

Marnus Labuschagne uses rubber mat and aluminium sheets to prepare for Australian tour of Pakistan

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Marnus Labuschagne is going to extraordinary lengths to prepare for the tour of Pakistan. *(Getty Images: Mark Kolbe)*

The world's top-ranked male Test batter Marnus Labuschagne is leaving no stone unturned as he prepares for Australia's tour of Pakistan.

Labuschagne has been practising batting on his home balcony in Brisbane on a rubber mat laden with pieces of taped aluminium and metal sheeting to try to emulate the variable bounce and turn of Pakistani wickets.

The Australian number three said he tried a similar ploy before heading to England for a county season in 2019, which culminated in a strong Ashes series later that year.

Key points:

- Labuschagne has set up a makeshift pitch on his balcony
- He wants to get used to the variable bounce and turn present in Pakistani pitches
- Australia plays Pakistan in three Tests

"I tried to create a wicket and a ball that nipped around a lot but didn't bounce," Labuschagne told reporters on Monday.

"Because one of the big factors when you go to England is it (the ball) nips and swings and it seams, but the ball sort of hits the stumps from a shorter length.

"So [it's] a little bit of a similar thing going to Pakistan.

"I thought, 'Well, what's the best way I can recreate spin?' ... you can't really predict what it's doing so you have to come up with a plan and a method.

"That was the thought behind it."

Australia has not toured Pakistan for a Test series since 1998.

It will be Australia's first Test tour since the 2019 Ashes, where Labuschagne enjoyed a breakout series with the bat.

He now sits on top of the men's ICC Test batting rankings, after averaging 41.87 in Australia's recent 4-0 Ashes series defeat of England.

"I feel very privileged to be currently the number one but I also feel the challenge," Labuschagne said.

"You know I haven't played much away from home.

"So I'm really looking forward to the challenge and hopefully to stand[ing] up in the different conditions."

The first of three Tests in Pakistan begins in Rawalpindi on March 4.

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