

Stages of Skill Development

Recommended Practice conditions	Initiation	Acquisition	Consolidation	Refinement	Creative variation
	First contact	movement patterning	Correct execution in variable conditions	Minor improvements	Inventing new movements
Surrounding environment	Stable and predictable free of distractions	Stable and predictable free of distractions	Increased variability and distractions in the environment, but not to the point where movement patterns deteriorate	Competition conditions	Conditions similar to those encountered in the highest level of competition
Decision-making, or uncertainty of the situation in which athletes are involved	No decision- making or options to choose from	Simple decision- making, maximum of 2 options	More complex decisions to make, increased frequency of decision-making, and more options (3-4)	Complex decisions, as many options, and at the same frequency as in a competition	Conditions similar to those encountered in the highest level of competition
Speed of execution	Slow and controlled	At athlete's own pace	Increased, variable, and close to competitive demands	Similar conditions in competitions	Similar to highest level of competition
Importance of being precise and consistent	Not important	Moderately important	Precision and consistency are sought	A high degree of precision and consistency are sought	Perfection is sought at all times
# of repetitions, or opportunity to execute the movements	As needed, depending on athlete's general motor development	High	High	As many as possible	As many as possible
Risk factor and consequence of error	Completely safe conditions, errors of no consequence	Low risk conditions	Less than or similar to what is encountered in regular competition	Similar to a high level of competition	Similar to highest level of competition
During training the emphasis should be on....	Basic stances and positions; getting the idea of what the movements are about, look like	Global execution and general form of the movement	Maintaining the form of movements and some performance consistency under a variety of conditions and under stress	Creating conditions that stress the specific elements that need adjustments	Generating new and unfamiliar situations