

SPORT-SPECIFIC TRAINING GUIDE SERIES

BASKETBALL

Needs analysis, key performance indicators, periodization, and full sample programming for the NSAA boys' & girls' basketball season — built on the Husker Power principles and the NSC periodization framework.

32 min

LENGTH OF AN NFHS REGULATION
GAME — FOUR 8-MINUTE
QUARTERS

2

LIFTS PER WEEK IN SEASON

35+

WEEKS OF OFF-SEASON RUNWAY
BETWEEN STATE FINALS AND THE
NEXT PRACTICE START

THE SPORT-SPECIFIC GUIDE SERIES

HOW THIS GUIDE WORKS

This is the fourth release in the NSC Sport-Specific Guide Series, following the same four-part structure used in the Football, Wrestling, and Swimming & Diving guides so a coach can move between sports without relearning the format. Every guide carries the same four sections, cross-referenced against the same NSC Periodization Framework and NSC Exercise Database.

1. NEEDS ANALYSIS

What the sport actually demands of the body — movement patterns for guards/wings and bigs/posts, the energy systems the game is really contested in, and the injury profile that should drive durability work.

2. POTENTIAL KPIS

The testing battery that tells you whether the program is working, plus development benchmarks by training level and position group, and when in the year to test.

3. PERIODIZATION

How the training year maps onto the sport’s actual competitive calendar — phase by phase, with the volume and intensity targets pulled from the NSC Periodization Framework.

4. EXAMPLE PROGRAMS

Full sample weeks for off-season, pre-season, and in-season — real exercises pulled from the NSC Exercise Database, ready to hand to a coach.

SOURCING

This guide is built on the NSC Periodization Framework (Bompa & Haff, Zatsiorsky & Kraemer, Fleck & Kraemer), the 10 Husker Power Principles, and the NSC Exercise Database. KPI benchmark figures in Section 2 are NSC program targets set for developmental planning purposes — not verified external population norms. Recalibrate them against your own roster’s baseline testing before using them to make roster decisions.

BASKETBALL SNAPSHOT

CATEGORY	DETAIL
Governing body	NSAA — boys and girls basketball are separate sports with separate rosters, playing overlapping regular seasons and separate state tournament weeks.
Classifications	Six classes for both boys and girls — Class A, B, C-1, C-2, D-1, D-2 — grouped primarily by school enrollment.
Season window	Practice begins Nov 16; first contests begin Dec 3; regular season runs December–February with roughly 18–20 games plus tournaments depending on class. Girls’ state championships run March 3–6; boys’ state championships run March 10–13, both at Pinnacle Bank Arena in Lincoln.
Off-season length	Roughly 35+ weeks between each team’s state finals and the next fall practice start date — comparable to wrestling and swimming & diving, the other winter sports in the series.
Roster composition	Two movement profiles under one team: guards/wings (perimeter-oriented, lateral-quickness-driven) and bigs/posts (interior-oriented, contact- and vertical-power-driven) — different enough physically to warrant different S&C emphasis, not just different practice reps.
Contact	Moderate-to-high contact, expressed almost entirely through jumping, landing, and post-position play rather than direct collision. The injury profile here is dominated by non-contact landing mechanics — led by an ACL injury risk that is measurably higher for female athletes and has to be a genuine program priority, not an afterthought.

1. NEEDS ANALYSIS

WHAT BASKETBALL DEMANDS

Basketball puts every athlete on the roster through the same game, but not through the same job. A guard or wing's game is played laterally — closeouts, drives, transition sprints, constant change of direction. A big or post's game is played vertically and physically — boxing out, finishing through contact, defending the rim. Build the physical base both need, then split the rest by position group.

MOVEMENT DEMANDS BY POSITION GROUP

TYPE	PRIMARY PHYSICAL QUALITIES	MOVEMENT SIGNATURE
Guards / Wings	Lateral quickness and change-of-direction power, repeated-sprint capacity, landing control under fatigue, ball-handling and decision-making while physically taxed	Constant change of direction — closeouts, on-ball defense, transition sprints — punctuated by catch-and-shoot footwork and drives that end in a jump or a cut, repeated dozens of times a game
Bigs / Posts	Vertical power, contact strength, rebounding-position strength, short-area explosiveness	Repeated jumping and landing in traffic, physical post-position battles for space, a shorter total movement range than a guard but far more contact absorbed per possession

HUSKER POWER CROSS-REFERENCE

Guards/wings and bigs/posts both train on the same 10 principles — multi-joint, ground-based, three-dimensional, explosive, progressively overloaded. Dose and emphasis change by position group; the system doesn't. A guard needs lateral power and repeated-effort conditioning built on a base of sound landing mechanics; a big needs the same landing-mechanics base carried into heavier vertical loading and more contact-strength work.

PHYSICAL QUALITY PRIORITY (BOTH POSITION GROUPS)

1. Landing mechanics & lower-body durability — the single highest-value quality in this sport. Basketball is a repeated jumping-and-landing sport, and how an athlete lands — not just how high they jump — is the biggest lever S&C has over the sport's most serious injury.
2. Lower-body power (vertical and horizontal) — rebounding, finishing at the rim, closing out on a shooter, and getting off the floor first all trace back to the same explosive base.
3. Change-of-direction / lateral quickness — the quality that separates a guard who can stay in front of their matchup from one who fouls to keep up.
4. Relative upper-body & posterior-chain strength — rebounding position, finishing through contact, and a strong hamstring-to-quad ratio, which is itself one of the better-supported levers for reducing ACL injury risk.
5. Core / trunk stability — the quality that lets force transfer through contact and lets a landing stay controlled instead of collapsing into the knee.

1. NEEDS ANALYSIS, CONTINUED

ENERGY SYSTEMS & DURABILITY

ENERGY SYSTEM DEMAND

An NFHS game is four 8-minute quarters — 32 minutes of game clock stretched across roughly 60–90 minutes of real time once stoppages, free throws, and timeouts are counted, and the 35-second shot clock keeps possessions from stalling out. The result is intermittent high-intensity work: repeated short sprints, jumps, and direction changes layered on top of an aerobic base that has to be there to keep recovering between efforts. Guards generally carry more total distance and repeated-sprint volume across a game; bigs work in a more alactic-dominant pattern — shorter, harder efforts with more force per rep and more contact absorbed per effort.

THE COMMON MISTAKE

Treating conditioning as suicides and line drills instead of programming the strength and landing-control work that actually prevents the sport's costliest injury. Practice and games already provide the sport-specific conditioning stimulus. S&C's job is to build what practice reps alone don't — strength, power, and the landing mechanics that keep an athlete available to take those reps.

INJURY PROFILE & DURABILITY PRIORITIES

COMMON INJURY	MECHANISM	DURABILITY PRIORITY
ACL tear	Almost always non-contact — a hard deceleration, cut, or single-leg landing with poor knee alignment; female athletes are two to eight times more likely to sustain this injury than male athletes (UAB Medicine, Dr. Amit Momaya)	Landing-mechanics training programmed year-round, not just in the off-season — soft, controlled landings, hamstring:quad strength balance, and single-leg control work at every training age
Ankle sprain	Landing on another player's foot after a jump, or a hard lateral cut	Single-leg strength, balance, and proprioceptive work built into the same sessions as landing-mechanics training
Patellar tendinopathy ("jumper's knee")	Cumulative overuse from the sheer volume of jumping and landing across a full season	Manage total jump volume across practice, games, and S&C; don't stack a heavy plyometric day on top of a two-practice day
Low back strain	Repeated loaded flexion/extension from jump-landing and contact/box-out positions	Anti-extension and anti-rotation core bracing trained in all three planes
Finger / hand	Contact with the ball or another player during rebounds, deflections, and closeouts	Largely a game-contact injury outside S&C's direct control; grip and forearm work supports it but doesn't prevent it

POPULATION NOTE

BOYS' & GIRLS' BASKETBALL — BOTH NSAA-SANCTIONED

NSAA sanctions basketball as separate boys' and girls' sports — separate rosters, separate team scores, and staggered state tournament weeks — but both compete on overlapping regular-season calendars. The needs-analysis and durability priorities above apply to both rosters equally, and the elevated female ACL-injury risk noted above makes landing-mechanics work a genuine priority for a girls' program, not an optional add-on.

Because both teams often share practice gym time on the same school calendar, the practical coordination point is logistical: build one shared dryland calendar for both rosters rather than duplicating the planning work, and schedule lifting access around each team's actual practice and game slate.

2. POTENTIAL KPIS

TESTING BATTERY

Test what the needs analysis says matters, not a generic combine list. Every test below ties back to a quality from Section 1, and the landing-mechanics screen matters as much as any of the strength or jump numbers — catching a knee-valgus pattern early is worth more than any single vertical-jump PR.

QUALITY	TEST	WHY IT'S ON THE LIST	WHEN TO TEST
Relative strength (lower)	Back Squat or Trap Bar Deadlift, 1–3RM relative to bodyweight	The foundation both jumping/landing power and post-position strength are built on	End of GPP, end of SPP
Relative strength (pulling)	Pull-Up max reps or Lat Pulldown relative to bodyweight	Rebounding and finishing-through-contact strength; a useful general upper-body marker	End of GPP, end of SPP
Explosive power (vertical)	Vertical Jump	Direct correlate to rebounding, shot contests, and finishing at the rim	All three windows
Explosive power (horizontal)	Broad Jump	First-step and closing-speed power for both position groups	All three windows
Change of direction	5-10-5 Pro Agility Shuttle	Lateral quickness for perimeter defense, closeouts, and driving	End of GPP, end of SPP
Landing mechanics / ACL screen	Single-Leg Landing (drop-jump) screen, qualitative knee-alignment check	Flags the #1 injury risk in the sport before it becomes a torn ACL	All three windows
Posterior-chain strength	Single-Leg RDL, reps to technical failure (bodyweight)	Hamstring:quad balance is one of the better-supported levers for reducing ACL injury risk	End of GPP, end of SPP
Core / trunk stability	Front Plank, hold to failure	Trunk control through contact and through a landing, under fatigue	End of GPP

TEST THE ATHLETE, NOT JUST THE ROSTER

A full battery on every athlete every window is more than an in-season practice slot allows. The three tests every athlete always gets: vertical jump, the landing-mechanics screen, and their primary strength lift. Layer in the agility shuttle and single-leg RDL test only at the off-season and pre-season windows.

2. POTENTIAL KPIS, CONTINUED

DEVELOPMENT BENCHMARKS & TESTING CALENDAR

The ranges below are NSC program targets — developmental benchmarks to aim a training level toward, organized by the NSC Exercise Database's four training-age levels. They are not verified population norms — reset them against your own athletes' baseline testing before using them for roster decisions.

WHY PULL-UPS ARE SPLIT BY SEX

Every other test below is a single combined scale, but pull-ups aren't — bodyweight pulling strength shows one of the largest male/female performance gaps of any common test, so a combined scale either overstates what's realistic for a girls' roster or understates a strong boy's ceiling. No basketball-specific pull-up study was available at publication, so the numbers below (marked *) are cross-referenced against general athletic-population pull-up norms rather than a sport-specific source — treat them as a starting estimate more than the swim-specific numbers in the Swimming & Diving guide.

GUARDS / WINGS

TEST	L1 — BEGINNER (<1YR)	L2 — INTERMEDIATE (1–2YR)	L3 — ADVANCED (2–3YR)	L4 — ELITE (>3YR)
Back Squat / Trap Bar DL (1RM, relative)	0.9–1.1 × BW	1.2–1.4 × BW	1.5–1.7 × BW	>1.7 × BW
Pull-Up (max reps) — Boys*	3–4	5–8	9–13	>14
Pull-Up (max reps) — Girls*	1–2	3–5	6–8	>9
Vertical Jump	14–17"	17–21"	21–25"	>25"
Broad Jump	5.5–6.5'	6.5–7.3'	7.3–8.0'	>8.0'
5-10-5 Pro Agility (lower is better)	5.3–5.6s	5.0–5.2s	4.7–4.9s	<4.7s
Single-Leg RDL (reps, bodyweight)	6–8	9–11	12–14	>14
Front Plank (hold)	60–90s	90–120s	120–180s	>180s

BIGS / POSTS

TEST	L1 — BEGINNER (<1YR)	L2 — INTERMEDIATE (1–2YR)	L3 — ADVANCED (2–3YR)	L4 — ELITE (>3YR)
Back Squat / Trap Bar DL (1RM, relative)	0.8–1.0 × BW	1.1–1.3 × BW	1.4–1.6 × BW	>1.6 × BW
Pull-Up (max reps) — Boys*	2–3	4–6	7–10	>11
Pull-Up (max reps) — Girls*	1	2–3	4–6	>7
Vertical Jump	12–15"	15–19"	19–23"	>23"
Broad Jump	5.0–6.0'	6.0–6.8'	6.8–7.5'	>7.5'
5-10-5 Pro Agility (lower is better)	5.6–5.9s	5.2–5.5s	4.9–5.1s	<4.9s
Single-Leg RDL (reps, bodyweight)	5–7	8–10	11–13	>13
Front Plank (hold)	60–90s	90–120s	120–180s	>180s

TESTING CALENDAR

WINDOW	TIMING	PURPOSE
Baseline	Start of Off-Season GPP (mid-to-late March)	Establish starting point right after the season ends; identify what needs rebuilding after a long in-season maintenance block
Progress Check	End of Off-Season SPP (late September)	Confirm strength and power gains transferred; adjust the fall pre-comp block based on results
Readiness	Practice start (Nov 16)	Final pre-season numbers; flags athletes who need modified lifting load once practice and scrimmage volume ramps up
Spot Check (optional)	Mid-season	Vertical jump and the landing-mechanics screen only — low fatigue-cost markers to catch a breakdown in landing quality before it becomes an injury

3. PERIODIZATION

THE BASKETBALL ANNUAL CALENDAR

Basketball's staggered state weeks — girls in early March, boys a week later — and its Nov 16 practice start leave roughly the same 35-plus-week off-season as wrestling and swimming & diving, the other winter sports in the series. The annual plan below anchors the NSC Periodization Framework's five-phase model (GPP → SPP → Pre-Competition → Competition → Transition) to the sport's actual competitive calendar.

PHASE	WINDOW	DURATION	VOL %	INT %	FOCUS
Transition	Early–mid Mar	~2–3 wks	30%	50%	Active recovery after a long in-season maintenance block; easing back into a normal training rhythm.
Off-Season GPP	Early Apr – mid Jul	~14 wks	70–82%	60–70%	Work capacity, hypertrophy, movement literacy, build the landing-mechanics base every later phase depends on.
Off-Season SPP	Mid Jul – late Sep	~10 wks	65–74%	72–80%	Maximum strength, power development, single-leg strength taken to heavier loads.
Pre-Comp	Late Sep – Nov 16	~7 wks	45–55%	80–88%	Power peak; coordinate lifting days with the practice slate as tryouts and pre-season practice begin.
Pre-Season	Nov 16 – Dec 3	~2–3 wks	40–45%	80–85%	Taper lifting volume as practice and scrimmage volume climbs into the first contests.
Competition	Dec 3 – mid Mar (regular season, districts, state)	~15 wks	30–45%	75–80%	2x/week maintenance around a full game and practice schedule; taper into state.

THE SINGLE BIGGEST PERIODIZATION ERROR IN HS BASKETBALL

Dropping landing-mechanics work once the season tips off, because a full practice-and-game schedule feels like enough "training" on its own. It isn't — practice and games are competition stress, not developmental stimulus, and the ACL-prevention work built in the off-season decays fast without an in-season maintenance dose.

3. PERIODIZATION, CONTINUED

PHASE DETAIL & LOADING RULES

PHASE	PRIMARY OUTCOME	REP RANGE	SETS	REST	COACHING NOTES
GPP	Hypertrophy / Work Capacity	8–15	3–4	60–90s	3–4x/week; build the landing-mechanics base every subsequent phase depends on
SPP	Maximum Strength	4–8	4–5	2–3min	Introduce/refine Olympic-lift variations; single-leg strength work moves to heavier loads
Pre-Comp	Power / Rate of Force Development	1–5	4–6	3–5min	Intensification: drop volume, raise load; progress landing work from Box Drop to Box Jump to Single-Leg Depth Jump as control improves
Competition	Strength Maintenance	2–5	2–3	3–4min	2x/week is the floor; schedule around the game slate, not just around practice
Transition	Recovery / Flexibility	N/A	2	Full	No barbell max work; mobility, bodyweight, and active recovery only

THE HEAVY-LIGHT LOADING WAVE

Alternate a heavy session with a light session across every phase — within the week and across the mesocycle — per Husker Power Principle #8. Use a 3:1 or 4:1 wave: three or four weeks of climbing load, then a deload week at 40–60% of the prior week's volume. Deloads are how supercompensation actually happens (Zatsiorsky & Kraemer), not time off from training. Skip them on a roster carrying a full practice and game load, and fatigue compounds fast.

RESIDUAL TRAINING EFFECTS

Per Zatsiorsky & Kraemer, maximum strength has a long residual (~30 days) — it survives weeks without direct work. Power and landing-mechanics quality decay faster. This is why the in-season maintenance program keeps a dedicated explosive/power exposure and never drops landing work entirely.

COORDINATING LIFTING WITH THE GAME SCHEDULE

Schedule the heaviest lifting day on a lower-practice-volume day, and never stack a new max-effort lift the day before a back-to-back or a rivalry game. Let the game calendar set the lifting calendar, not the other way around.

4. EXAMPLE PROGRAMS

OFF-SEASON (GPP) — SAMPLE WEEK

4-day explosive/strength split, alternating a heavy day with a light day for each quality across the week — the Heavy-Light Loading Wave (Section 3) applied to GPP. Every explosive day pairs the power lift with a jump/plyo element and a resisted-speed element, not just one or the other; every strength day closes with a change-of-direction drill so COD quality gets trained independent of the explosive days. Scale load to the athlete's training level. The % column is a percentage of a recent 1RM (or working max) — use it as a starting point and adjust to the bar speed you see that day.

MONDAY — EXPLOSIVE (HEAVY)

#	EXERCISE	SETS × REPS	% 1RM
—	RAMP Warm-Up (Raise / Activate / Mobilize / Potentiate)	12 min	—
1	Hang Clean Jump	3 × 3	70%
2	Box Drop — Single Leg	3 × 4e	—
3	Broad Jump	3 × 3	—
4	Sled Push — Heavy	3 × 15yd	—
5	Single-Leg RDL	3 × 8e	—
6	DB Row	3 × 10e	—

TUESDAY — STRENGTH (LIGHT)

#	EXERCISE	SETS × REPS	% 1RM
—	RAMP Warm-Up (Raise / Activate / Mobilize / Potentiate)	12 min	—
1	Squat	3 × 10	60%
2	RDL	3 × 10	60%
3	Incline	3 × 10	60%
4	Pull-Ups	3 × 10	—
5	4-Cone Box Drill	4 reps	—
6	Copenhagen Plank	3 × 20s/side	—

THURSDAY — EXPLOSIVE (LIGHT)

#	EXERCISE	SETS × REPS	% 1RM
—	RAMP Warm-Up (Raise / Activate / Mobilize / Potentiate)	12 min	—
1	Hang Clean Jump	3 × 3	65%
2	Box Drop — Single Leg	3 × 4e	—
3	3D Lateral Hops	3 × 4e	—
4	Sled Pull — Heavy	3 × 15yd	—
5	Single-Leg RDL	3 × 8e	—
6	DB Row	3 × 10e	—

FRIDAY — STRENGTH (HEAVY)

#	EXERCISE	SETS × REPS	% 1RM
—	RAMP Warm-Up (Raise / Activate / Mobilize / Potentiate)	12 min	—
1	Squat	3 × 10	70%
2	RDL	3 × 10	70%
3	Bench	3 × 10	70%
4	Pull-Ups	3 × 10	—
5	4-Cone Box Drill	4 reps	—
6	Pallof Press	3 × 12e	—

GUARD/WING VS. BIG/POST ADJUSTMENT

Guards/Wings: add an extra set to the change-of-direction and sled work — their game demands more repeated-effort capacity. Bigs/Posts: prioritize the vertical-power and contact-strength lifts, keep the sled work heavier and shorter, and manage total jump/landing volume alongside what they're already absorbing in the post.

4. EXAMPLE PROGRAMS, CONTINUED

LATE OFF-SEASON (SPP) — SAMPLE WEEK

4-day explosive/strength split carried over from GPP, now in the SPP block (Section 3): reps drop, load rises, and Olympic-lift variations replace their GPP-tier equivalents to build maximum strength and power. The landing-mechanics progression advances from Box Drop to Box Jump; the sled work from GPP progresses to a free-sprint element now that an SPP-level landing and deceleration base is in place, and the strength days' change-of-direction drill steps up to a cutting-pattern progression.

MONDAY — EXPLOSIVE (HEAVY)

#	EXERCISE	SETS × REPS	% 1RM
—	RAMP Warm-Up (Raise / Activate / Mobilize / Potentiate)	12 min	—
1	Hang Clean	3 × 3	80%
2	Box Jump — Single Leg	3 × 4e	—
3	Falling Start Sprint	3 × 15yd	—
4	Single-Leg RDL	3 × 6e	—
5	DB Row	3 × 6e	—
6	Lateral Bound — 45°	3 × 4e	—

TUESDAY — STRENGTH (LIGHT)

#	EXERCISE	SETS × REPS	% 1RM
—	RAMP Warm-Up (Raise / Activate / Mobilize / Potentiate)	12 min	—
1	Squat	3 × 5	75%
2	Clean Deadlift	3 × 5	75%
3	Incline	3 × 5	75%
4	Weighted Pull-Ups	3 × 5	—
5	Cone Sprint and Backpedal	3 × 20yd	—
6	Copenhagen Plank	3 × 20s/side	—

THURSDAY — EXPLOSIVE (LIGHT)

#	EXERCISE	SETS × REPS	% 1RM
—	RAMP Warm-Up (Raise / Activate / Mobilize / Potentiate)	12 min	—
1	Hang Clean	3 × 3	75%
2	Box Jump — Single Leg	3 × 4e	—
3	Sled Pull — Light	3 × 15yd	—
4	Single-Leg RDL	3 × 6e	—
5	DB Row	3 × 6e	—
6	Lateral Bound — 45°	3 × 4e	—

FRIDAY — STRENGTH (HEAVY)

#	EXERCISE	SETS × REPS	% 1RM
—	RAMP Warm-Up (Raise / Activate / Mobilize / Potentiate)	12 min	—
1	Squat	3 × 5	80%
2	Clean Deadlift	3 × 5	80%
3	Bench	3 × 5	80%
4	Weighted Pull-Ups	3 × 5	—
5	T-Drill	3 × 1	—
6	Pallof Press	3 × 12e	—

WHY THE LIFTS CHANGED FROM GPP

Hang Clean replaces Hang Clean Jump as the primary power lift once the full catch position is added to the technical progression (Section 3); Clean Deadlift keeps building the pull position under the same bar-speed emphasis as the heavy lower day. Single-Leg RDL and the landing-mechanics work stay in every session at a comparable dose — that work doesn't get phased down the way a strength lift progresses. The speed and COD drills step up in difficulty the same way the lifts do: Falling Start Sprint and the T-Drill ask for more deceleration and change-of-direction control than the 4-Cone Box Drill and sled work from GPP.

4. EXAMPLE PROGRAMS, CONTINUED

PRE-SEASON — SAMPLE WEEK

4-day heavy/light split carried into Pre-Season, wave-loaded (e.g. 4/3/2) so bar speed and CNS readiness stay high while practice and scrimmage volume climbs toward the first contests. The landing-mechanics progression advances to Single-Leg Depth Jump — the highest-intensity variation, reserved for athletes with a demonstrated Box Jump base — and the sled work from SPP opens up into top-end sprint work now that landing and deceleration control is established. The strength days' change-of-direction drill steps up to the 5-10-5 shuttle, the same movement being tested in Section 2. RAMP opens every session.

MONDAY — EXPLOSIVE (HEAVY)

#	EXERCISE	SETS × REPS	% 1RM
—	RAMP Warm-Up (Raise / Activate / Mobilize / Potentiate)	12 min	—
1	Power Clean	4 / 3 / 2	75/80/85%
2	Single-Leg Depth Jump	3 × 3e	—
3	Flying Sprint — 10-30m	3 × 20m	—
4	Single-Leg RDL	3 × 5e	—
5	DB Row	3 × 5e	—

TUESDAY — STRENGTH (LIGHT)

#	EXERCISE	SETS × REPS	% 1RM
—	RAMP Warm-Up (Raise / Activate / Mobilize / Potentiate)	12 min	—
1	Squat	5 / 4 / 3	75/80/85%
2	DB Walking Lunge	3 × 5e	—
3	Incline	5 / 4 / 3	73/78/83%
4	5-10-5 Pro Agility	3 × 1	—
5	Pallof Press	3 × 12e	—

THURSDAY — EXPLOSIVE (LIGHT)

#	EXERCISE	SETS × REPS	% 1RM
—	RAMP Warm-Up (Raise / Activate / Mobilize / Potentiate)	12 min	—
1	Power Clean	4 / 3 / 2	70/75/80%
2	Single-Leg Depth Jump	3 × 3e	—
3	Sled Pull — Light	3 × 15yd	—
4	Single-Leg RDL	3 × 5e	—
5	DB Row	3 × 5e	—

FRIDAY — STRENGTH (HEAVY)

#	EXERCISE	SETS × REPS	% 1RM
—	RAMP Warm-Up (Raise / Activate / Mobilize / Potentiate)	12 min	—
1	Squat	5 / 4 / 3	78/83/88%
2	DB Walking Lunge	3 × 5e	—
3	Bench	5 / 4 / 3	76/81/86%
4	T-Drill	3 × 1	—
5	Pallof Press	3 × 12e	—

CUT VOLUME, NOT INTENSITY

Total lifting volume should drop from the SPP peak even though session count holds at 4/week — each session is short (4 movements) and the week keeps alternating a heavy day with a light day so no single day compounds with the practice and scrimmage volume already climbing. Trim these numbers further, not up, once games start.

4. EXAMPLE PROGRAMS, CONTINUED

IN-SEASON — SAMPLE WEEK

2-day maintenance template, spaced across the week around the game schedule. The exact days move team to team depending on when games fall; what stays fixed is the heavy/light split, a brief change-of-direction touch on the strength day, and the non-negotiable jump/plyo and speed work on the explosive day.

DAY 1 — STRENGTH DAY

#	EXERCISE	SETS × REPS	% 1RM
—	RAMP Warm-Up (Raise / Activate / Mobilize / Potentiate)	12 min	—
1	Squat	3 × 3	80%
2	Weighted Pull-Ups	2 × 5	—
3	Bench	3 × 3	80%
4	Single-Leg RDL	2 × 6e	—
5	Lateral Shuffle	2 × 15yd	—
—	Cool-Down Stretch Series	5 min	—

Target session time: 35–40 minutes.

DAY 2 — EXPLOSIVE / POWER DAY

#	EXERCISE	SETS × REPS	% 1RM
—	RAMP Warm-Up (Raise / Activate / Mobilize / Potentiate)	12 min	—
1	Hang Clean	3 × 2	78%
2	Single-Leg Depth Jump	2 × 3e	—
3	Lateral Bound — 45°	2 × 4e	—
4	Sprint — Max Effort	2 × 10yd	—

Target session time: 20–25 minutes — short and sharp, never a reason to shorten a taper.

LIFTING AROUND A CONGESTED SCHEDULE

In weeks with back-to-back games, cut the lifting sets further before you cut the rep quality — a short, crisp session that leaves an athlete feeling fast beats a longer one that leaves them flat for a game. Never introduce a new max-effort lift the day before a rivalry game or a back-to-back; the goal in-season is to preserve what the off-season built, not to test it.

THE IN-SEASON FLOOR

Two sessions per week is the floor, not a target to shrink further when the game schedule gets heavy. Below two sessions, the strength and landing-mechanics quality built across 35+ weeks of off-season starts eroding by mid-season — exactly when the ACL-injury risk climbs with accumulated fatigue.

THE WRAP

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- ▶ It's two movement profiles under one team name. Guards/wings and bigs/posts share the same 10 Husker Power principles but need different dosing — lateral power and repeated-effort capacity for guards, vertical power and contact strength for bigs.
 - ▶ Landing mechanics is the #1 durability priority. Program single-leg landing control every week, all year — it's the single highest-value thing S&C offers against this sport's costliest injury.
 - ▶ The ACL risk gap is real and documented. Female basketball athletes are two to eight times more likely to sustain an ACL injury than male athletes — landing-mechanics and hamstring-quad balance work has to be a genuine priority for a girls' program, not an afterthought.
 - ▶ Practice and games are competition stress, not training stimulus. A full game slate doesn't replace S&C's job — it makes the strength, power, and landing work S&C provides more necessary, not less.
 - ▶ The 35-week off-season is the asset. Split it into a true GPP block and a true SPP block, and build the landing-mechanics progression — Box Drop to Box Jump to Single-Leg Depth Jump — on purpose, in order.
 - ▶ In-season, two sessions per week is the floor. Keep a dedicated explosive/power exposure and never drop landing-mechanics work entirely.
 - ▶ Respect the deload. A 3:1 or 4:1 heavy-light wave isn't optional recovery on a roster carrying a full practice-and-game load — it's how the adaptation from the preceding weeks actually gets banked.
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"Robust, strong, athletic — in that order. A fast athlete who cannot stay healthy is a liability."

BUILT BY NEBRASKA STRENGTH & CONDITIONING

This is the fourth release in the NSC Sport-Specific Guide Series. Every guide follows the same four-part structure — Needs Analysis, Potential KPIs, Periodization, and Example Programs — cross-referenced against the NSC Periodization Framework and NSC Exercise Database. Questions, feedback, or want a sport prioritized next? Visit nebraskasc.com.