

Practising

As the child becomes more competent in his ability to play the game so will the game become more complex. He will begin to use all his strokes to make use of all the space on the court. He will attempt to outwit his opponent and win the contest. As a result he may have to be prepared to move the full distance of the court from the centre and do this quickly. The child will have to improve his strokes and become fitter to play the game at a higher level. Strokes are improved by practice; fitness is improved by training. Below is given some guidance on how to practise and how to train.

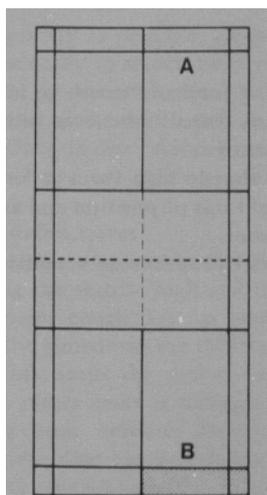
Stroke practices

A good stroke is one performed simply and easily with the minimum of movement and effort. A good stroke is one when the shuttle is hit with control and accuracy to the space it is aimed at. Strokes are improved with practice. Practice implies the repetition of a stroke until the player gains control and accuracy with the shuttle. Here are some practices for the strokes.

Overhead clears

A = Parent

B = Child Use the half court. Both players stand at the rear of the court.



First practice

1. A. serve high to B.
2. Both players hit forehand overhead clears to each other.
3. The shuttle should land within the lines of the rear court.
4. Play a rally of 30 shots.

Second practice

1. A. serve high to the backhand side of B.

2. *B.* hit an overhead backhand clear to *A.*
3. Play a rally of 30 shots.
4. Change over.

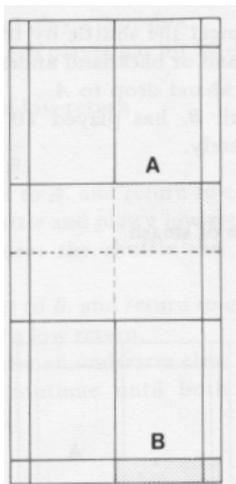
Third practice

1. *A.* serve high to *B.*
2. Both players hit either forehand or backhand overhead clears to each other.
3. Repeat these practices. This time take two steps towards the centre after the shot. Make certain the child assumes the ready position after each stroke. Each stroke should involve a preparation, action, and a recovery.

Overhead drop shot and underarm clears

First practice

1. *A.* serve high to *B.*
2. *B.* play an overhead forehand dropshot to *A.* (the shuttle should land in the forecourt near to the net).
3. *A.* move to the shuttle by stretching and play a forehand underarm clear to *B.*
4. Play a continuous rally until *B.* has played 10 drop shots.
5. *A.* and *B.* change over.



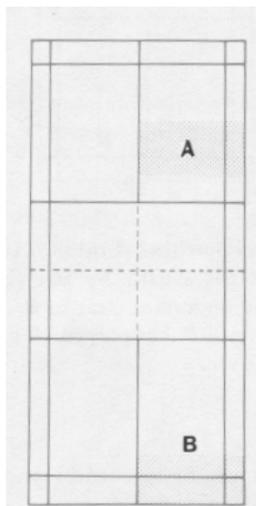
Second practice

1. *A.* serve high to *B.*
2. *B.* play a backhand overhead drop shot to *A.*
3. *A.* move to meet the shuttle by stretching and play a forehand or backhand underarm clear to *B.*
4. Continuous rally until *B.* has played 10 drops. 5. *A.* and *B.* change over.

Third practice

1. *A.* serve high to *B.* on the forehand side.
2. *B.* play forehand dropshot to *A.*

3. A. move to meet the shuttle by travelling or stretching and play a forehand or backhand underarm clear to *B*.
4. *B*. play a backhand drop to A.
5. Continue until *B*. has played 10 drops forehand and backhand alternately.
6. Change over.



Smash and return of smash

First practice

1. A. serve high to *B*. in the rear court.
2. *B*. smash to backhand of A.
3. A. play an underarm backhand clear to *B*.
4. Continuous rally until *B*. has played 10 smashes.
5. A. and *B*. change places.

Second practice

1. A. serve high to *B*. to the rear court.
2. *B*. smash to the forehand of A.
3. A. play underarm forehand clear to *B*.
4. Continuous rally until *B*. has played 10 smashes.
5. A. and *B*. change places.

Third practice

1. A. serve to *B*.
2. *B*. smash to the forehand or backhand of A.
3. A. play a forehand or backhand clear to *B*.
4. Continuous rally until *B*. has played 10 smashes.
5. A. and *B*. change places.

Overhead drop shot and Low return

1. A. serve high to *B*.
2. *B*. play a forehand or backhand dropshot to A. and return to the central base.

3. A. move to shuttle by stretching and play a low return for the shuttle to pass low above the net and land close to the net.
4. B stretch to meet the shuttle and hit an underarm clear.
5. A. move back and play an overhead dropshot and return to central base.
6. B move to the shuttle and play a low return to land close to the net.
7. A. stretch forward to play an underarm clear.
8. B move back and play a dropshot.
9. Continue until each player has hit 10 dropshots.

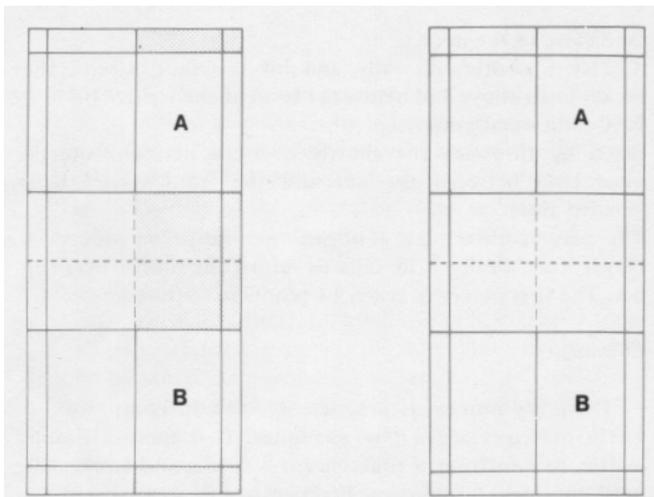
Overhead smash and low return

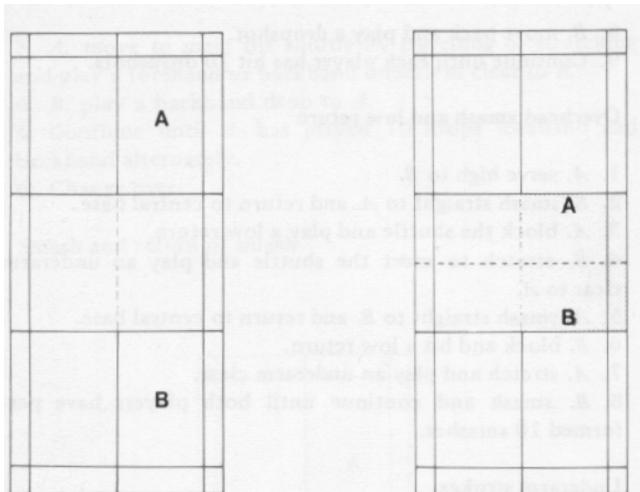
1. A. serve high to B.
2. B.smash straight to A. and return to central base.
3. A. block the shuttle and play a low return.
4. B.stretch to meet the shuttle and play an underarm clear to A.
5. A. smash straight to B and return to central base.
6. B.block and hit a low return.
7. A. stretch and play an underarm clear.
8. B smash and continue until both players have per-formed 10 smashes.

Underarm strokes

Forehand and backhand low returns.

1. Both players stand in the mid court.
2. Low returns should skim the net.
3. Hit the shuttle to each other using forehand and back-hand strokes.
4. Hit the shuttle with the racket head above or below the level of the wrist.
5. Use stroke through, glancing blow or impact shot.
6. Do this whilst facing the net and also whilst turned sideways to the net.
7. Rally for about 5 minutes





Net strokes

Forehand and backhand strokes with the racket head,

- (a) above the level of the wrist,
- (b) below the level of the wrist.

1. Both players stand in the forecourt.
2. A. throw the shuttle over the net.
3. B. returns the shuttle to pass low over the net and to land close to the net.
4. Play a continuous rally and hit the shuttle with the racket head above and below the level of the wrist.
5. Conditioned game.

Begin by throwing the shuttle over the net. The shuttle must land between the net and the front service line.

The players then play a normal net rally for points. A player loses a rally if he fails to return the shuttle over the net. The first player to reach 11 points wins the game.

Comments

There are numerous practices for the different strokes. These practices are a few examples. It is quite a simple matter to construct a practice for a stroke and work at it until the stroke improves. Practice is an essential part of improving the strokes, but it is only a means to an end. The end is to become a better player. A good player plays opponents, not just strokes.

Fitness for badminton

Fitness training

Fitness training is not necessary for the young child for usually he can keep quite fit by playing the game. In fact it is only when the child is beyond adolescence that he really needs to concern himself with fitness for badminton. He should train only if he wants to enter tournaments and compete against other players at a higher level. For the teenager who would like to become fitter for badminton here is a brief explanation of what is involved.

There are many different methods of specialised training. These methods can be written down, but they do need expert guidance in their performance. Skill is required to train properly and unless an expert is on hand to guide the training a player can do more harm than good to his body. For this reason the following methods are very basic, but if performed well will raise the level of fitness.

What is fitness?

Fitness is a difficult word to explain for it is used to describe both the physical and mental states of a person e.g., 'I am fit', or 'I feel fit'. Take the person who wakes up on a sunny day, stretches and exclaims 'I feel fit' when in fact a few minutes hard exercise might prove the contrary; or the highly trained player, superbly fit physically, who goes on the court and doesn't 'feel' fit.

Any discussion about fitness also raises the question of 'fit for what:'. Do we mean fit for the rigours of daily life or a specialised sport? Fitness is required to delay the onset of fatigue caused by work and to aid recovery after fatigue. When fatigue sets in, skill is affected and performance drops. A basic level of fitness is necessary for general life and this level increases as more demands are made on the individual. It follows that the top class player requires a high level of fitness. Let us now consider how fitness is acquired.

Physical fitness

There are three essential factors.

1. *Exercise.* A fit body requires strength, endurance, flexibility and speed. These are developed by exercises in which the body is trained to withstand the rigours of activity.
2. *Rest.* A certain amount of rest is important to allow the body to recover from the exercise. This involves the rest gained between regular training sessions and the rest gained from regular sleep.
3. *Diet.* Correct diet ensures that the body is supplied with the essential fuel to meet the demands of training.

Other factors:-

Balance. A systematic training programme is essential for any improvement in fitness. This is achieved by planning the correct balance between exercise, rest and diet. *Purpose.* You should have some reason for getting fit. This could be from wanting to feel better generally to training to become the best player in the club, league or county.

Mental fitness

The combination of correct balance of exercise, rest and diet should ensure a fit body. Add to this an objective (a reason for getting fit) and a player should adopt the necessary mental attitude to acquire the 'feeling of fitness'.

Any successful training programme must consider these factors. They are basic to general fitness and the specific fitness required for top class badminton.

Getting fit

Let us assume that the purpose is to reach and maintain a basic level of fitness and so improve general performance on the court. Exercise, rest and diet are involved. Rest and diet are personal to the individual and commonsense will guide one in these matters.

Moderation is perhaps a virtue here. Exercise is the key ingredient and so below are some different methods of exercising.

1. *Play.* Regular and constant play for three or four evenings a week should help to develop fitness and improve a player's strength, endurance, speed and flexibility.

2. *Training.* A particular form of exercising is selected to develop a particular aspect of fitness. Running develops endurance and speed. Weight training or circuit training can develop strength and endurance. Often much repetition occurs and exercising may appear like doing drill. Do not confuse training with drill. Both involve repetition but with drill the player does the exercise without thinking. Training involves thinking about how you are doing, what you are doing. It requires skill to train properly even if the exercise is only a simple one.

General training methods

1. **Running.** This is good for the heart, lungs and the legs. It is enjoyable if done properly.
Technique:- Keep a good carriage, head up, arms held loosely and flexed at the elbows. Run lightly and get into a rhythm and keep to it. It becomes easier and more enjoyable with practice.

Method:- Plan a set distance or a set time (10-15 minutes). Go out three to five times a week. Begin gradually and combine jogging and walking until it is possible to run for the whole time. As it becomes easier increase the time or distance, or do parts of or the whole of the run at an increased speed.

2. **Skipping.** This is good for footwork and speed.

Technique:- Skip lightly like a boxer. Try different foot patterns. Upright body, arms near side and rope held loosely, turned with the wrists. Look ahead and not at the ground. Rhythm is very important and it helps to skip to music with a regular beat.

Method:-

(a) Do a ten minute session three or four times a week. Skip 2 minutes and rest one minute. Do this five times.

(b) Skip for 10 minutes non-stop.

As it becomes easy increase the skipping period or reduce the rest interval.

3. **Circuit training.** The purpose is to develop strength. Strength is developed by working against resistance and of the various methods used, weight training and circuit training are the most common. Weight training is too specialised to be included in this book for it can be very harmful unless properly supervised. A player requires strength in the shoulders, arms, trunk and legs. Circuit training is excellent for this purpose. The exercises which follow can be performed in the home and are written out in the form of a training programme.

Exercise	Repetitions		
	A	B	C
1. Press-ups	5	8	10
2. Sit-ups	10	15	20
3. Squats	10	15	20
4. Back bends	3	4	5
5. Squat thrust	5	10	15
6. Step-ups	10	15	20

Method.

There are three programmes, A, B, and C. Begin with programme A. Go through the circuit from 1 to 6 in that order. When one circuit has been completed rest one minute. Repeat in this way until a total of three circuits have been completed. Perform the exercises continuously but smoothly and rhythmically. Do the session 3 or 4 times a week in conjunction with running and skipping. When programme A is easy to do then progress to B and so on to C.

Description of exercises



1. **Press-ups.** Lie face downwards on the floor. Girls take a kneeling position. Place the palms of the hands on the floor at the side of the shoulders with the fingers pointing forwards. Keep the body straight and straighten the arms to raise the body off the floor. This is the press-up. Lower the body and repeat the exercise continuously. This exercise can also be done in a kneeling position.



2. **Sit-ups.** Lie on the back with your arms by your side, and legs flexed at the knees. Sit up and twist the trunk towards the left knee.

The hands slide forward as you sit up. Lower the trunk to the ground and repeat the movement to the right side. Do this exercise in a smooth continuous rhythm.



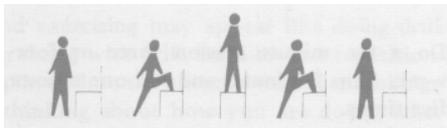
3. *Squats*. Stand upright. Keep the body straight, head up and lower the body by bending the knees into a sitting position. Stand up again. This is one squat.



4. *Back bends*. Lie on the front, hands clasped behind the head and elbows raised. Raise the upper body and the legs off the ground. Hold the position and then lower. This is a back bend.



5. *Squat thrust*. Begin in a deep squat position. Place the hands on the ground to take the body weight. Thrust the legs backwards full stretch and then return quickly to the squat position. Do this continuously quickly and smoothly without a pause.



6. *Step-ups*. Use a chair, low bench or a step on the stairs in front of you. Step up onto it, straighten the legs and step down again. This is a step-up. Do half with the right leg leading and half with the left leg leading.

Specific training methods

1. *Training on the court*. Fitness can be improved during practice quite simply by stressing the quality of stroke production and general movement about the court. For example during a practice on the overhead clear try to return to the central base each time between the strokes. Keep the body upright and alert and don't sag between shots. Make sure the racket is always held in front of the body and the racket head above the level of the wrist in a ready position. Move quickly and softly on the feet. This is very difficult and very tiring. Get behind the shuttle each time. Do not be lazy and stretch when not necessary. Hit the shuttle with good stroke production and do not be satisfied with less than perfect accuracy and control. To appreciate just how much physical work is involved in doing this, try a rally of 50 overhead clears and notice the effects.

2. Training sequences. In these a player performs a pattern of movement from the centre to one of the four corners and back to the centre. This is the training sequence. It is possible to perform a single stroke sequence in which the player returns to the same corner each sequence; or a two or three or four shot sequence in which several single sequences are combined.

Examples:- **One shot sequence.** Start in the centre with a racket. Travel to the corner, shadow an overhead clear and return to the centre. This is one sequence. Do 10 repetitions.

Two shot sequence. Start in the Centre. Move to the corner of the forehand rearcourt, shadow an overhead clear and return to the centre. Move to the corner of the backhand rearcourt and return to the centre. This is a 'Two shot' sequence. Do 5 repetitions.

A circuit of sequences on various strokes can be planned in this way to improve fitness and skill. This form of training can be done with a partner acting as a 'feeder' so that it takes the form of continuous rallying or with the player performing the sequences on his own.

Below is an example of a circuit of sequence training.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • represents the centre. ↗ represents the direction and corner if facing the net. 		
<i>Circuit</i>		<i>Method</i>
1. 	5 repetitions	Work with or without a feeder. Complete three repetitions of the circuit. Take rests when necessary.
2. 	5 repetitions	
3. 	5 repetitions	
4. 	5 repetitions	
5. 	5 repetitions	
6. 	5 repetitions	
7. 	5 repetitions	

Comments on training

Fitness training need not be unpleasant. Training if performed regularly can become a part of one's daily life. It need only be performed in moderation and the accumulative effect of regular exercise and a care for standards of performance in practice will increase fitness. Training is only a means to an end. Though it can be enjoyable, the satisfaction comes from the end result, the improvement in performance.

Organising competitive badminton

The majority of players enjoy organised competition. Match play and tournaments provide the opportunity for young players to test their performance in the competitive situation. This is the best way to measure the performance of the child and will provide a good indication of his progress as a player. In practice the emphasis is on im-proving skill; in competition the emphasis is on winning. Competition usually brings out a more determined effort to overcome the opponent and win the game. The result of competition is usually a general improvement in the standard of play. However even in competition it should not be forgotten that enjoyment of the game is the important factor. The enjoyment derives from the challenge of the opponent, the battle of wits as one player tries to defeat the other. The child will learn and develop his interest if he enjoys the contest. This he will do if not too much is made of the result. To win or to lose a contest is only the state of affairs for that one occasion. The loser always lives to fight another day, and so has the opportunity to reverse the result.

Competition is an important part of playing a game. For that reason some idea of the various sorts of competition and how to organise competitive badminton is described below. Two types of competitive badminton are considered:

1. *Match Play*. One team of players against another team of player

2. *Tournament Play*

- (a) Singles or doubles or mixed doubles open tournament organised on a knock-out basis
- (b) Handicap tournament of singles, doubles and mixed doubles organised on a knock-out basis.
- (c) American tournament. To achieve the best results from a series of games.

The organisation of competitive badminton is considered under these categories.

1. *Match Play*.

The Team: The team usually consists of six players, arranged in three doubles pairs. Each pair play a contest against each pair of the opposing team.

The order of play: The pairs in each team are numbered as 1st pair, 2nd pair, 3rd pair.

	<i>Team A</i>	versus	<i>Team B</i>
Pair	1	v	1
	2	v	2
	3	v	3
Pair	1	v	2
	2	v	3
	3	v	1
Pair	1	v	3
	2	v	1
	3	v	2

Altogether nine matches are played.

Organising the match: Usually when a match takes place it is between the home team and a visiting team. The visitors are the guests of the home team and certain courtesies should be extended to the visiting team.

1. When arranging the match, also enclose a diagram which shows the directions to the venue. There is nothing more frustrating than searching for a building in a maze of streets.
2. When the visitors arrive, a member of the home team should welcome them and show them to the changing rooms.
3. Allow the visitors to knock up on court before the match begins. Make a point of doing this so that they can get used to the lighting and the conditions of the court.
4. Explain which part of the ceiling is considered as a let and which part is a fault.
5. Provide refreshments during the match and make sure that the visitors are served first.
6. At the end of the match, the captain of the home team should thank the visitors for the contest.

These are a few courtesies essential for developing good social relationships between players.

Equipment: For a normal contest of nine matches, two cartons of shuttlecocks should be provided. In match play feathered shuttlecocks are used unless both teams agree to use plastic shuttlecocks. A scorebook is used to keep a record of games played and points scored. They can be obtained from most sports shops.

2. Tournament play.

An open tournament consisting of singles, doubles and mixed doubles events.

It is not essential to hold all these events. The number of events will depend on the number of entries for the tournament or the number of events offered to the players. However, the principle involved for organising an open tournament is the same for one event or five events.

In this tournament all the players start level. The tournament is organised on a knockout basis. This involves a gradual process of elimination, until two players are left to contest the final.

If the tournament is restricted to the members of one particular club, the players may enter by signing their names on a notice, designating which event they wish to enter. If the tournament is open to a wider field, entry forms are sent out to surrounding clubs. The entry form should provide the following information:

1. The name of the tournament.
2. The venue and directions.
3. The date of the tournament.
4. The closing date for entries.
5. The name and address of the secretary who will receive the entry forms.
6. The list of events.
7. The cost of entry for each event.
8. Any rules or conditions under which the tournament is played.

Once these details have been arranged and the entries received, the players' names are mixed together and the draw is made. There may be problems if the number of entries does not permit an even draw. The ideal number of entries which lead to the final two contestants is from 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, 64 etc. If the number of entries is between any of these numbers, several players will begin in either the second round or the first round of the tournament. This is arranged to allow the final to be between two players. If this is difficult to arrange, further information may be gained from the *Handbook of the Badminton Association of England*.

The tournament

Requirements:

Shuttlecocks. Assess how many matches will be played in the tournament. To be on the safe side, order sufficient shuttlecocks to allow two for each match.

Recording results

Results sheet: This should be displayed. It should show the order of the draw and record of results of matches played.

Results Slips: This is a small book containing results slips. A result slip is given to the players for each match. The contents should show the name of the players involved in the match, the title of the event and the court number. At the end of the match, the players should sign and record the result on the result slip before handing it into the recorder.

Officials

Referee: The person in charge of the Tournament. He is there to decide on all matters involving disputes and questions concerning the rules. He should keep a copy of the Laws of Badminton available for reference.

Recorder: The recorder keeps a record of the matches to be played and arranges the order of play. He is responsible for keeping the Results Sheet up to date as matches are completed.

Umpires: The umpire controls the game and keeps the score for the players. At this level of play, the players can act as umpires for matches themselves. It is one way in which players can accept additional responsibility and acquire a knowledge of the Laws. For a small tournament, this type of organisation is sufficient. Senior Championships will obviously require more officials and a more detailed organisation.

Handicap tournaments

A handicap tournament is organised in exactly the same way as above. The difference is that the players do not start level. Each player is handicapped according to his ability. The advantage of handicapping is that it gives the weaker player an equal chance of winning against the strong player.

Example:

Player A. is a strong player.

Player B. is a weaker player.

Player A. may receive a handicap of minus 10 points. If the game is played up to 15 points, player A. must score 25 points to win a game.

Player B. may receive a handicap of plus 5 points. Player B. has only to score 10 points to win the game.

The game begins at Player A. minus 10 points, Player B. plus 5 points. It is important that the varying ability of the players is considered very carefully when giving handicaps.

Handicap tournaments are useful at the beginner level and club level, as the strong player is forced to work hard to score points and cannot make many mistakes. The weaker player has a chance to go for his shots and can afford to make mistakes and still win. Both players are motivated to play well and the result is usually a general improvement in each player's standard of play.

American tournament

In this type of tournament, the players are placed in sections. A player must achieve the most wins in his section to reach the final. This type of tournament can include all the possible events in the game, i.e. singles, doubles, and mixed doubles.

The number of sections arranged are dependent on the number of players. If there are 16 players in a singles tournament, there may be four sections. In each section there will be four players. The players in each section will play against each other. The player with the best results wins his section. With four sections there will be four winners. The winners play off a semi-final, and then there is a final between the winners of the semi-finals.

The advantage of this system is that the competitors play more matches and have an increased chance of reaching the final. In a knockout tournament, one defeat and the tournament is over for that particular player. In the American tournament, even if a player loses one match, he is still in the tournament and has another chance of winning.

The organisation for the Handicap and American tournaments is the same as for the open tournament. Players who want to organise tournaments should be aware of the advantages and the disadvantages of each system, and should be able to organise competitive badminton. These systems are basic ones and the organisation is simple and practical.