

AGILITY PSYCH

Agility might come from between your ears, not your muscle

Let's be frank—when you train, you train your body. You train physically so that your body becomes strong, powerful, fast, flexible, and agile. But with all this physical training, have you ever given any thought to your brain, perceptions, or ability to recognize cues? Consider agility, for example. Athletes train in all sorts of novel ways to increase their speed and agility. But when has any coach or athlete given thought to the brain's processes involved in agility? After all, agility moves in competition are based on decision-making. Of course, we know that your body is trainable—hence all those hours spent in the gym. But what about all those cognitive abilities that need to be in place for you to put your physical skills to the competitive test when you need to be at your most reactive and agile? A group of scientists from the University of Ballarat and the Canberra Raiders Rugby League Club, both in Australia, set out to investigate.



If your sport requires agility, then you need to know that you can train your perceptions and reaction time, but this doesn't happen effectively with the common approaches used.

Original Research

Serpell, B. et al. Are the perceptual and decision-making components of agility trainable? A preliminary investigation. *Journal of Strength and Conditioning Research* 25(5):1240-1248, 2011.

Power Key: agility, perception, reaction time, motor skills