

YOUNG GAELIC PLAYER PATHWAY

“ A journey must begin with a single step ”

Lao Tzu

There are five key age groups or stages in the pathway outlined which have detailed player characteristics and describe the practical elements that must be coached during these ages.

THE FIVE AGES OR STAGES ARE:		
STAGE	APPROXIMATE AGE	EMPHASIS
Learning to master the ball <i>me and my ball</i>	4-6 years	Should be about fun and participation with key emphasis on physical literacy and core movement skills with the ball
Learning to use the ball well <i>(me, the ball and my friend)</i>	7-9 years	Major skills learning phase where all the basic skills in football and hurling are learned
Learning to play together <i>the start of us)</i>	10-12 years	Emphasis on understanding how to play and work together as a team
Learning about positions <i>(us)</i>	13-15 years	The principles of play and applying good game sense increase
Learning to perform <i>The formal phase)</i>	16-18 years	Combining all aspects of performance including, decision making, higher physical demands of the game and coping with competition

LEARNING TO MASTER THE BALL

4-6 YEAR OLDS

SKILL EMPHASIS		PHYSICAL FOCUS	GAME SPECIFIC
HURLING	FOOTBALL	ABC & RJTs	
<p>Handling Correct hurley size</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Grip (hurley hand) - Swing-elbow up - Ready, lock, lift, positions - Pick up (catching hand, one hand) <p>Sending & Receiving</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - One hand dribble - Two handed dribble - Ground strike <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tyre Ball - Ground stop - Run and strike stationary ground ball 	<p>Handling</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Throw <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bowling ball Two handed bounce catch One handed bounce - Body catch - Pick up stationary & moving <p>Kicking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ground kick - Dribble - Punt kick (two hands) (hard foot) <p>Travelling</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Knee tap solo 	<p>Agility For example: Chasing games, Dodging, Shadow running</p> <p>Balance For example: Animal walking, Hop in & out of hoops</p> <p>Co-ordination For example: Skipping, Bean bag toss, Pass through the ladder</p> <p>Running</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good technique <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forward Backward Sideward's <p>For example: Marching, Stopping</p> <p>Jumping For example: Takeoff & landing, Jump jacks</p> <p>Throwing For example: Target roll</p>	<p>Target Games The simplest form of a game which challenges players to use the techniques previously learnt is to aim into or at a target. Players have lots of time to perform the task without any distraction from other players. There is a low level of decision making. For example: Skittles, Through the gate, Tower ball</p> <p>Court Games Court games require players to pass the ball over an obstacle like a net or zone to a receiver. The level of decision making has increased but is limited. For example: Over the river, Hurling tennis</p> <p>Part – Invasion These games require players to complete a task with limited or direct opposition. For example: Getting through the traffic, 4v4 (two zones) no goalie, Up north down south</p>



LEARNING ABOUT POSITIONS 13-15 YEARS

PLAYER CHARACTERISTICS

- While players in this stage may have the same chronological age they may differ significantly in terms of biological age ie one may be more physically developed than another
- The onset of puberty usually occurs during the early stages of this cycle. Aerobic and strength programmes should be individualised or grouped according to their Peak Height Velocity (PHV). **N.B** Only trained coaches to undertake this training
- Broad base skills and sport specific skills
- Advanced technical skill development/skills developed under pressure
- Fitness with the ball in skills drills
- Gain an understanding of the principles of attack and defence through grids and small sided games
- Players can be introduced to moderate anaerobic and strength training through ball work
- Players should be introduced to psychological training through games that promote concentration and better decision making

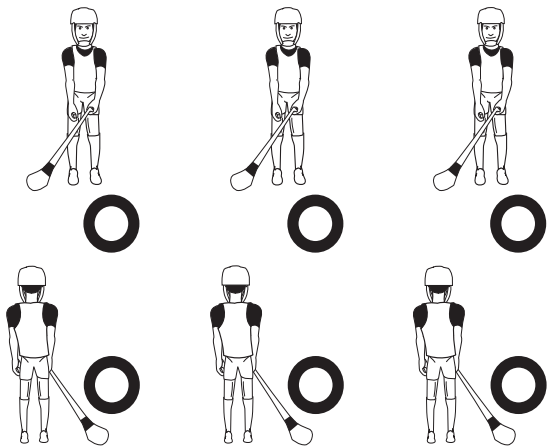


PLAYER PATHWAY



SKILL ACTIVITY 4: TYRE HIT

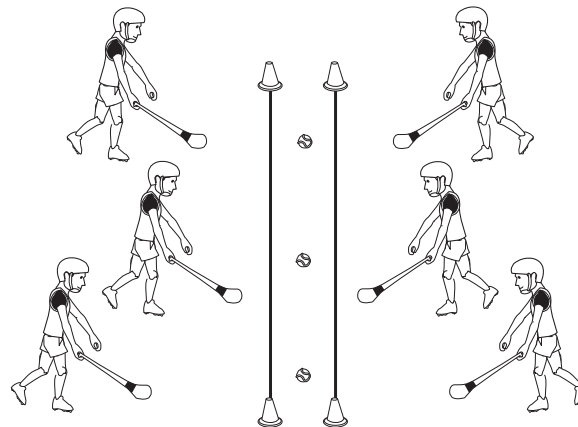
8 players - each at a tyre. One handed strike while walking around the tyre - both sides. Switch to two-handed striking. Jump onto the tyre. Jump back down & strike right/left. Jump into the tyre, jump out and strike right/left.



8 min	6	6	0

SKILL ACTIVITY 5: FLICK THE FLIES

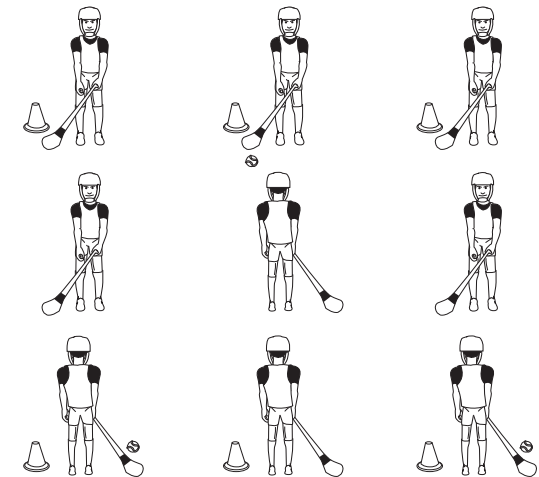
Step 1. draw two parallel lines of 4 meters distance. Step 2. two players facing each other on the parallel lines. Step 3. Put a ball in the middle (2 metres distance). Execution: the winner is the player who Flicks the ball away first. Each flick reward is 1 point. Set player to execute from ready position to flick action, using your thumb and finger as a spring.



8 min	6	4	3

SKILL ACTIVITY 6: PASS THE GUARDS

The first player begins by striking the sliotar towards the central player. The central player, without stopping the ball, must strike it on towards the third player. The third player strikes it back to the central player again and so the drill continues. Encourage the central player to play the ball on whatever side it approaches. The first team to move the ball up and down the line a set number of times wins.



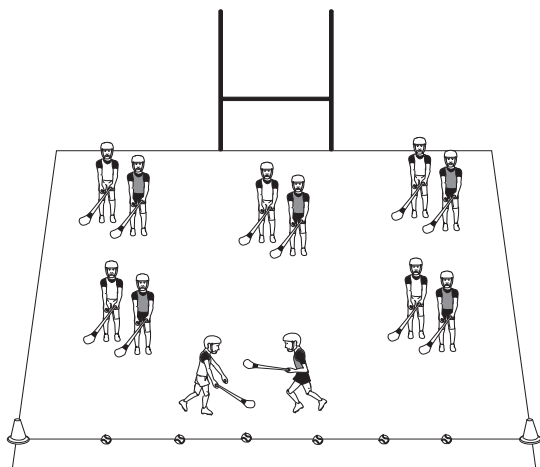
8 min	9	6	3

PLAYER PATHWAY



SKILL ACTIVITY 4: 6 OF THE BEST

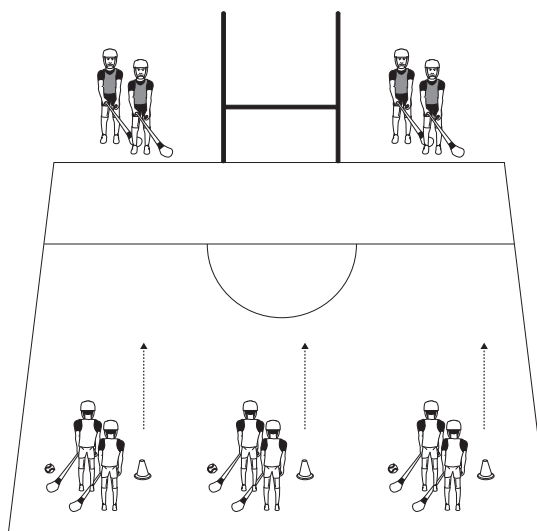
Six scoring opportunities. One forward picks up a sliotar and along with his team-mate attempts to set up a score. If the ball is intercepted or the defenders win back possession then that attacking opportunity is gone. The forwards must then go back to the halfway line, retrieve another sliotar and set up another attack. How many scores do the forwards get from 6 attacks. Rotate defenders with attackers after 6 attacks.



8 min	12	2	8

SKILL ACTIVITY 5: TIME ATTACK

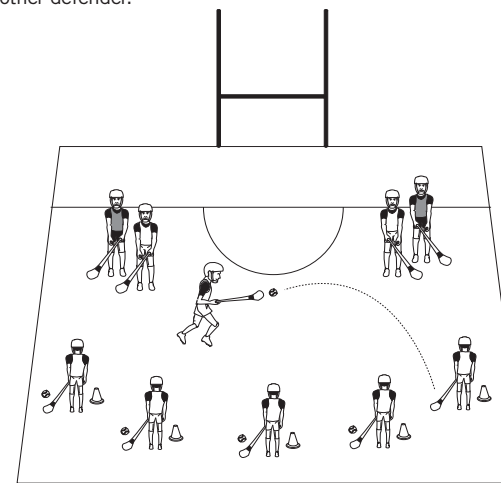
3 attackers start in possession of a sliotar on the 45m line. 2 defenders start on the end-line either side of the goal. The attackers must pass the ball a minimum of 3 times and must carry the sliotar, beat the defenders and work a goal.



8 min	10	3	3

SKILL ACTIVITY 6: FREE FORWARD

Place 5 fielders around the pitch on the 45 in a half circle set up. Place 3 attackers and 2 defenders inside the 45. The aim of the drill is for the Feeder to make the correct decision and pick out the free forward. The free forward must carry the ball and create space for the other 2 attackers and make the correct pass to avail of this space and create a scoring opportunity. **Progression:** Add in another defender.



8 min	10	5	5