

# Five Mental Tips for Sporting Success



# Preamble

The following psychological resource for participants and athletes, has been developed by sport psychologist Fiona McCarthy on behalf of the NSW Office of Sport, as a key initiative of the NSW Government's Future Champions strategy.

For more information on Future Champions, please visit [www.sport.nsw.gov.au/pathways-and-development](http://www.sport.nsw.gov.au/pathways-and-development)

## Getting to know the author

Fiona McCarthy is a registered psychologist, specialising in sport psychology and is a member of the Australian Psychological Society and the Australian College of Sport and Exercise Psychologists. Fiona owns and operates Mind and Body Balance, a business she established 25 years ago.

Fiona is the Hunter Academy of Sport, Sport Psychology Consultant and a New South Wales Institute of Sport, Sport Psychology Service Provider. Over the last twenty-

five years, Fiona has assisted many teams, athletes, parents and coaches in the areas of confidence, concentration, handling pressure, motivation, goal setting, time management, performance preparation and general well-being. Fiona has worked with numerous sports, assisting recreational level athletes to professional, international, Olympic and Paralympic level athletes, reach their full potential.



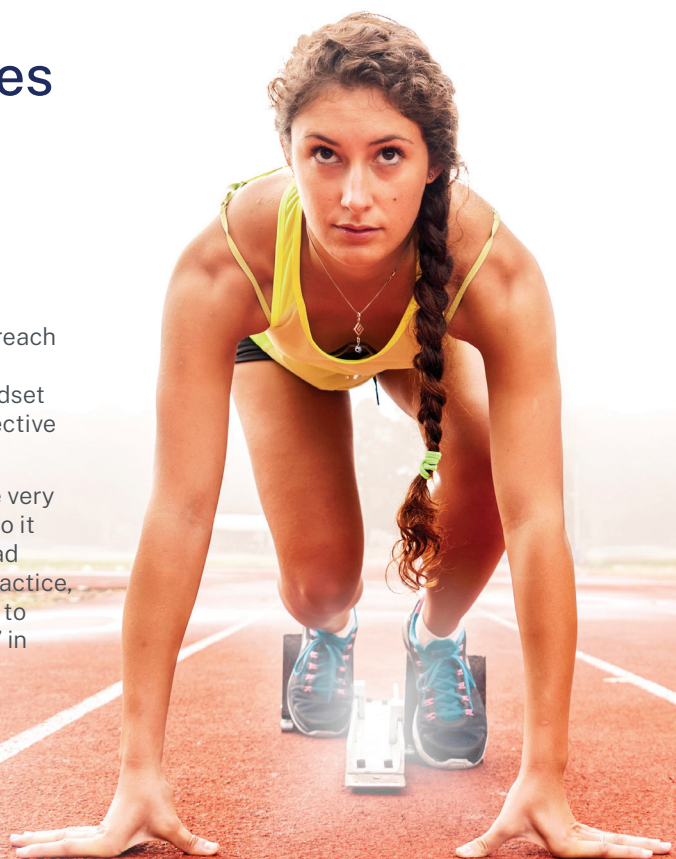
## Background to these resources

The importance of having a mental 'tool kit' to support your learning, performance and engagement on and off the sporting field.

The following resources have been developed by Fiona McCarthy to assist athletes at all levels, in understanding the importance of having a suite of mental 'tools' at their disposal. These 'tools' are practical and multidimensional and will help athletes learn and develop the necessary mental skills they require to help them navigate their way through their sporting journey with a positive mindset and achieve success on and off the field.

It is well recognised that to reach the pinnacle within sport, an athlete needs a superior mindset consisting of strong and effective mental skills and strategies.

Importantly, mental skills are very intertwined and integrated, so it is recommended that you read about and put into regular practice, a number of these resources to strengthen the 'mental tools' in your kit bag!



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# Top 5 Mental Tips for Sporting success!

## 1. Preparation is the key- Always train smart.

**Be your own leader and never take the easy option. Have no regrets.**  
Training is where your physical, technical, tactical and mental habits are developed and installed. Training is the key place to engage in learning. Learning from mistakes. Treat training as an important place to prepare for comps. Don't cut corners and have no regrets.

Be smart in the way in which you train and never take the easy option.



## 2. Always use your positive key words.

**Say them, see them, feel them and do what they say.**

The use of positive key words specific to you and your event/position is very useful in establishing the correct mindset, decreasing anxiety and improving your focus and confidence. Some examples of some words may be, 'Strong', 'Drive', 'Rhythm', 'Flow'.



## 3. Always use your routines.

**Training is where habits are installed and developed.**

Some routines athletes use are, warm up routines, night before event routine, warm down/evaluation routines.



## 4. Mental imagery.

**(where you see yourself perform in your mind's eye) is a valuable skill to develop.**

See, feel, believe, achieve! Using imagery or mental rehearsal can help your mind and body learn and perform skills required in your sport and prepare you for big events with confidence!



## 5. Segment your thoughts into small chunks.

**Think in the present moment.**

Breaking your task into manageable pieces makes the task seem less overwhelming. This helps you to think in the manner of one step/piece at time. For example, a baseball pitcher may be best to think about her pitches one at a time, rather than feeling overwhelmed of having to get someone out.

Challenge yourself to improve your weaknesses and maintain your strengths.

Focus on the present moment.



## ENJOY building your mental toolkit – skills for sport and life!

For information and practical tips on how to develop these key mental skills and strategies check out our full suite of psychological resources for athletes.



# We hope you liked our tips

Have FUN building your psychological skills and strategies and put them into practice in and out of sport!

Remember importantly, if you are unsure of any of these tips or require further advice, please talk to your Coach, Parent or consult a Sport Psychologist.

You might like to check out our NEW animated YouTube video, Developing your mental 'tool kit' to support you in and out of sport featured within the NSW Office of Sport's Pathways and Development webpages @ <https://www.sport.nsw.gov.au/pathways-and-development>.

Check out more tips for Participants @ <https://www.sport.nsw.gov.au/pathways-and-development/social-and-recreational-sport-participants>

And or tips for Emerging and High-Performance Athletes @ <https://www.sport.nsw.gov.au/pathways-and-development/emerging-athletes>



**Future Champions -  
Developing your  
mental 'tool kit' to  
support you in and out  
of sport.**

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