
ENCOURAGING MORE WOMEN AND GIRLS TO PLAY SQUASH

What does a Squash Girls Can session look like

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It's important to ensure that when new participants come along to your session it matches their expectations. Squash Girls Can sessions are suitable for newer players and are fun, friendly squash or Squash 57 sessions.

All squash Girls Can sessions shouldK

- have minimal levels of commitment, women can drop in and out of sessions when they want, missing a week or two isn't an issue. This can help with longer term retention.
- have flexible payment options such as a pay as you go [] or offers to buy in bulk e.g. 10 sessions for the price of 8. This allows women and girls to be flexible with their attendance.
- be relaxed, but organised. Although women don't always want to be coached, having a leader or coach there to organise the session is important.
- be regular so that participants can form a habit and plan the session around their busy lives.

The participants journey

Arriving at the session

Joining a new session at a venue you haven't been to before can be a daunting prospect.

Make a new participants visit to your session friendly and welcoming from the moment they arrive.

- A warm welcome is important. Ensure reception staff know about the session and offer a warm welcome so new participants feel relaxed immediately.
- Have someone at reception to meet new participants, whether that's you as the coach, another volunteer, a staff member, or ask a regular attendee to meet people at reception.
- Don't assume people have been to the venue before, show them to the changing rooms and to the squash courts. Don't just leave people to find their own way around.

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During the session

The vast majority of women want to join sessions for fun and fitness.

- Deliver fun sessions, don't just focus on skill development.
- Be friendly, and ensure participants know it's not about being perfect all the time.
- Ensure participants are getting a good workout from the session.
- Add lots of variety to your sessions to keep them coming back for more.

A large proportion of women are also motivated by improvement – setting and achieving their own personal goals.

- Remember goals will vary, some may want to improve fitness, others to do something for themselves, and some will want to improve their squash skills.
- Encourage and support your participants to achieve goals. By getting to know your participants you'll be able to get an idea of their goals.
- Celebrate successes of all sizes.

People make a big difference to a person's experience at a session. Meeting new people, and building new social connections is important.

- Encourage conversations, making people feel they are part of something and they belong.
- Include a social element to the session, stay for a coffee after the session. It can help keep people coming back to your session.
- Organise a social get together every so often.
- Women and girls are more motivated by people close to them than high level role models. The coach, other participants and family and friends all play a big role in motivating women and girls to take part.

After the session

- Be clear about when the next session is, let people know you've enjoyed seeing them and you look forward to seeing them at the next session.
- Follow up after a participants first session at the end of the session, or by text or email to see how they enjoyed the session. Ask if they'll be coming again.
- Keep an eye out for people who have dropped off from sessions. Get in touch to see if they are OK and let them know you look forward to seeing them at a session again soon. Avoid pestering though and remember that people have busy lives which might prevent them from coming every week.
- Perhaps set up a WhatsApp group, or social media group to enable everyone to keep in contact. This can help to motivate people to keep coming to the sessions. You'll need to ask their permission though before you share anyone's contact details.
- Ask for feedback regularly, see if there's anything people aren't enjoying, or anything people would like to start doing. People's goals may change and responding to feedback where possible can help keep them involved.