

Demonstrating a Skill



Everybody has heard the old saying that a picture paints a thousand words.

Demonstrating a new skill is an important component of coaching.

Tips for demonstrating a skill

- Make sure all the participants can see the demonstration. Be aware of distractions such as the sun, traffic or other groups.
- The coach doesn't always have to do the demonstration. Other options include one of the players who you know can perform the skills, or a picture, diagram or video may help.
- Ensure that the skill is demonstrated in the context of the game situation, so that participants understand 'why' as well as 'how' it is done.
- Highlight the main points of the skill. Keep explanations simple and brief. Try not to emphasise more than two or three key points at a time.
- Avoid pointing out things 'not to do' as this will only overload the players.
- You can break the skill into separate components for the purpose of the demonstration, but ensure you demonstrate the complete skill at normal speed first and at the end.
- Let the participants practice. New information stays with people for only a short period of time unless they are able to try the skill.
- Verbal instructions are sometimes unclear - accompany verbal instructions with a complimentary visual.
- Always show the correct skill last. If you are showing a player the difference between what they are doing and what you want them to do, demonstrate the correct skill after you have shown them their current method.