

## GCSE Physical Education – Sports Psychology (Classification of skills)

Each skill that we perform can be classified on a continuum. A continuum is a scale that allows the skill to be placed somewhere along a line in accordance with the labels. We class skills on TWO different continua:

### ENVIRONMENTAL CONTINUUM

The environmental continuum is to do with.....The environment!

Examples of environmental stimuli are:

- **other people** - for example, a netballer reacting to their own and the other team's players
- **terrain/surface** - for example, a cross-country runner running on muddy and dry ground
- **weather** - for example, a golfer playing on a windy day
- **situation** - for example, the venue and crowd

If the skill is affected hugely by an environmental factor is called an OPEN SKILL, if it is not affected at all by any environmental factor it is called a CLOSED SKILL. For each sporting skill you place on the scale like the one below:



Think about the following skills and decide why they belong on the continuum in the place given. Remember you need to think about ALL OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS before placing it on there:

1. Tennis Serve
2. Goalkeeper saving a shot in football

### DIFFIUCULTY CONTINUUM

Skills can be classified according to how complex or difficult the movement is.

The two different characteristics of the difficulty continuum are 'simple' and 'complex'.

**Simple skills** are skills where the performer doesn't have to process much information or make many decisions. The skill has only a small number of parts (or sub-routines) and doesn't require much feedback during its performance. An example of a simple skill is sprinting.

**Complex skills** are skills where the performer has to process lots of information and make lots of decisions. The skill has many sub-routines (or parts) to it and requires a lot of feedback during its performance. An example of a complex skill is a tennis serve.

Most skills are not totally simple or complex but range between the two. They are somewhere on the difficulty continuum between simple and complex.



Think about the following skills and decide why they belong on the continuum in the place given. Remember you need to think about ALL SIMPLE AND CLOSED FACTORS before placing it on there:

1. Sprint start in 100m
2. A rugby player in a scrum