

Coaching players with dyslexia

Change how you explain things. Keep your expectations high.

Dyslexia is about processing, not ability

Dyslexia can affect reading, writing, remembering steps and short-term memory.

It does not tell you how smart, keen or talented a player is.

What you might notice

- Long instructions are hard to remember.
- Left and right get mixed up under pressure.
- Team sheets and forms take longer to read.
- Number or letter calls are hard to remember.

Six ways to help

1. Show it, then say it

Players may find it easier to learn when they see a move first and then hear it explained.

TRY: Walk through the play slowly. Then practise it at full speed.

2. Give one or two steps at a time

Long instructions can be hard to remember. Short instructions are easier to follow.

TRY: Give two steps. Check they understand. Then give the next steps.

3. Use colours and words

Numbers and letters can be easy to mix up.

TRY: Use clear names or colours for line-out calls and moves.

4. Make left and right easier

Left and right can be confusing during a fast game.

TRY: Use words such as “blindsides” or “opensides”. You could also use a coloured wristband.

5. Keep written notes simple

Busy pages can be hard to read. Clear text, short lines and pictures can help.

TRY: Use pitch diagrams, short bullet points or a brief voice note.

6. Ask in private

Reading aloud in front of a group can feel stressful.

TRY: Ask privately: “What helps you learn best?” Offer to repeat or show the information.

NOTICE EACH PLAYER’S STRENGTHS

Many dyslexic players are good at spotting space, solving problems and thinking quickly. Praise these strengths. Give players chances to use them.