



## Squash Canada Coaching Program alignment to Long Term Development model

Scientific research has concluded that, as a broad guideline, it takes at least 10 years and 10,000 hours of training for a talented athlete to reach elite levels. This translates into slightly more than 3 hours daily of general physical activity, directed training or competition, for 10 years.

The Squash Canada Coaching Program is:

- athlete-centered and participant-centered
- driven by coaches
- supported by administration, sport science and sponsors

Canada's Sport for Life Long-Term Development (LTD) model identifies 8 stages of development, based on developmental age. That is, an individual's maturity level, rather than chronological age. Squash Canada's Coaching Program considers an individual's biological markers and training ages to create periodized plans specific to that individual's development needs. (The female and male groupings in each stage are labels assigned at birth, based on physical attributes. However, individuals may not fall within or identify with such labels. Make sure to respect and be inclusive of everyone's needs to encourage positive, equitable, safe sport experiences.)

- **Awareness and First Involvement**
  - In Awareness, prospective participants and leaders are informed of the range of activities available and how they can take part. First involvement refers to the first experiences participants have in sport.
- **Active Start**
  - For male and female participants from 0 to 6 years of age
- **FUNDamentals**
  - For male participants from 6 to 9 years of age and female participants from 6 to 8 years of age (1 to 2 training years)
- **Learn to Train**
  - For male participants 9 to 12 years of age and female participants from 8 to 11 years of age (2 to 3 training years)
- **Train to Train**
  - Growth rate dependent – for male athletes 12 to 16 years of age and female athletes from 11 to 15 years of age (3 to 6 training years)
- **Train to Compete**
  - Approximately for male athletes from 16 to 23 or more years of age and female athletes from 15 to 21 or more years of age (5 to 8 training years)
- **Train to Win**
  - For male athletes 19 or more years of age and female athletes 18 or more years of age (8 to 10 training years)
- **Active for life**
  - Individuals can enter this stage at any level of development



The Squash Canada Coaching Program, in conjunction with the National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP), is designed to meet the needs of these participants and athletes by certifying coaches who have been trained, evaluated and certified in a coaching context. This is reflected in our Participant Development Model and our Coach Development Model.

Squash is classified as a late specialization sport. Typical ages are listed, but some learners in each group will be earlier or later than others. Squash Canada's Coach Certification Program aligns its Long-Term Development (LTD) model to the NCCP. The program is designed to ensure coaches are properly trained and certified to develop participants in the best possible way. We currently offer 5 coach pathways under the 3 NCCP streams, specifically Community Sport, Instruction and Competition. Each coach pathway has various requirements to progress coaches through the NCCP Training and Certification Pathway – In Training, Trained and Certified.

It's important for coaches to understand that the NCCP isn't linear. That means an individual may enter any coach pathway. Before selecting the applicable coach pathway, coaches should decide what kind of coaching they want to do and with what kind of athletes or participants they want to work.

### **How Squash Canada Coaching Program aligns its LTD model with NCCP streams**

The Squash Canada Coaching Program trains squash instructors through the **Community Sport stream**, which covers both the **Awareness and First Involvement** and **Active Start** stages of development.

Awareness and First Involvement can vary for participants depending on when they first learn or experience the sport of squash. This may include, but not be limited to, happening in an at home environment, a school activity, a community event or a squash facility.

Active Start is primarily home-based and school-based. It stresses daily physical activity with a focus on proper movement skills: running, jumping, wheeling, twisting, kicking, throwing and catching.

Well-structured "munchkin fun and games" programs are offered in some squash clubs. Gymnastics and swimming complement the program.

The Squash Canada Coaching Program trains instructors through the **Community Sport stream**, which covers the **FUNDamentals** stage of development and trains and certifies coaches through the **Instruction – Beginners stream**.

The Instruction – Beginners stream, covers the **FUNDamentals** and **Learn to Train** stages of development.

**FUNDamentals** cover fundamental movement skills and overall motor skills with the focus on athleticism, ability, balance, coordination, speed and fun. Competition is in



the form of skill awards and in squash-related games, rather than squash matches and tournaments.

**Learn to Train** is a major skill learning stage. In the Instruction – Beginners stream, basic squash skills, technical, tactical, mental, and physical are introduced.

Recommendation: Squash-specific training 3 times a week and participation in other sports 3 times a week.

The Squash Canada Coaching Program trains and certifies coaches for the **Instruction – Intermediate stream**, which covers the **Learn to Train** stage of development.

In this context, Learn to Train progresses to complete the training of all basic squash skills required by intermediate players. All basic squash skills should be taught before entering the Train to Train stage.

The Squash Canada Coaching Program trains and certifies coaches for the **Competition – Introduction stream**, which covers the **Train to Train** stage of development.

Train to Train covers practices to develop excellence in technique and tactics, and further develop mental skills. This is also a major fitness development stage.

Recommendation: Squash-specific training (technical, tactical, mental and physical) 6 to 9 times a week, including complementary sports.

The Squash Canada Coaching Program trains and certifies coaches for the **Competition – Development stream**, which covers the **Train to Train, Train to Compete** and **Train to Win** stages of development.

Train to Train further develops the athlete's abilities in all performance factors, excellence in technique, strategies and tactics, and refines mental coping strategies. This again is a major fitness development stage.

Train to Compete now prepares to mix the training into match performance. Physical conditioning, technique, strategies and tactics, and advanced mental preparation are competition-specific. The athlete specializes in this sport and trains 9 to 12 times a week.

Train to Win focuses on podium performances. Athletes are trained to peak at selected events and to plan effective rest periods. Physical capacities are maintained or improved, and technical, tactical, and playing skills are further developed.

The Squash Canada Coaching Program trains instructors and trains and certifies coaches through **all streams**, which covers the **Active for Life** stage of development. At any age, anyone can enter the Active for Life stage, which is more recreational and involves self-driven development.