

## The Key to Successful Indoor Training



What you do this winter with your teams can really make or break your season in the coming year. It is true that many players will have just completed a long season and now they need rest but it is important for you, the coach, to start planning for the year ahead. 'Rest' can be forgotten when it comes to planning your training programmes but too much training in the winter can lead your team to becoming 'January Stars' and peaking long before the season even begins so it is important that you use suitable activities to ensure your players enter the season fresh and strong.

So what age groups should be participating in Indoor Training? The answer to this is quite simple... any age group. Indoor training can be adapted for all teams in clubs from nursery level through to adult. Many teams continued training outdoor throughout the winter and had to battle all the elements of the weather from snow through to freezing fogs but with so many facilities available now in our clubs and communities it is important that we utilise these to maximum effect.

### What are the advantages of winter indoor training?

- A chance to continue to develop skills
  - A gym/ hall can be an ideal place to practice techniques. The limited space, even floor surface and opportunities to use the walls all speed up the game and make it more technically demanding. Indoor training provides an excellent opportunity for players, especially the very young, to work on coordination and effectively improve their technical skills
- Keep in touch with teammates through the winter months and have some fun
  - It can be difficult to get your team back together after the winter months if they have not been in contact so by keeping them training during this season you are preparing for the new year. Players enjoy their team mates company and using indoor facilities allows you to use new training methods and have some fun rather than usual training of preparing for competitive matches
- Enter the pre season training sessions focused, fit and ready to go!
  - Although your indoor sessions will not be as intense perhaps as your usual training it will still assist your players to keep a level of fitness and feel more prepared for the new season. It will make it much easier to motivate your players to get them back on the field of play
- Warm indoor environment where the practices are never cancelled
  - It is very frustrating for coaches and players alike when sessions have to be cancelled from week to week due to inclement weather conditions. By having your training indoor this is never a problem and your players will always be aware of their training days and times

- Ideal opportunity to get more parents/ volunteers involved
  - New volunteers find it difficult to assist with teams as they feel they do not have the required skills to help out. Indoor training should be fun and different and coaches should ensure to 'ask' any parents who are standing around to assist in some capacity particularly if you are using circuit training

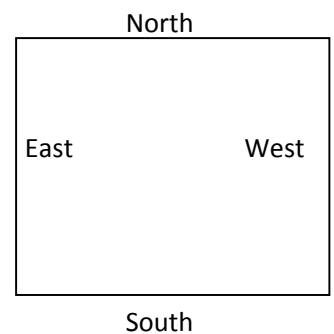
### What should you include in your indoor session?

The first thing you need to do when you arrive at your venue is complete a safety check and make sure that all facilities are suitable. You need to check for any obstacles, spillages, lights or any other barriers that may affect your session. If certain items cannot be removed it is important that you mark them off using cones so no players run anywhere near them. After that your session should look familiar to your usual sessions but you just need to be aware of the minimal space you have to work in.

It is important to have a good warm up in your sessions. A few samples are provided below. Notice minimal equipment needed but including the ball as much as possible. You also need to conduct your stretches after or during your warm up activities.

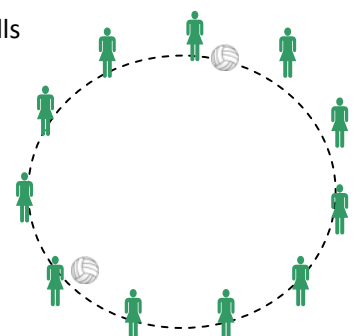
#### 1. The Wall Game

- All players stand in centre of hall. Identify four walls as North, South, East and West (can use colours etc for younger children)
- Coach calls name of wall and players must run, touch wall and run back to centre
- Can vary type of movement (sideways, backwards, skipping etc)
- Coach can change names of walls or tell players to run to opposite Wall (you call 'North' but they run to 'South')
- Add footballs so players must solo to the walls or hand pass of wall



#### 2. Pass and Follow

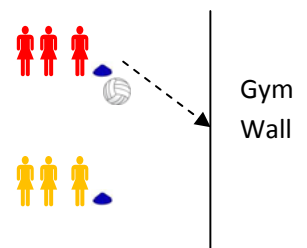
- Players all jog on spot in circle formation as shown with two footballs
- Players with ball must fist pass to another player and follow their pass to take up new position in circle
- Add more footballs to keep moving quicker
- Can also expand circle and player must solo before passing
- Coach can change to roll on ground for pick up or throw in air for high catch etc



The most important part of your warm up is ensuring that your players have gotten their first breath and now feel ready to carry on with main activities. With regards your main session you can then incorporate some drills but it is essential to also include fun games as players can demonstrate all their skills together through these games. When deciding what activities you will use in your session it is important to look at what is available to you in your indoor hall. Can you use lines on the floor as paths to follow when soloing? Can you use walls as 'passing' stations? Or is there other equipment available to you like using a box/ basketball net as a shooting target. Indoor training allows you to use your initiative and do some fun training that you could not do before. If you have soft mats available it can also give you the opportunity to develop the correct diving techniques for your goal keepers. Below are two simple drills that you can set up to use indoor:

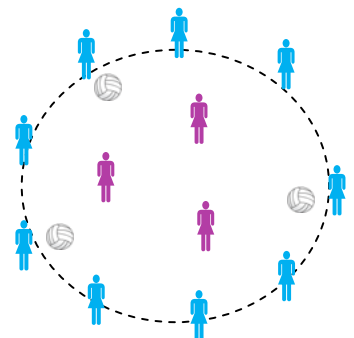
### 1. Pass and Move

- Players line up in groups as shown in front of wall
- First player fist passes against the wall and immediately moves to back of the line. Next player must catch the ball before it hits the ground and repeats for next player etc.



### 2. Switch Ball

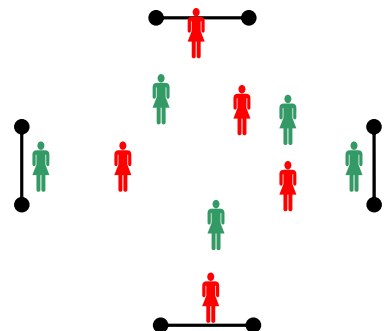
- Players set up as shown. Use 10 + players where possible
- Three players are in middle of grid and remaining around circle
- Give a ball to a number of players on outside. Players in middle move to a player with a ball, receive it, turn and pass to another player without a ball
- Change players after few minutes



As said previously fun games are the most effective way of allowing players to utilise all their skills and ensure that they develop their decision making capabilities. I have included a sample of a game that can be used for all ages when designing your indoor session. This game will help your players develop all the skills needed in gaelic football.

### Captain Ball

- Mark out four goal areas as shown and divide into two teams
- Two players from each team act as goal keepers on opposite sides
- Objective of game is to hand pass to own goal keeper to score
- After each point, goal keeper must pass to opposition to restart
- Alternate goal keepers



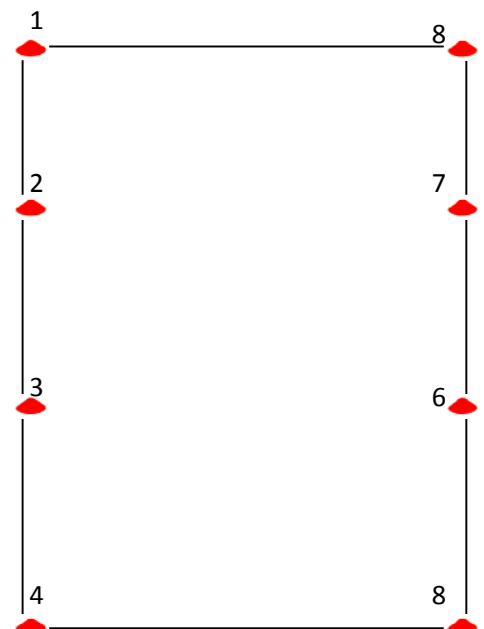
It is up to you, the coach, to decide on the appropriate session you need for the age group you are catering for but the most important thing is to plan keeping the size of the hall, equipment available and numbers expected in mind at all time. Circuit training can be ideal for dealing with any numbers as you can change the number of stations you need to cater for your group.

### What is circuit training?

Circuit training involves participating in a variety of activities at a number of stations around the hall. The team is divided into an equal number of players for each station and when circuit begins all players attempt to perform tasks designated at their station. Tasks vary from station to station and differ in physical and technical demands. It is essential that you use age appropriate activities for the players on your team. The coach should recruit parents etc as volunteers to assign to the stations and get them involved. The coach will blow the whistle after a certain amount of time (e.g. 30 seconds) and players move to next station in clockwise direction. Always keep an eye on the time during circuit training as you have to be consistent with time per station. You should aim to complete all ball activities on left and right side. Below are two sample stations. The first is aimed at underage teams while the second could be used with adult teams. You are encouraged to implement your own ideas also and vary activities from week to week in your stations.

### Under 7/8/9 Sample Circuit—Mix of ABC's (Agility, Balance & Co-ordination) and Skill Work

- Station 1: Hurdles - 2 lines of 4/5 small hurdles to jump over in various ways
- Station 2: High catch against wall
- Station 3: Fist pass in pairs between 2 cones
- Station 4: Soloing on the spot
- Station 5: Punt Kick in pairs
- Station 6: Solo in Zig Zag line
- Station 7: Ladders - through ladders using various techniques
- Station 8: Kicking/ Striking ball at a target



## Adult Sample Circuit

- Station 1: Hurdles
- Station 2: Hand passing in pairs at speed
- Station 3: Zig Zag sprinting
- Station 4: Kicking at target
- Station 5: Ladders
- Station 6: Punt kick to partner, sit down and up quick to catch return pass
- Station 7: Skipping Ropes/ Medicine balls
- Station 8: Zig Zag Soloing

### Important tips when circuit training:

- Ensure players are not spending too much time per station
- Keep the groups small when possible
- Try to set the circuit where there is ball activity followed by physical activity or keep it all with ball activity
- For the ball activities it might be useful to use right foot/ hand on first circuit and left foot/ hand on 2<sup>nd</sup> etc.
- Allow an agreed time, between stations, for players to have a breather.
- Have water bottles at each station or at least every 2<sup>nd</sup> station
- Be conscious of players not executing skills correctly as they get tired. This is when good coaching comes into play.

So hopefully all the above will give you an insight into the reasons behind indoor training and also the types of activities you should be planning. I am not saying all teams should train during the winter as I am fully aware that you as coaches need a break as do many of our players but it can be very beneficial to keep your teams together and help them prepare for the coming season. So in preparation for your indoor sessions you should be looking in your area for suitable facilities and hopefully your new season will be a huge success.