

NetballSmart SmartPlayer

Simple strategies, great ideas to support your Netball Journey

For more information visit www.netballsmart.co.nz

ACC SportSmart



Introducing SmartPlayer

NetballSmart

The NetballSmart philosophy is based on six key principles. NetballSmart encourages players to prepare their bodies so they can play better, reduce the chance of serious injury and fully enjoy Netball through school and the years beyond.

If you ask any Silver Fern or professional player they will most likely describe their Secondary School Netball as some of their favourite sporting memories, having fun, being competitive and making lifelong friendships.

Navigating teen sports can be confusing and difficult and at times it is challenging to make the right decisions for you and your sport.





The aim of the SmartPlayer resource is to support aspiring players of any ability throughout secondary school to:

- Get fit, strong and stay healthy
- Reduce the risk of serious injury
- Grow and extend their Netball performance
- Set goals and challenge themselves to achieve them
- Enjoy Netball to its fullest for a lifetime
- Provide practical off court tips to get the most out of trainings and prepare for games.

A SmartPlayer and Top Performing Teen is:



HAPPY AND THRIVING

Enjoys training and games. Netball is a source of fun and enjoyment.

HAS FRIENDS AND FAMILY

Good relationships with family and friends.

BALANCED

Feels in control of sporting commitments. Has interests outside of Netball. Has a rest day from sport once a week.

CHALLENGED

Enjoys the challenges.

FOCUSED

Able to concentrate in class. Sets and reviews goals.

FUFLED

Balanced, quality nutrition.

RESILIENT

Non-selection or losing is disappointing but the player can learn and move forward.

FIT AND HEALTHY

Sleeps well, 8+ hours (on average) each night.

"Use your passion to fuel your performance! Go for everything, have fun, make heaps of friends, don't take yourself too seriously and ask heaps of questions. You play your best netty when you're having fun, so be yourself and enjoy it!"

Tayla Earle

Northern Mystics, Secondary School player of the Year (2018), Aspiring Silver Fern (2019)

"A champion is defined not by their wins but by how they recover when they fall."

Serena Williams, elite Tennis player

Young players can put too much emphasis on what teams they are selected for early on. Many of our Silver Ferns and professional athletes didn't get selected in the top teams until later in their teen and schooling years.

Success is not the teams you are in or your results, rather WHO you become and HOW you handle the Netball journey.



10 Performance Tips (Talent optional)

- On Time
- Prepared and Organised
- Energised
- Great Attitude
- Doing Extra
- Optimal Effort
- Passion
- Positive Body Language
- Coachable
- Excellent Work Ethic

Plan your season - Quality versus Quantity

At the beginning of each season, take time to plan what teams and sports you will target. Aim for a maximum of 2-3 teams (across all sports).

Map out what days and times all practices and games are played. What would your week look like? (See page 13)

It can be difficult saying "no" to coaches and adults when they ask you to play for their team.



Top tips for saying "No, thank you"

- Give yourself some space, avoid committing in the moment.
- "Can I check with (Mum or Dad, my schedule), to see if that will work?".
- Sincerely say "thank you for the opportunity, unfortunately I am fully committed this season."
- In extreme cases you may need to get a supportive adult to tell the individual "no" on your behalf.

Goal setting

At the beginning of the Netball season set 3-4 performance goals. These are areas that are outside of the team or results, instead based on things that will improve your own performance.

Goals don't always have to be about how you play. You may choose some off court behaviours such as packing your bag each night, drinking more water or being consistent with your cool down.

SMART goals:

Specific

State exactly what you are aiming for.

- I want to be a better shooter by increasing my goal percentage.

Measurable

How will you measure success?

- I will ask my coach to keep my stats on shooting each game.

Achievable

Challenge yourself with each goal. Make sure it is realistic but also will demand some real effort to achieve it.

- I talked to my coach and she said a good aim is 80%.

Relevant

Does each goal actually help with your overall performance?

- Consistently shooting at a high percentage will help me be a better GA and will help my team.

Time

Set a date that you will achieve each goal (or review if you have not achieved it).

- I will check my progress each week but I have asked to meet with my coach half way through the season to review on progress and reset the goal if needed.

Be organised

Being organised means you can train and play with a clear mind.

- 1. Pack training clothes and equipment the night before.
- 2. Have all your food for the day prepared and packed the night before (especially breakfast if you have an early morning training).
- 3. Keep track of games, assessments, exams, family and social events on a large wall calendar so you can see at a glance what is coming up and when. This will also help balance out your year.
- Complete assessments in a timely manner. Using a wall calendar will help you see when the busy times are and when you might need to complete school work in advance.







Positive self-talk

Positive self talk makes you feel better about yourself. Its like having an optimistic voice in your head that always looks on the bright side.



- 1. View "failures" as learning opportunities. "What would I do differently next time?"
- 2. Believe that you can improve (have confidence and trust in yourself to put the work in and get better).
- 3. Be aware of what you are saying to yourself? Would you talk to a team member like that?
- 4. Everyone in a team has different strengths. What are yours?



"The physical is only an extension of what you're capable of doing mentally"

Debbie Christian, former Silver Fern #137

Relaxation

Teenage years are fun and exciting but there are many changes (physical and emotional) and some challenges.

Finding time and ways to truly relax is vital so that you can keep positive, energised, and cope with any challenges with a clear mind.

Relaxation tips:

- Focus on breathing in through the nose and out the mouth and count 4
 inhaling and 8 exhaling (this is an excellent quick way to bring calm during
 a game even if it's only repeated for 1 breath).
- Play some soft relaxing music. Avoid music with words (relaxing sounds of nature are a good start).
- Try some meditation apps: Stop, breathe and think teaches the beginnings of relaxation, mindfulness and meditation.
- Take a short walk outside (along a beach or in a park).
- Go to bed 30 minutes earlier than normal (screen free).



Puberty

- Puberty in females begins with a large increase in Oestrogen and Progesterone (hormones).
- On average this occurs around the age of 11 but is completely normal if it happens earlier or later.
- If you have any concerns at all or haven't started getting your period and you are 16 years, it's a good idea to talk to your local GP doctor.

Normal changes during puberty

Structure of the brain changes

Body fat increases

Increase in sweat and skin becomes oilier

Increase in weight

Rapid growth in height (muscle development can take a while to catch up with bone growth)

Hips widen

Changes in how you move. You land differently

Secondary sex characteristics (breast development, pubic hair, armpit hair)

Periods begin

Hormones can cause sleep disturbances

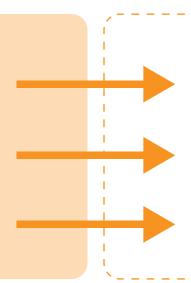


Social and emotional changes occur

Hormones are like the "code" for a computer, they tell some body functions what to do and when to do it.

Effect of puberty on sporting performance

- When players experience their growth spurt (increase in bone length) they can feel clumsy and uncoordinated. This is temporary and will correct its self once the muscle strength and brain functions catchup with the bone growth.
- 2. Breast development can be a difficult adjustment for many players.
- 3. Some players may feel self-conscious or uncomfortable playing when they have their period.



- Work hard on fundamental skills (jumping, landing and stopping) during year 7-10 in particular. The NetballSmart Dynamic warm up is an ideal opportunity to practise key Netball movements.
- Getting a well fitted bra is vital as even a 4cm movement from the breasts can cause discomfort and pain.
- There are several different hygiene options players can try, tampons, pads, cups and specialised period pants. Be open and appreciate individual and cultural variation.

Power of your period

Exercise during your period is one the of the most effective times to train for women:

- Reduces physical feelings of period pain.
- Can have a positive effect on mood.
- Body is able to produce it's strongest and fastest performances.
- Muscles are able to recover faster from exercise.
- Body can make peak strength gains.

The rise in hormones 5 days before the period, (the premenstrual phase) can make exercise feel harder and for many effects mood, sleep and cravings. Be kind to yourself over these short days, get enough sleep and keep exercising. Remember this is temporary.



SmartPlayer Movement

"If I land well, I play well, and I look after my knees" Bailey Mes, Silver Fern #150

Movement on Court and ACL Injuries

The ACL (Anterior Cruciate Ligament) is an important ligament in your knee. Due to the dynamic nature of the game and strict footwork rules, Netball has a high ACL risk. In addition females are more prone to ACL injuries, especially post puberty, due to changes in movement, landing and control strategies.

Minimise - ACL injury risk and improve your performance:

- 1. Start every training/game with the NetballSmart Dynamic Warm up.
- 2. Practise and improve your stopping and landing strategies and put these good strategies into your game. Check out the Landing Skills resource on
- 3. www.netballsmart.co.nz
- 4. Keep your core strong so you land with great trunk control. Helps performance.
- 5. Improve your overall strength (NetballSmart Body Weight Strengthening Programme).













"You are your habits under pressure so they better be good ones."
"Whatever you do at practise do it well. Quality is vital and make it purposeful."

Sharon Kearney, former Silver Fern Physiotherapist

SmartPlayer Training

To be your best:

- Play a variety of sports: A variety of different sports helps to develop a wide range
 of skills that will ultimately increase performance on the Netball court.
- Have a whole day off training and playing once a week: A day off all sport refreshes and energises your bodies and it will also rejuvenate your mind.
- Balance your week and season: Plan ahead to only commit to 2-3 teams across
 the Netball season (remember these might not be all Netball teams).

Learn to love strength and conditioning!

- When a player is fit and strong they will be able to execute skills at a higher level for longer and make better decisions under pressure.
- Make time to work on your core (trunk and abdominal muscles) and overall strength (see the NetballSmart Body Weight Strengthening Programme).
- Strength and fitness greatly reduces the risk of major and even minor injuries that can side line players.

www.netballsmart.co.nz

"Learn to love fitness. As much as we can dread conditioning it's something we have to do in order to continue to play the game. I use to hate fitness, but now I'm in a good routine and I look forward to doing it. Then I want to do a yoyo to see if I have improved. So learn about your body and train yourself into a positive mindset that will push you into enjoying fitness." (New Zealand Secondary Schools Netball Player)



Myth: You have to play in lots of different Netball teams to get "exposure" if you want to be a Silver Fern.

Fact: Elite athletes (like the Silver Ferns) are more likely to have played multiple sports in their youth, compared to non-elite individuals. It's much better to play in a few chosen teams and have the energy to play at 100% and stay injury free, than play in lots of teams, play fatigued and risk injury. All Silver Ferns in the 2019 Netball World Cup winning team played multiple sports growing up.

SmartPlayer Smart Training Checkpoint

Task: Check your training load by recording your weekly exercise load in the table below.

Write up in hours how long each exercise session is. Add all of these together in the "total" box.

- Include all sports
- Practices and games
- Strength and fitness
- School PE
- Social sports

Use the results to compare to the checkpoint tips on the following page

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Before School (am)							
During the day							
After school (pm)							

Total hours per week:	

SmartPlayer Smart Training Checkpoint

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An effective training week should include:

Challenging but enjoyable skill practices.
Game play (no more than 2 full games per week, excluding tournaments).
Strength activities (check NetballSmart resources for a body weight strengthening and core programme).
Full NetballSmart Dynamic warm up x2 weekly (can be at trainings).
Recovery techniques after every training and game.
A full day off all sport.
Total hours of structured exercise is less than your age.
No more than 2 Netball sessions per day.
A different sport.



What we eat and drink directly influences our performance and enjoyment of sport.



Not everything on social media is accurate!

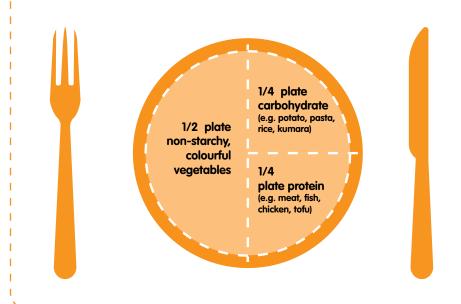
Fact: Balance is best

Eat a range of fresh foods.

What, and how much you need will be different from player to player so it's best to decide what works for you.

Cutting out food groups isn't healthy (unless you have a medically diagnosed reason).

Avoid supplements - nutrition is best from fresh food.



Example food plan: Normal school day

6:15am 7:00- 8:00am 8:30am 10:30am 12:45pm 3:45pm 4:00-5:30pm 5:30pm 7:00pm Travel to training **Team Training** Post training Fitness training Post training Morning tea Lunch Pre training Dinner Chicken or tuna + Apple + handful of Homemade dinner Muesli with milk and Pre training salad wrap. 1x fresh Pretzels, or Small chocolate milk natural nuts, or Dessert Honey on whole Greek yoghurt, or Banana + nuts, or fruit, or + almonds, or Fresh berries and Pottle of Greek grain toast. or Banana smoothie Peanut butter sand-Mixed dried fruit + Home made fruit

wich. 1x fresh fruit, or

Dinner leftovers.

yoghurt or

3 bliss balls.

Key points:

Greek yoghurt.

• Everyone is different so will need a varying amount of food – judge your own plan based on: energy levels, moods and performance.

with oats.

- Eat enough to fuel your training.
- Fuel pre and post training (within 30mins after finishing, protein is important).
- Healthy nutrition doesn't have to be expensive, flash or exclude food groups.
- Always have a mix of protein, carbohydrates and fats in each main meal.
- Water is vital for energy, concentration and performance. Make sure you are drinking throughout the day and especially during games and trainings.

Extra options:

nuts.

Breakfast:

Eggs on toast

Baked beans on toast

Avocado on wholegrain toast

Cereal (weetbix or nut based) with yoghurt

and fresh fruit

Peanut butter on toast

Snacks:

Boiled eggs

Peanut butter and apples slices

Tuna and rice crackers

Homemade baking

Vegetable sticks and humus

muffin.

Creamed rice

Lunches:

Tuna and chickpea salad Baked bean toasty sandwich

Mini quiches

Peanut butter and banana wraps

Mini home made pizzas (use pita bread as

yoghurt, or

Homemade slice.

a base)

A common question from young players is: "How do I prepare for a big game?"

The answer is simple: Players should approach all games with the same mental focus and level of preparation.

This enables you to have a good routine that sets you up to play the best you can. Repeating this for every game is the same as practising a skill, the more you do it the better you become.

Action	Timing
Night before	 Have a balanced dinner + water Get 8+ hours sleep All clothing, equipment and food ready Set 2-3 goals individual goals for the game Visualisation / relaxation techniques (great to calm the mind)
7:00 am	 Balanced breakfast (see page 16) to be eaten 2 hours before game time + water Re read goals Double check Netball bag for equipment needed
8:00 am	Meet team at courts, preventative strapping/bracing if required
8:40 am	NetballSmart Dynamic warm up
9:00 am	• Game
9:45 am	 Game finishes, cool down walk & stretch Within 30mins recovery snack (protein and carbohydrate mix, page 16 snack examples)
Afternoon	 Make sure you have a balanced lunch and water Roller, self massage or light walk and stretch Review your performance goals

Write out your own game day plan, use page 17 as a guide Tip: Note the game time and work backwards from there.

Action	Timing

UNDER FUELING and OVERTRAINING / OVERDOING:

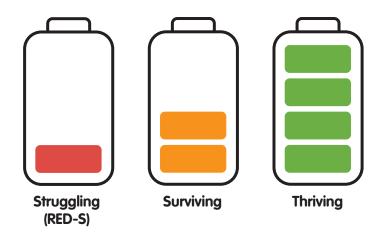
Teenage Netball players (no matter what level they compete at) are busy individuals. As well as still physically growing and developing, there are the commitments of school, PE, cultural groups, other sports, work, friends and family.

All these activities demand a high level of energy output. If players are not eating enough to fuel all these activities they may become energy deficient. Not eating enough to supply activity is called RED-S – Relative Energy Deficiency. This is especially the case if training and playing activity levels are high.

Under fuelling and overtraining warning signs:

- Constant fatique
- Sleep disturbances
- Drop in performance
- Repetitive illness / colds
- Periods stop, become irregular or are delayed
- Multiple injuries especially stress fractures
- Relationship problems
- Anxiety
- Depressive thoughts
- Decreased motivation
- Worry around eating
- Find it hard to relax, fidgety

What do your energy levels look like?



RED-S - Relative Energy Deficiency in Sport

Occurs when an individual under fuels relative to energy output over a period of time.

- 1. Intentional: Purposefully restricting the amount of food or cuts certain foods to lose weight.
- 2. Unintentional: Accidental lack of balanced food intake with an increase in training amount or intensity. Lack of time and lack of preparation = lack of food intake.

RED-S Effects on the body:

- Stop getting regular periods. A regular period is normal and vital for current and future health and wellbeing
- Decreased bone strength
- Increase in stress injuries (shin splits, stress fractures)
- Decreased muscle strength
- Lowered immunity and gets sick more often
- Poor concentration
- Poor mental health
- Decreased sporting performance

- Recovery from exercise takes longer
- Decreased co- ordination
- Can affect the cardiovascular system (heart and arteries)
- Impaired growth and development
- Stomach and bowel issues (pains)
- Poor sleep / sleep disturbances

What to do:

If you are concerned about yours or another player's energy intake:

- Talk to a trusted adult about your concerns.
- Seek medical advice GP doctor or a qualified nutritionist.
- Decrease the amount of exercise you are doing, days of training and the intensity. Ensure there is at least 1 day of rest.
- Increase the amount and frequency of eating.

SmartPlayer Warm Up, Cool down and Recovery

NetballSmart Dynamic Warm Up: Ignites our body and mind ready to perform (reducing serious injury risk).

Practice and conditioning **Game preparation** and warm up Game play Cool down and recovery

Practice & Conditioning: Strengthens the body and develops skills, to increase performance.

Game Play = Fun: Rewards of all the hard work!

Cool Down: Replenishes the body ready for the next training or game.

Recovery: A continuous process throughout the week that helps the body mend from exercise, and prepares for the next physical or mental challenge.

What recovery is made up of:

- Sleep 8+ sleep per night can decrease injury rate by 60%
- Hydration water is best
- Nutrition- what & when you eat (within 30mins of finishing game/training see page 16)
- Mental space away from netball
- A whole day off sport

- Stretching
- Cold water therapy ice baths
- Pool sessions
- Massage or using a roller
- Compression clothing
- Yoga there are lots of great apps you can download to do at home

SmartPlayer Injury Management

The 3 biggest injury risks:

OVER LOADING: Too much Netball and training over a period of time (i.e. committed in too many teams)

SPIKE IN LOADING: A sudden increase in Netball and training for example playing in a one-off tournament without being fit enough or returning from a lazy summer holiday and going straight into Netball trials.

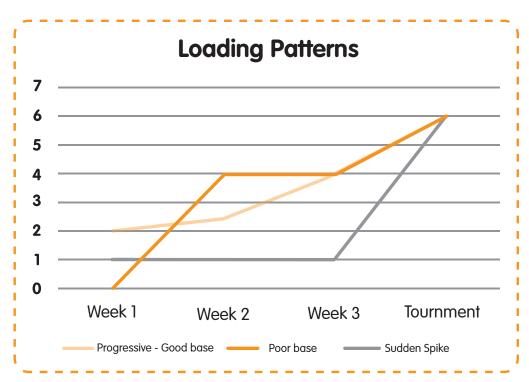
PREVIOUS INJURY: Having a previous injury, especially one you haven't fully recovered from, increases the likelihood of getting another injury.

Other contributors:

LACK OF SLEEP: Our bodies need 8+ hours sleep on average each night to fully physically and mentally recover. Sleeping an average of 8hrs each night can reduce injury risk by 60%!

POOR NUTRITION: Players require a balanced diet full of fresh fruit, vegetables, good quality protein and complex carbohydrates (such as wholegrain bread, brown rice) to stay fit and healthy.

NOT STRONG OR FIT ENOUGH: Instead of doing too much some players don't do enough to get their bodies physically ready to play.



Progressive loading allows the body to adapt to Netball. A poor preparation base or a sudden spike in loading exposes the body to a sudden load and it fails to adapt and often breaks.

SmartPlayer Injury Management

Injured? What to do next?



Stop what you are doing immediately



Rest the injured area. You may be able to exercise and join in trainings in a moderated way as long as it doesn't impact on recovery.



Ice the injured area for 15-20mins every 2-3 hours for up to 48 hours. Using a zip lock bag and glad wrap to hold in place is a handy court side first aid trick.



Compress

Use an elastic bandage to reduce the amount of swelling, make sure you take this off when you sleep.



Elevate

Raise the level of the injured area above your heart level, i.e. lying on the couch place pillows under the injured area.



Diagnose

Seek professional help from either a Physiotherapist or a Doctor

Return to play

- 1. ALWAYS stick to the plan your medical professional has created for you. Don't be tempted to return to play too early.
- 2. If injured you need to gradually return to training, then progress into competitive game play, guided by a medical professional.
- 3. Use the NetballSmart Dynamic warm up to test game readiness. If you cannot complete 100% of the warm up at 100% intensity, then you are not ready to return to train or play.



SmartPlayer Injury Management

Ankle Injuries

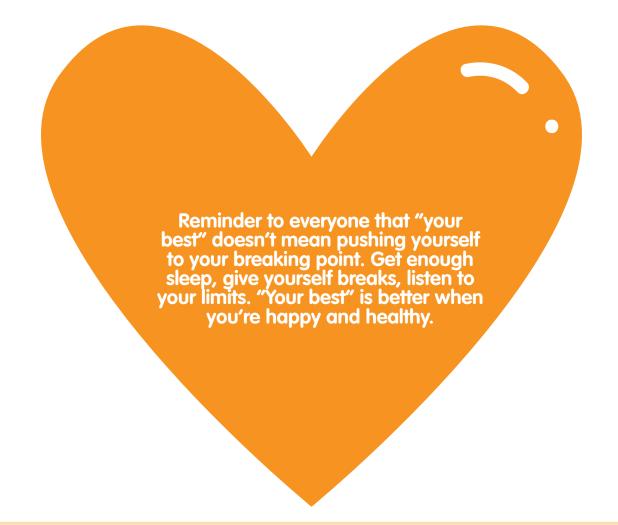
Landing in confined spaces and often close to people means ankle Injuries are common. However, like knee injuries there are simple things you can do to make a difference:

- 1. Wear a Netball shoe they provide the stability you need to change direction well.
- 2. Start every training / game with the NetballSmart Dynamic or Power Warm up.
- **3.** Practice and improve your stopping and landing strategies Add stopping into all Netball drills.
- 4. Practice balance activity with and without a ball. (see www.netballsmart.co.nz for the Core and Stability resource and some other great information about ankle injuries).
- **5.** If you have sustained an injury that has been significant you will need to strap or brace your ankle for all future Netball games to help prevent further injury.
- **6.** Rehabilitate well and listen to your Physiotherapist / Doctor, and resist returning to training and game play until you are medically cleared.
- 7. Remember the NetballSmart Dynamic warm up is a great test to determine game readiness. If you cannot complete 100% of the warm up at 100% intensity, then you are not ready to return to train or play.





Your BEST is BETTER when you're happy and healthy



"I think in terms of the balance side of things, if you feel you need a break, physically or mentally, then a rest day doesn't mean you aren't committed or that you don't want to work hard to be the best. It just means you needed a breather, and that's okay" (New Zealand Secondary School Netball Player).

SmartPlayer 10 top tips to help you navigate your Netball



Be Prepared

Be organised and you'll get the most out your sport.



Smart Training

Training supports the game. Be strong, be fit, be stable, move well, and land well. You will get more out of your game and minimise injury risk.



Quality vs Quantity.

Limit the number of Netball teams you play. A variety of sports will develop a wide range of movement and sporting skills.



Movement Changes

With puberty, females change how they move and land. Practise your landing to optimise performance and minimise injury risk.



Loading

Over loading (too much training or playing) or a sudden increase may increase your injury risk. Plan your day/week/month/year.



Sleep well

8+ hours of sleep on average per night can reduce injury risk by up to 60%.



Eat well and Drink well

What you eat and drink directly influences your performance and enjoyment of sport. Eat a balanced diet and eat enough to fuel your body.



Smart Injury Management

Injuries do occur. It's how you manage them that is important. Be injury Smart.



Power of the Period

It is normal and it is important. Understand it better and talk about it more.



Enjoyment

Most importantly enjoy your Netball journey and set yourself up for life long participation in Netball.





My Smart Roadmap

My Smart Roadmap is designed to help players take responsibility for their own wellbeing and recovery to ensure they are keeping a good training/life balance. In each section check in on yourself by marking either a 1, 2, or 3.

🕦 Over stressed. Pick two options from that category that fits into your day. ② Mildly unbalanced. Pick one option from that category that fits into your day.

3 Well balanced and ready to go. No actions needed.

Smart Mind Balance

Ensure you have a clear mind. Where are you sitting mentally today, is your mind cluttered?

How do you feel?





Meditation

Take 5–10 minutes out of your day to focus on your breathing and relax your mind.



Positive Connection

Put aside some time in your day to have a positive connection with family or friends. This may just be 30 minutes over a coffee.



Enjoyment

Take some time to do something you love! This could be art, baking, building, reading. This is "you time".



Get Outdoors

Take some time to remove yourself from it all and get some fresh air. This could be at the park, the beach, gardens, whatever works for you.



Plar

Sit back from it all and organise your thoughts. This could be by creating a 'To Do' list or setting small goals.

Smart Body Balance

How energised are you feeling today? Make sure you have done everything you can to look after your body.

How does your body feel?



Low Energy Neutral – low energy Energised



Sleep

Aim to get 9–10 hours sleep tonight or have a 30 minute nap between 12–4pm to make up for lost sleep.



Screen Time

Minimise your screen time. Take an hour to put down all devices. This may also help with sleep quality.



Hydration

Make a conscious effort to drink at least 2 litres of water. Training or games may require you to drink more. Guidelines are in Smart Preparation on the NetballSmart website.



Nutrition

ENERGY IN = ENERGY OUT. Take a food diary to ensure you are fuelling yourself for what your day brings.



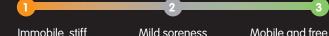
Hygiene

Do something that makes you feel clean and relaxed. e.g. tidy/organise your room or desk, hot shower before bed.

Smart Training Balance

Listen to your body and make sure you do what you can to look after it.

How do your muscles feel?





high muscle pain

Stretch Session

Incorporate a 15–30 minute stretching session into your day. Guidelines can be found on the NetballSmart website.



Foam Rolling

Release affected muscles by incorporating a foam rolling session into your day. Guidelines can be found on the NetballSmart website.



Massage

Massage is a good option for muscular release if foam rolling is not an option. This can be either self-administered or administered by somebody else.



Active Recovery

Go on a light walk or bike ride to increase blood flow and relieve stress in muscles.



Pool Recovery Session

Have a 30 minute pool session. This can aid mobility without putting excess stress on muscles and joints. May also help induce fatigue to help sleep quality.







