represent all aspects of the game and need to be considered as one when developing players. The COGs impact each other and should be coached collectively.

Within this document the Rugby Skills COG is emphasised, with further resources to follow on the Physical, Brain and Life COGs.



BLUEPRINT

Rugby Skills



RUGBY SKILLS

Attacking Principles



Stay Connected

Be ready to Play

Get to the ball carrier quickly

Positive support line



Find the best space

Find and attack space/opportunities either through around or behind a defence



Rugby Speed

Get into position early

Create quick ball opportunities

Ball away quickly

Creative Attack



Stress Defenders

Use evasive footwork, swerve, pace and/or fend to stress defenders

Continuity

Passing, attacking kicks, offloads, quick rucks and ball presentation



RUGBY SKILLS

Defensive Principles



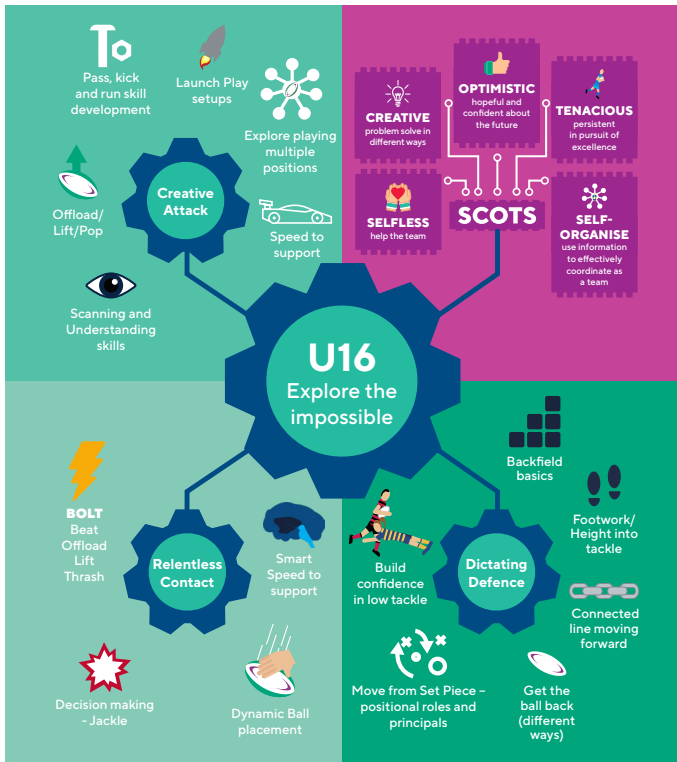
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Rugby Skills Curriculum

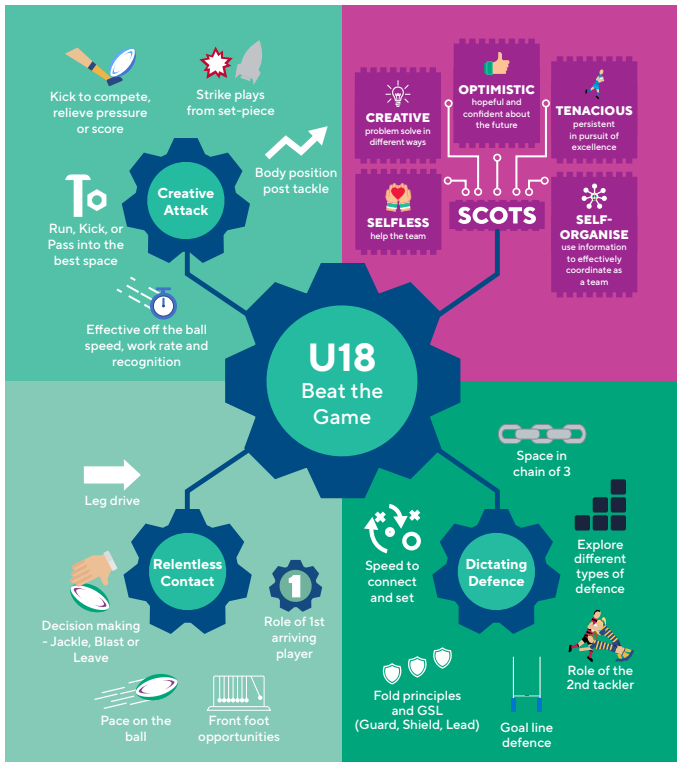
Girls Youth



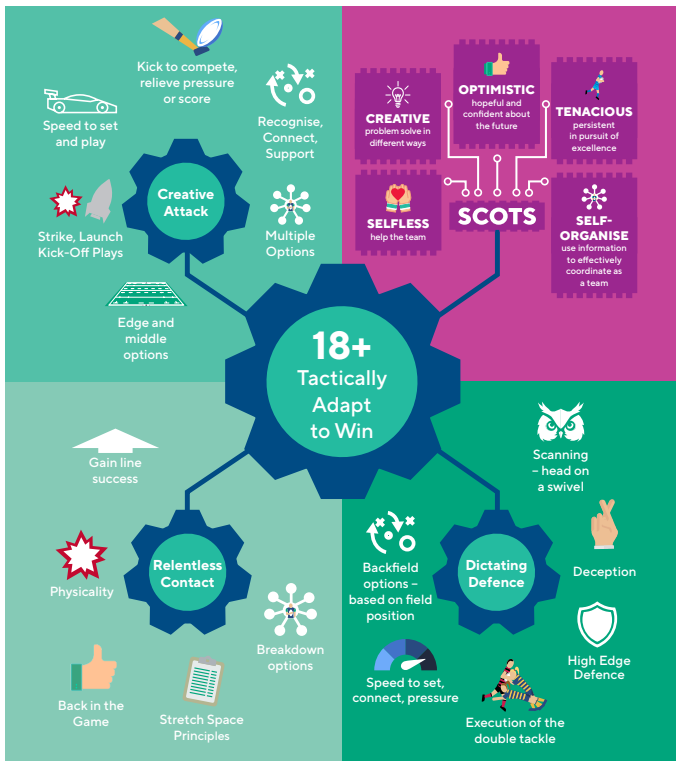
GIRLS U16 RUGBY SKILLS CURRICULUM



GIRLS U18 RUGBY SKILLS CURRICULUM



FEMALE RUGBY SKILLS CURRICULUM (18+)



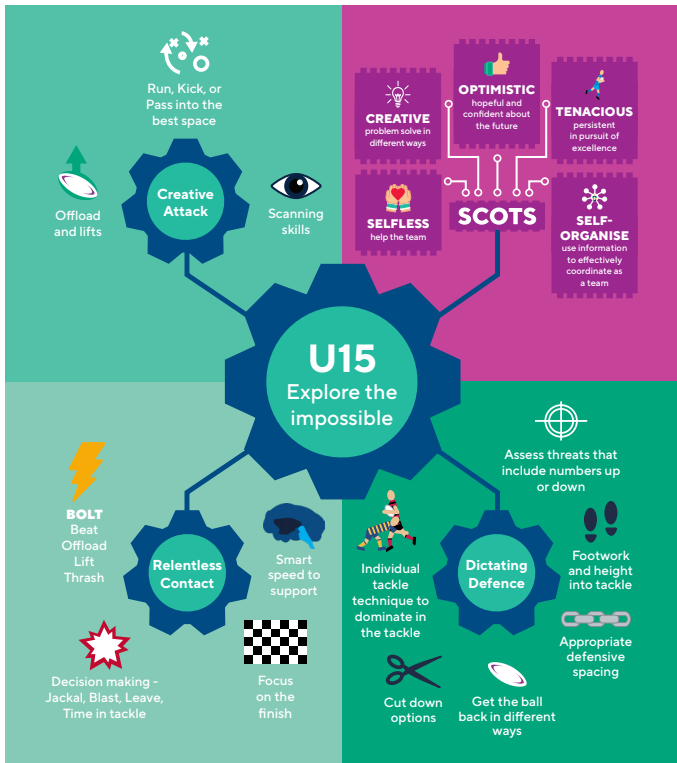
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Rugby Skills Curriculum

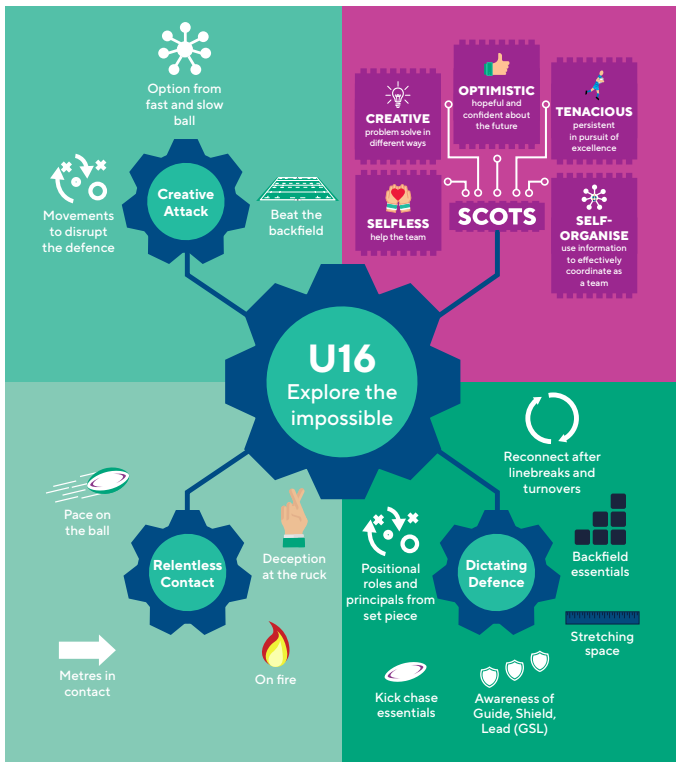
Boys Youth



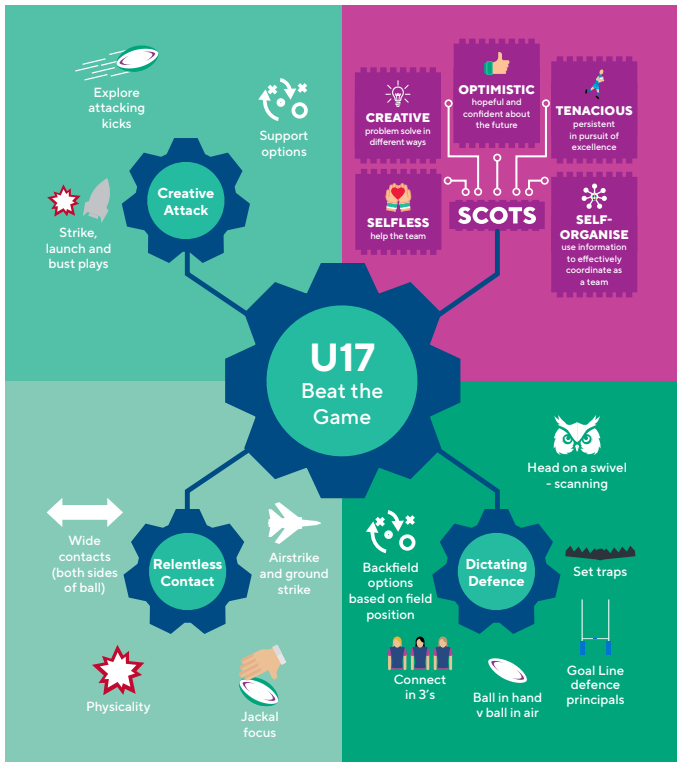
BOYS U15 RUGBY SKILLS CURRICULUM



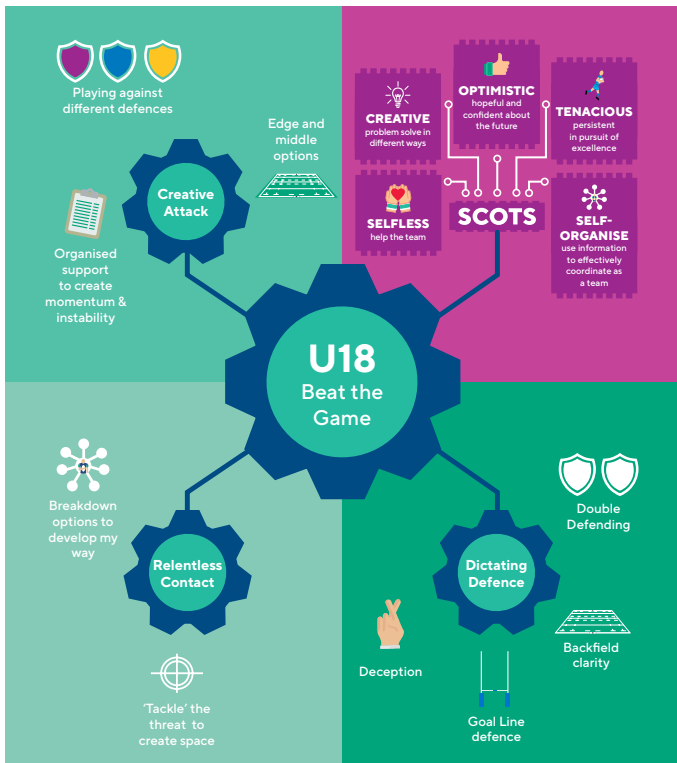
BOYS U16 RUGBY SKILLS CURRICULUM



BOYS U17 RUGBY SKILLS CURRICULUM



BOYS U18 RUGBY SKILLS CURRICULUM



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Physical Skills Curriculum

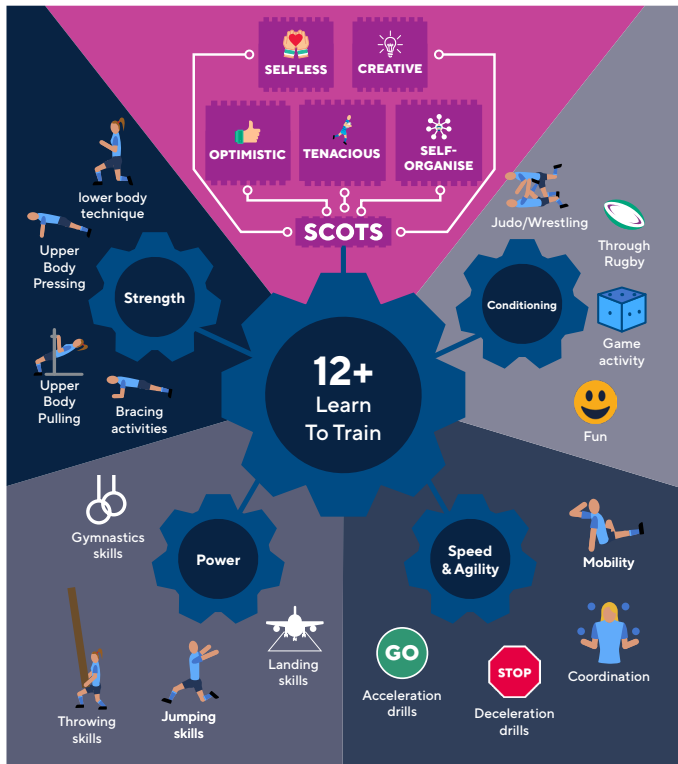
Boys & Girls Youth



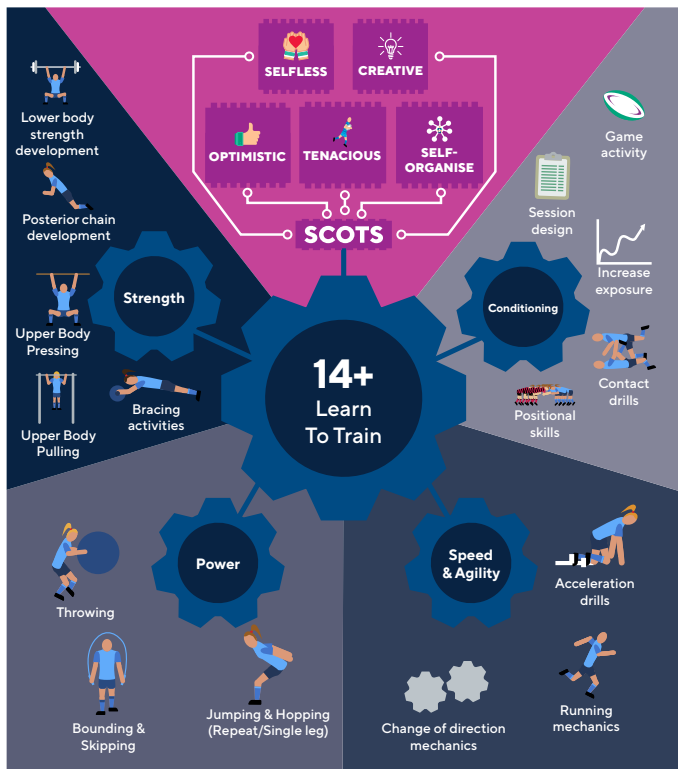
BLUEPRINT PHYSICAL SKILLS CURRICULUM



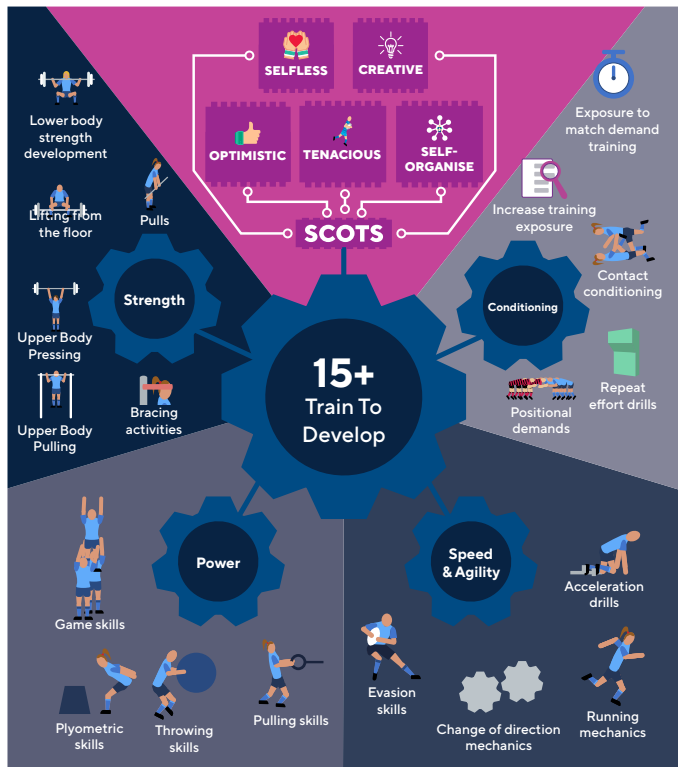
LEARN TO TRAIN STAGE PHYSICAL SKILLS CURRICULUM (12+)



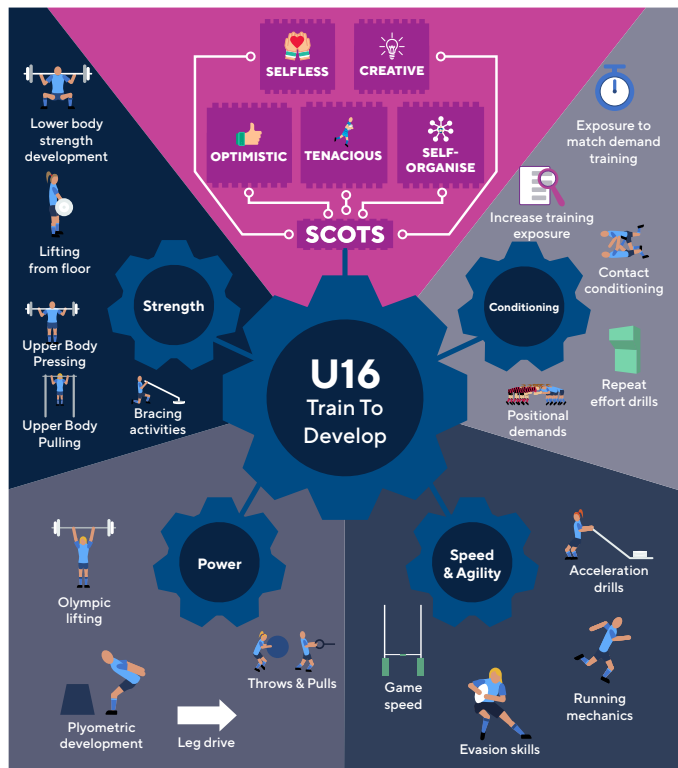
LEARN TO TRAIN STAGE PHYSICAL SKILL CURRICULUM (14+)



TRAIN TO DEVELOP STAGE PHYSICAL SKILLS CURRICULUM (15+)



TRAIN TO DEVELOP STAGE PHYSICAL SKILLS CURRICULUM (16+)



BLUEPRINT

Player Identification and Learning Environment








BLUEPRINT

GASPS - Player Identification and Development

The GASPS principles will be used to guide selection decisions within Scottish Rugby male and female pathway programmes (e.g. player development hub, Academy and national age grade). Players will also be developed in alignment with these principles through on and off field coaching.

Further information on the GASPS principles will be made available in due course.

G GAME SENSE 	game awareness, spatial awareness, problem solving, beat the game
A ATTITUDE 	competitiveness, curious, self-motivation, resilience
S SKILL SET 	ball movement, tackle, evade, positional skills - all under pressure
P PHYSICAL POTENTIAL 	speed/agility, power, endurance, stature
S SCOTS SKILLS 	selfless, creative, optimistic, tenacious, self-organised

BLUEPRINT

Learning Environment

“When a flower doesn’t bloom, you fix the environment in which it grows, not the flower” - Alexander Den Heijer

Players and coaches will thrive when the environment and culture around them promotes learning, relationships and competition.

The LEARN principles can be adapted for both on and off field situations, and can be used to help create an environment that is suitable for the age and stage of player.

L	LEARNING TO LEARN		Set problems and challenges for players and coaches. Create a learning culture.
E	EXPLORATION		Give players time to find their own different solutions.
A	ADAPTIVE		Use activities which stimulate choice.
R	REFLECTION		Allow players and coaches time to think and learn from their experiences.
N	NO ONE IS THE SAME		Differentiation between players is critical. Players learn at different speeds.

BLUEPRINT

Coaching Skills, Session Design and Core Games



BLUEPRINT

How to plan for successful sessions

A coach's key role is to design sessions that are engaging, giving players the chance to learn and develop while enjoying themselves.

The diagram highlights considerations for planning sessions.

Game Question - Begin with a question for players to solve, e.g., How can we attack against this defensive set up more effectively?

Practice Design - Choose appropriate games or activities to explore the game question, e.g., Barbarians Core Skill Game.

Coaching Skills - Identify coaching skills that match each activity, e.g., freeze frames to help players scan and decide.

Player Engagement - Plan for individual player needs, like conditions or positional work, and use co-coaches to support all players.

What is the question from the game we can't answer?

What is the INTENT of each activity?
For players to Explore, Exploit or Execute?
How does it tie in with your programme aims?

Practice Design

Game, skill or technical activities?
Intensity (physical, contact, mental)?
Timings?
STEP - Challenge levels
Use of co-coaches

Coaching Skills

Feedback tools
Effective questions
Appropriate level of Challenge
Differentiation

Player Engagement

How do create connection with players?
Do any players need extra attention?

Adapted from Bob Muir (2011)

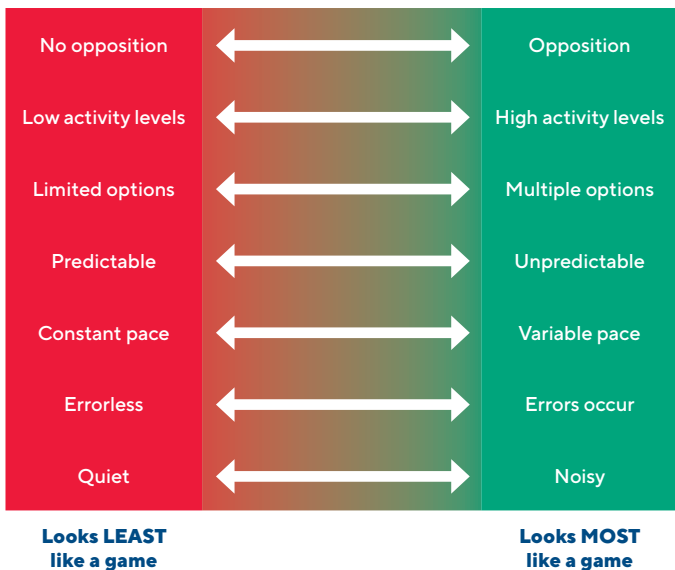
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Are your practices improving players skills to play the game?

Developing players all round skills and game understanding requires coaches to consider how practices are designed.

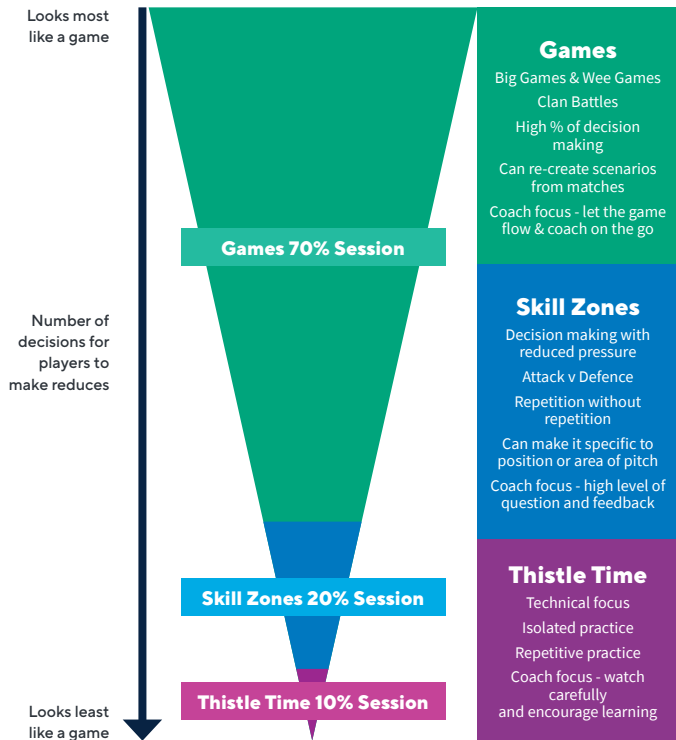
Below are some considerations when designing practices.

Practices which are aligned more to the right-hand side of the continuum are likely to be more representative of the game, and likely to have a greater chance of developing players decision making abilities and game sense.



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Session/Practice Design Tool



BLUEPRINT

Session Design & Flow

Designing engaging and inclusive sessions is a huge part of coaching. The options below support you to create sessions which help promote the SCOTS principles and give a good backdrop to deliver the blueprint games.

Can you challenge yourself to coach within game related activities for up to 80% of the session?



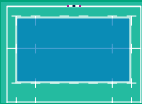
Muckabout

Free play / No coaching
Players express themselves
Integrate Activate physical preparation activities



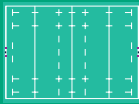
Clan Battle

Lots of problem solving
Games or activities which challenge tactical decisions



Wee Games

Small sided (e.g. 7v7)
Lots of touches on the ball
Use STEP to change the game



Big Game

Looks like the full game
Lots of transition
All coaches active



Skills Zone

Isolated practice to hone in
on a skill development

Short and sweet

Clear coaching points



Beyond The Gates

Set challenge or home work

Use technology

Player to review and preview



Thistle Time

Individual/sub team
development

Ran by the player(s) and
supported by the coach

Focussing on strengths
and work ons

BLUEPRINT

Coaching Skills

The Blueprint Coaching Skills can support you to positively engage and develop your players.

Coaching is a skill and therefore can be developed and improved. Remember that your noticing skills are key to making decisions about which coaching skill to use next – think about your positioning etc.

APES principles (Active, Purposeful, Enjoyment, Safety) underpin all coaching sessions. These should remain a priority.



Questioning

- Support players' understanding to aid their decision making
- Use open questions to prompt reflection at the right time



Peer-to-Peer

- Players share thoughts, experiences and reflections (can be in game)
- Buddy up players in key positions (e.g. 8 and 9)



Freeze

- Stop the activity to build awareness for players
- Give players the opportunity to freeze



Replay

- Give the players another go to challenge and develop
- Rewind to previous phase of play and restart



Second Ball

- Introduce a second ball to provide opportunities for decision making
- Give a player a second ball to introduce when they wish



Scoring System

- Exaggerate the purpose of the session through point rewards
- Reward effort as well as outcome



Delegation

- Involve players in the session design, delivery and review
- Players to coach each other



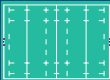


Challenges

- Set players and/or coaches challenges linked to aims or themes
- Individual and/or team challenges to raise competition

BLUEPRINT

Change the Challenge (STEP)

The STEP Model encourages coaches to change the space, task, equipment, or people for a chosen activity, to make it easier or more challenging. These four simple steps can also be used to make your sessions more inclusive.

S SPACE 	<p>Pitch Dimensions or Starting Position</p> <p>Scoring Areas / Skill Zones</p> <p>Number of Pitches</p> <p>Wide channels</p>
T TASK 	<p>Add conditions on certain players (e.g. can pass)</p> <p>Introduce special roles for groups/individuals</p> <p>Introduce a new Scoring System or change timings</p> <p>Set scenarios (e.g. team A are 15 points down)</p> <p>Introduce challenges with rewards</p>
E EQUIPMENT 	<p>Change the type and/or number of balls</p> <p>Distraction (e.g. contain/constrain defenders)</p> <p>Alignment (e.g. stay square)</p>
P PEOPLE 	<p>One team with more or less players</p> <p>Special roles to certain players (e.g. 5m channel)</p> <p>Give super powers (e.g. double points if they score)</p>

BLUEPRINT

Core Games

The Blueprint Core Games have been designed to help coaches of all age groups deliver sessions which develop and challenge their players (when used alongside the appropriate Age Grade Law Variations).

Each game has three modifications, categorised by Mild, Hot and Spicy

- Mild – an entry level version of the game
- Hot – adapts the game to become more challenging for the attack or defence
- Spicy – increases the complexity of the game to challenge players' decision making under pressure



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SET-UP	GAME OBJECTIVES
HAWICK BALL	
Multi-direction run, pass or kick Score in a zone or box	Attack - Challenge players to find space, time & options through scanning and identification Defence – Challenge players to identify interception opportunities
BARBARIANS	
1st touch = pass/offload 2nd touch = condition (e.g. turnover or go to floor)	Attack - Develop players' ability to offload and have close support Defence - to stay connected
BANNOCKBURN	
1 x defensive player drops back to their try line after each phase or touch	Attack - Challenge players to find the best space Defence – Challenge players to find solutions to get the ball back with less numbers
HIGHLANDERS	
Ball carrier offloads within 1 second, if not then pop or hold	Attack - Control body through contact and off the floor Defence - time your tackle to slow the opposition
SKYE BALL	
2 x attacking players allowed in offside positions as kicking options	Attack – Challenge players to find the best space or opportunity to score Defence – Challenge the defence to cover the off-side player threat
CALEY BALL	
Attack has 3 touches to get out of their half, then 6 touches to score	Attack – Challenge the attack to attack the best space for maximum go forward. Defence – How can you stop go forward and win back possession?
WALLACE BALL	
On a turnover the attacking team have 1 phase to score	Attack – challenge players to explore creative attacking solutions Defence – Stay connected

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