

Support for sport

Where to play

Once the basics are mastered and it's time to go and hone skills out on the practice court, the track or in a scrum with 14 others, BBC Sport Academy offers a starting point to more information on local courses or finding a place to play.

In each of the nine sport categories there is a contacts link which, through partnerships with major sporting organisations, reveals a clickable map of the British Isles for youngsters to pinpoint where they live and access links to sites with information for finding a local club anywhere across Britain.

The Sports Charter

At grass roots level, it's vital that young people are aware of their rights in relation to the members of their team, their coach and their parents. The Sports Charter does not offer prescriptive advice, but it does offer young people a set of guidelines for reference if they are feeling uncomfortable with any aspect of the sports they are involved with. The ten points of the charter are explained below:

1. You have the right to be treated with respect regardless of race, religion, colour, language, sex and disability.
2. You have the right to a safe environment off the field and to be protected from emotional, physical or sexual mistreatment or abuse from any section – players, coaches, parents etc.
3. You have the right to be protected from violence, bullying and aggression from opponents and teammates on the field.
4. You have the right not to be ridiculed or criticised by parents, supporters or coaches.

5. You have the right to express an opinion and develop ideas providing it is done responsibly.
6. You have the right to play sport for your own reasons and not be the victim of unrealistic expectations from anyone else.
7. You should respect other teammates, coaches and game officials.
8. You should take responsibility for your own actions and behaviour.
9. You should respect the rules of your chosen sport.
10. You should respect your sporting environment and equipment.

Careers guide

Apart from wanting to be the next David Beckham, many young people aren't aware of the depth and breadth of careers and employment within the sports and leisure industry.

Only a small percentage of talented youngsters will go on to make a living out of playing sport professionally, but that doesn't mean the association and enthusiasm has to end for those with less ability.

This section offers lots of ways to make a living in the sport you love, apart from playing, to really get young people thinking seriously about how they can develop and qualify further in the sports environment through coaching, administration or management to make a difference in other ways.

Sport is fun

BBC Sport Academy isn't about getting young people into the gym for hours on end – its aims are to stir an interest in sport and create the motivation for them to go out and try it for themselves.

Sport should not become a chore for young people, and to make sure fun is the name of the game, the BBC Sport Academy has created 10 new animated Flash games and a unique series of mobile phone text message challenges set by sporting stars to make practising a pleasure.

Play – 10 BBC Sport Academy interactive games

BBC Sport Academy has teamed up with some of the hottest animation designers around to create 10 fantastic internet games to give young people their first shot at competing – in the heptathlon for example – deciding which equipment will prevent sports stars from injury and help with improving reaction times for the smash return.

Mind gym



Meet the familiar looking “Svensons” to uncover where your mental strength lies and the types of sport you're suited to. Sven Youronnext Myson analyses whether powers of motivation, confidence, relaxation and concentration are in tune to slot home that crucial penalty when the

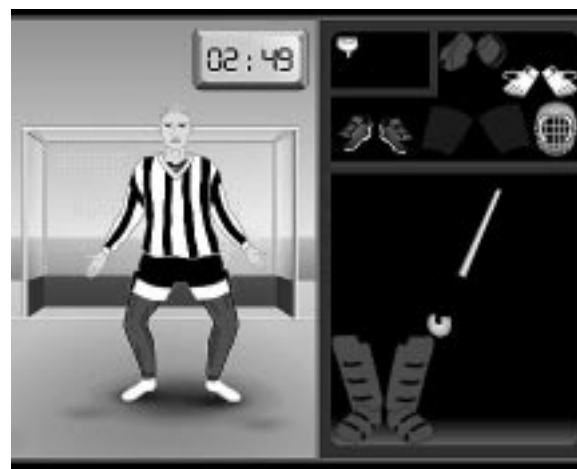
pressure is on. Answer three questions from each category to find out your mental profile.

Recipe for success



With the screech of his moped, Jamie Olive Oil challenges you to create a healthy, balanced diet fit for a high-performance athlete. Create breakfast, lunch and dinner and an energy-boosting snack to find out the right amount of bread and cereals, fruit and vegetables, dairy and protein and liquids a sports star needs to compete. Plus, pick up tips on food facts and a glossary of what's good and what's bad for a healthy diet.

Get your kit on!



Having the right protective kit is essential for cricketers, boxers, hockey players and skydivers!

Louis Lennox introduces a race against the clock to kit-up a sports star before they get a nasty injury. Click and drag pieces of kit in the right order and discover what each item of kit is and how it works out in the field.

Fair or foul?



Cheating and foul play are the scourge of professional sport and John Motson, the famed football commentator, reveals how to treat your opponent with the respect they deserve. On the virtual football pitch, answer fair play questions to win possession of the ball and make passes until you score a goal – get questions wrong and give the ball away to the other team. Watch winning goals again with the action replay button and, at full time, hear Motty advise on improvements for your personal conduct!

Denise Lewis heptathlon

Enter the Commonwealth Games stadium and use all your skill and judgement to steer Denise to another gold medal in the heptathlon. Take on five cartoon athletes in the hurdles, 200m, long jump, shot-put and javelin to win points and take your place on the podium.

The five remaining games include:

Smash return

A chance to return the biggest serves in tennis coupled with a tutorial on how to test your reaction speed.

Kicking kings



See how many conversions you can make in this challenging rugby kicking game hosted by the voice of rugby, Bill McLaren.

Virtual athlete

Find out if you have got what it takes to prepare a virtual athlete for the biggest race of their lives.

Virtual body

Take a trip around the body and match up areas of the gym to develop a training programme.

Pulsometer

Discover the biology behind the pulse, measure your own and take it to the limit!



SMS – The BBC Sport Academy text message challenge

BBC Sport Academy aims to bring sport to young people wherever they are with its unique series of weekly SMS Challenges to beat sports stars at their own game.

Kieron Dyer has counted the number of consecutive headers he can keep up in a minute, Nick Faldo has been filmed putting blindfolded from five yards and Mark Ramprakash has recorded the number of wickets he can take in two minutes, to name just a few.

A video clip of the sports star performing their challenge will be available on the Sport Academy website for tips on how the stars did it and to prove it is possible! So go on – challenge yourself!

The BBC Sport Academy text club asks kids to sign up on the website or send a text message to 07736 120000 to register to receive the SMS Challenges. A skills challenge for each of the Academy sports – football, rugby, swimming, golf, cricket, basketball, athletics and tennis – will then be sent out weekly for eight weeks, starting from 1 August.

The highest score from SMS Challenge responses will receive a BBC Sport Academy prize. The top challenge scores plus the best text comments will also be posted on the site each week to let challengers see how they compare to the best of the rest in the SMS Challenge leaderboard.

Detailed information is not required to register, just first name, age and the first half of the person's postcode. The BBC covers the cost of sending out the messages, although responses will be charged at the person's standard text message rate. It is possible to unsubscribe from the BBC Sport Academy SMS Challenges at any time.

Contributors to BBC Sport Academy

The “Hall of Fame”

If you’re looking for some inspiration or motivation to make that early morning run, these quotes from the most dedicated sportsmen and women should give you that final push towards achieving excellence.

Football

Robbie Savage, Leicester City and Wales

“Even if you think that you are not good enough – as I once thought – keep trying, keep believing in your own ability.”

Gary Neville, Manchester United and England

“Being a professional footballer is the greatest thing I could ever imagine. There isn’t anything in your life that can give you a buzz like running out in front of 60,000 people.”

Keith Gillespie, Blackburn Rovers and Northern Ireland

“The best thing is to enjoy the winning as much as you can because there are going to be plenty of disappointments too.”

Chris Coleman, Fulham and Wales

“There have been times when I’ve been in pain and I’ve felt like I can’t get through another day. But something always tells me to keep going.”

Marianne Spacey, Fulham and England

“Enjoy it and make the most of it because you don’t know what is going to happen next. Even when you lose you still learn and in the end you win from losing.”

Jayne Ludlow, Arsenal and England

“An American coach once pointed out to me that British athletes tend to stay in the comfort zone – but you’ll never achieve your potential that way. I always push myself to the limit.”

Rugby

Brian O’Driscoll, Ireland and British Lions

“Scoring tries is fantastic, but it gives me as much satisfaction being an integral part of a good team try.”

Scott Quinnell, Wales and British Lions

“What I wanted to do above anything else was play rugby and I’m one of the lucky ones who made it.”

Swimming

Mark Foster, 50m freestyle world champion.

“The crucial thing is to believe in yourself. If you have done all the training then there is nothing to stop you being the best.

“When I swim a big race I focus so hard that everyone else and everything else is completely blanked out.”

Basketball

Ronnie Baker, London Towers

“I cannot stress enough that small guys out there can make it as well as big guys. We’re even a lot smarter as well.”

John Amaechi, Utah Jazz

“I was 17 and had only played for six months and my only dream was to play in the NBA – it is the absolute pinnacle.”

Randy Duck, Brighton Bears slam dunk specialist

“Some people say white men can’t jump but I happen to disagree.”