The Learning Environment

- the learning environment
  - nature of the skill (open, closed, gross, fine, discrete, serial, continuous, self-paced, externally paced)
  - the performance elements (decision-making, strategic and tactical development)
  - practice method (massed, distributed, whole, part)
  - feedback (internal, external, concurrent, delayed, knowledge of results, knowledge of performance)

- design a suitable plan for teaching beginners to acquire a skill through to mastery. The plan should reflect:
  - appropriate practice methods for the learners
  - the integration of relevant performance elements
  - an awareness of how instruction may vary according to characteristics of the learner
  - how feedback will be used as learners progress through the stages of skill acquisition
Practice method

• Training and practice allow athletes to refine skills and develop performance elements.

Different types of practice include:

• 1. **Massed or distributed**: Massed practice involves performing many repetitions over a longer time. This is good for low intensity and simple skills (AFL goal kicking). Distributed practice involves periods of practice and **rest**. This is good for high-intensity and complex activities (pole vault).
• **Massed practice** involves a continuous practice session, with the rest intervals being shorter than the practice intervals.

• **Distributed practice** (or spaced practice) involves a broken practice session, with the intervals of rest or alternative activities being longer than the practice intervals.
• **Whole or part**: If a sport or skill cannot be broken into sub-components or is simple in nature, whole practice is better (sailing). If a sport or skill has a number of sub-components that can be broken down to be practiced separately, part practice is better (Rugby Union).
The **whole practice method** is applied when a skill is practiced in its entirety. The **part practice method** is applied when a skill is broken into smaller components and each discrete subskill (subroutine) is practised separately.

*Figure 8.21: The difference between the whole (left) and part (right) methods of practice*