

1 **Back to School Netball Style: An Emerging Highly Inclusive Game for Physical**  
2 **Education or Sport**

3 **Shrehan Lynch & Sonya Ottaway**



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5 *Photo Courtesy of Gene Ozgar*

6 Physical educators are looking for new ways to excite students to participate in  
7 lessons. Brusseau & Burns (2015) have identified that the most valuable units to increase  
8 physical activity in Physical Education (PE) lessons are fitness activities and large space  
9 invasion games. The Society of Health and Physical Educators (SHAPE America, 2015)  
10 recommend well-designed PE programs that keep students active for most of their time in  
11 class. Invasion games have the ability to adhere to this recommendation and are particularly  
12 popular in many PE classes; however, not all invasion games are created equal. Novel games  
13 are said to support students' multicultural experience especially if the selected game is played  
14 in another country or culture (Clancy, Portman & Bowersock, 2007). Netball is a fresh  
15 invasion game option for teachers to involve students at all ability levels. Netball is an all-  
16 inclusive and engaging 'true' team global sport that has the ability to keep students active and  
17 engaged in PE classes.



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## 19 History of Netball

20 In 1892 James Naismith's basketball rules for women were adapted by gymnastics  
21 instructor Senda Berenson Abbott and she introduces the game to her students at Smith  
22 College, Massachusetts (O'Reilly & Cahn, 2007). This version of the game was called  
23 women's basketball. Berenson solved the question of overtaxing the women physically by  
24 dividing the court into three equal sections and requiring players to stay in their assigned  
25 section. Thus, the players could not run all over the court and become exhausted. She  
26 justified the three-section court because it encouraged team play. To assure womanly play  
27 Berenson prohibited players from snatching or batting the ball from the hands of another  
28 player. To increase the pace of the game, players were not permitted to hold the ball for  
29 longer than three seconds and they could not bounce or dribble the ball more than three times.  
30 It wasn't until the 1960's that this version of the game was changed to the name of  
31 'Netball'. The sport of Netball has taken off through the Commonwealth countries. It is  
32 currently played semi-professionally in the top four ranked netball countries in the world:  
33 Australia, New Zealand, England and Jamaica. However, the United States has never made it  
34 into the top four in the world. Even though Netball has been played in the USA for 40 years,  
35 several organizations have failed to get Americans playing the sport. Netball America is the  
36 leading authority on Netball in the United States and they are focused on showing how  
37 Netball creates an exciting atmosphere of participation and supports individual progress, team

38 unity, good health and education of youth. They also provide young people with the  
39 opportunity to learn Netball and then progress through a pathway to either recreational play  
40 or elite Netball.

41 Netball America's aim is to encourage children and families to be physically active,  
42 maintain a healthy lifestyle and includes those with disabilities to ensure they feel part of  
43 their community. Netball America's Be An Inspiration Program™ falls in line with SHAPE  
44 America's National Standards & Grade-Level Outcomes for K-12 Physical Education (2014).  
45 The national standards identify the skills and knowledge necessary to support the  
46 development of physically literate individuals: those who have the knowledge, skills and  
47 confidence to enjoy a lifetime of physical activity.

48 Netball America seeks to have Netball included as part of the core curriculum for  
49 educational systems throughout the USA as a way of promoting good health and aiding in the  
50 education of youth. Netball America runs clinics and education programs throughout the  
51 USA to get youth moving; reduce obesity and provide opportunities to underserved youth  
52 through inclusive strategies for all. They are also the first Netball organization to have  
53 introduced Netball into core USA education curriculums. Miami-Dade County Schools,  
54 under the leadership of Dr. Jayne Greenberg, District Director, was the first school district to  
55 have Netball introduced to their teachers at their continuing education day.



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57 Benefits in PE

58 Netball provides a platform in PE with many benefits. Netball is a team orientated  
59 sport; and a wide range of positions suits all ability levels, played at any age by both males  
60 and females and it is a cost-effective sport to implement and maintain. It is also a great way  
61 to enhance youths hand/eye coordination skills and teaches them on space awareness and  
62 body control. Playing Netball requires you to run around the court, sprint short distances and  
63 change direction quickly.



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65 Implementing netball into a PE curriculum is relatively painless as many students  
66 have already been provided with opportunities to play similar sports such as basketball,  
67 handball and ultimate Frisbee. These ‘sister sports’ allow students to make cognitive  
68 connections with more familiar activities. Considering this, the sport provides an opportunity  
69 for students learn a new game on a level playing field. Thus, all students learning the game at  
70 the same time gives students a fairer chance to succeed.

71 Netball is an inherently fair sport due its inclusivity; the court is split into three zones  
72 and the ball has to be passed and touched in each zone, therefore everyone has to actively  
73 contribute to the scoring of the game. This is achieved as the ball must be passed to other  
74 players and must be touched in each of the thirds before one of the two goal shooters can  
75 shoot for goal. Consequently, all players are of equal value and importance within the game  
76 as each one has a designated role. The various roles are restricted within areas of the court  
77 and this creates a group environment where teamwork skills are vital.



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## 79 Implementation

80           When implementing the game of netball teachers should consider the students in front  
81 of them and set up games that support student success and allow students to make direct  
82 connections. An example recommended by Clancy, Portman, & Bowersock (2007) in their  
83 Netball article was: pass the ball like you would a basketball. Teachers might also consider  
84 the instructional model used to teach netball, we recommend teaching netball through the  
85 Teaching Games for Understanding Model or Sport Education. An outline and more  
86 information on these models can be found in Metzler (2005). Ultimately our reasoning for  
87 this is to increase student activity levels, promote an authentic sporting experience and  
88 promote teamwork in which each model promotes.

## 89 Set up

90           The equipment is easy to setup and portable and can be used indoors, outdoors and  
91 even on grassy flat surfaces. The equipment is also adjustable for different age levels. A  
92 netball court is 100 feet by 50 feet; divided into three areas (thirds) with two goal circles, The  
93 court can be seen in Figure 1. Most gymnasiums in the United States have a basketball court,  
94 this can easily be adapted and marked out using painters tape. Refer Figure 2 for a picture of  
95 a basketball court marked up.

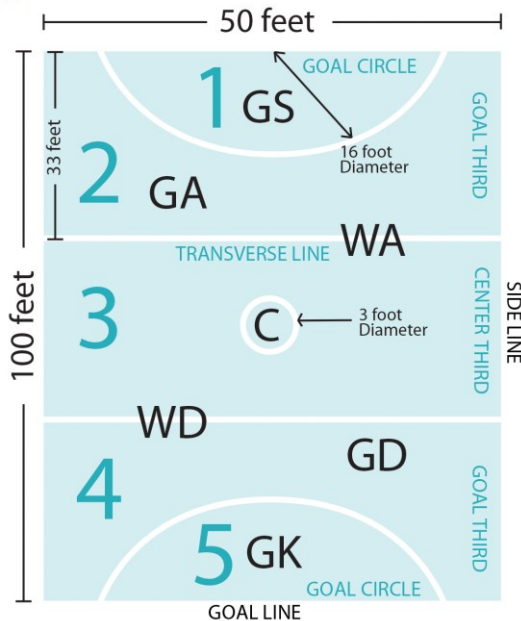
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97           Figure 1: The Netball Court and Playing Positions





## NETBALL COURT



## Playing Positions



Each playing position has a specific area of the court in which to play:

**GS (Goal Shooter)** Scores goals and works in and around the goal circle with the Goal Attack. Areas 1 & 2

**GA (Goal Attack)** Feeds and works with the Goal Shooter to score. Areas 1, 2 & 3

**WA (Wing Attack)** Feeds the goal circle players giving them shooting opportunities. Areas 2 & 3

**C (Center)** Takes the center pass and controls game flow between attack and defense. Areas 2, 3 & 4

**WD (Wing Defense)** Looks for intercepts and prevents the opposition Wing Attack from feeding the ball into the goal circle. Areas 3 & 4

**GD (Goal Defense)** Defends the Goal Attack, looking for intercepts, trying to prevent the opposition Goal Attack and Goal Shooter from scoring. Areas 3, 4 & 5

**GK (Goal Keeper)** Works with the Goal Defense to prevent the opposition Goal Attack and Goal Shooter from scoring. Areas 4 & 5

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Figure 2: FISU World University Netball Championships 2016 organized by Netball America and held at St. Thomas University, Miami, Florida.

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### Player roles

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There are seven individuals on a netball team and each player must remain in their

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assigned playing areas and have specific roles. That being said, they can rotate during interval

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periods. You can also have players learn to umpire as two umpires (one of each side of the

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court) is also needed. Figure one identifies the positions along with their role and the zone

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they are assigned to.

<b>RULE</b>	<b>EXPLANATION</b>	<b>INFRINGEMENT / RULE</b>
<b>Contact</b>	No player may contact an opponent, either accidentally or deliberately touch another player	Penalty pass to opposing team = against a player therefore the infringer may not take part in play until the ball has been released or make any attempt to intercept the penalty pass. Anyone can take the penalty pass in that area.
<b>Obstruction</b>	A player must stand 3ft from the player with the ball	Penalty pass to opposing team
<b>Footwork</b>	Having caught the ball, a player may land or stand on: one foot - while landing foot remains grounded, the second foot may be moved anywhere, pivoting on the landing foot if desired. Once the landing foot is lifted, it must not be re-grounded until the ball is released; or two feet (simultaneously) – once one foot is moved, the other is considered to be the landing foot, as just stated. Hopping or dragging the landing foot is not allowed.	Free pass to opposing team: Any player allowed in that area may take the free pass. The infringer does not have to stand where the infringement happened.
<b>Playing the ball</b>	Once the ball is caught it must be passed or shot within 3 seconds. A player who has caught the ball may not bounce or drop the ball and replay it.	Free pass to opposing team
<b>Offside</b>	Player moving out of own area, with or without ball (on a line counts as within either area)	Free pass to opposing team
<b>Over a third</b>	Ball may not be thrown over two transverse lines without being touched	Free pass to opposing team
<b>Out of Court</b>	The ball is out of court when it contacts anything outside the court area (not the goal post). The ball is returned into play by a throw-in taken from a point outside the line where the ball left the court. The player stands with foot close to the line	Throw in within 3 seconds
<b>Scoring</b>	Each goal is worth one point only and must be shot within the goal circle	Only the GA and GS can score
<b>Starting the game</b>	The game is started (and restarted after each goal) with a centre pass from the centre circle which must be received in the centre third	If the centre pass is not received in the centre third a free pass is given to the other team
<b>Simultaneous contact/fouls</b>	Toss-up between players at a height no more than two feet above the shorter person's shoulders. Ball may be caught or batted.	



*Photo courtesy of Michael Clubine*

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### 113 Conclusion

114 Netball might seem daunting to many teachers to implement in their curriculum and  
115 many may think where can I start? A Netball resource was created for the Shape America  
116 National Conference in Boston outlining sessions for implementation and can be found on  
117 Netball America's website. Help is always at hand from Netball America and you can contact  
118 them at [Info@NetballAmerica.com](mailto:Info@NetballAmerica.com) to organize clinics for schools and PE teachers. Teaching  
119 netball can effectively promote sport-related motor development concepts, physical activity  
120 levels and cultural awareness. Furthermore, with support from Netball America it can provide  
121 recreational and elite opportunities for students who have a passion for the sport. Lastly, as  
122 the spirit of netball is inclusive it increases teamwork and collaboration between students  
123 which is needed now more than ever to provide an engaging curriculum to our students.

124 Note: Netball America's website is <http://www.netballamerica.com/> or contact Sonya

125 Ottaway at [President@NetballAmerica.com](mailto:President@NetballAmerica.com).



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139 Notes about contributors

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