



Gaelic Football

Key Stage 3

Game Development

Introduction

To develop the skills needed for a full 15-a-side game, it is important that the players have as much time on the ball as possible. In Gaelic football, the rules about lifting the ball, moving with the ball and passing the ball can be complex and difficult for some players to pick up initially. Relaxing some of the rules or introducing them gradually can help players develop confidence and allow them more time on the ball.

Inclusion and Accessibility

While we would like all pupils to be included in Physical Education along with the others in their class, this is not always possible when it comes to playing the full version of the sport.

If a pupil has physical disabilities that mean they cannot safely take part in the game along with the other pupils in their class, then this pupil should be given the opportunity to take part in other physical activity. For example, a class could be split into groups, with some pupils practising the drills and others playing the game. The smaller group could practise the skills needed for the sport, or for the disabled version of the sport, alongside the rest of the class. These smaller groups would work in rotation, giving everyone an opportunity to play the sport and practise their skills.

Alternatively, some pupils may prefer to do a physical activity that they are particularly interested in, for example practising the drills needed for a sport they play outside of school.

Tips

- Divide the group into teams of five or six so that the players will have more touches of the ball and more space in the area. Then gradually increase the size of the pitch and the number of players in each team.
- Use an area of appropriate size for the Gaelic football pitch, depending on the group's ability.
- Encourage the keepers to change so that everyone has a turn in nets.
- Limit the number of touches certain players can have before passing.
- Allow players more steps before calling a travel.
- Ensure the time set for each half is suitable for the age and ability of the players.
- If players are having difficulty with some aspects of the game, call a 'timeout' and give them a demonstration.



General

- Use a flat, hard playing surface.
- Ensure the adult to player ratio is appropriate so that every player has a chance to be involved.
- Divide players with difficulties evenly between teams.
- Remind players that there is a mixture of abilities on the court and it is important not to run into each other.
- Allow wheelchair users and those with difficulties and impairments more time.
- Make sure that tackling is restricted to appropriate players.
- Ensure inclusion by introducing a rule that every player must receive the ball before the team can score.

Physical Disability

- Reduce the size of the pitch for players with mobility difficulties.
- Widen the nets, if necessary.
- If several wheelchair users are playing, they may need to use a bigger ball.
- Allow a wheelchair user to throw a ball instead of hand passing.
- Place players who are at a similar level together for hand passing.
- Instead of toe tapping or bouncing, allow a wheelchair user to move for a certain length of time before passing or shooting.

Hard of Hearing or Deaf

- Demonstrate the game using a sign language familiar to the player.
- Use a visual sign to show that game time has started or stopped, e.g. a flag or "time out" sign.

Sight Impaired or Blind

- For players with minor visual impairments use a brightly coloured ball that contrasts with the playing surface.
- Ensure that team bibs clearly contrast with each other.
- Make sure that cones and equipment marking the boundaries of the playing area are brightly coloured and clearly contrast with the playing surface itself.
- Use an audible ball (ball that makes a sound) with players who have a serious visual impairment.
- Hand the ball to a player with a visual impairment and allow them to move with the ball for a certain length of time before they pass.
- Allow an adult or 'seeing' player to guide them around the pitch using directions or a hand on their shoulder.

Useful Links

Ulster GAA

ulster.gaa.ie/coaching-old/special-needs