



Bays United U-6—U11 Coaches Resource Guide For Skills Development



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Technical Director

- ⚽ Dribbling
- ⚽ Passing
- ⚽ Shooting

General approach guidelines

1. FUN is the most important part of teaching soccer FUNdamentals. Players will respond and want to learn if practice sessions are fun.
2. POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT: Whenever possible, give individuals and/or groups positive reinforcement. Refrain from using negative comments. Use praise as an incentive.
3. BE CREATIVE AND USE INITIATIVE: Use drills that are challenging and demand players' attention.
4. MAKE A DIFFERENCE: Be motivational and inspirational. Enthusiasm and being energetic are contagious.
5. Did I mention FUN?
6. KEEP PLAYERS ACTIVE: If the drill is static for very long, players get restless. Keep players actively involved with a constant change in focus.
7. EACH PLAYER IS AN INDIVIDUAL: Be aware of player differences. Recognition of individual personalities will allow you to respond to all players, and they will respond to you positively.
8. STRIVE FOR QUALITY: In all demonstrations make the desired objectives clear. If a player shows mastery of a skill, use him/her to demonstrate.
9. REINFORCE CORRECT TECHNIQUE: When you catch players doing drills correctly give them praise.
10. FUN is good!!!
11. ENCOURAGE PLAYER MOVEMENT: At all times make players aware of importance of readiness. Emphasize weight forward on toes and bouncing instead of flat footedness.
12. ROTATE POSITIONS: All players should be active as servers, assistants. In game situations change positions each quarter.
13. DEVELOP PLAYER RESPECT: Continually get players to support one another: to show good sportsmanship towards all players including opponents, and respect others' attempts and efforts.
14. EQUALITY AMONGST PLAYERS: Give equal attention to all players in group or games. Do not leave the less competent players behind nor slow the advanced players.
15. FUN: Players learn best when they are having fun!

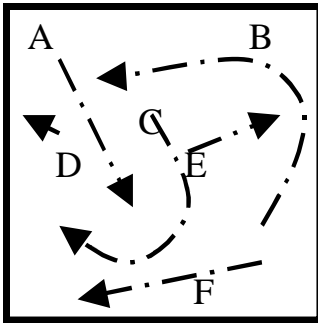
DRIBBLING –GENERAL TIPS

- Maintain close control with both feet.
- Be agile; stay on toes.
- Use all parts of feet: inside, outside, laces, sole.
- Move to get behind ball's path.
- Keep a soft contact.
- Concentrate on center of ball.
- Keep head up.
- Control ball first; don't just kick it away.
- Change direction and speed when turning.
- Be a friend with the ball.

Dribbling skill drills

1. Dribbling in a grid (10x10 metres)

Formation



Players dribbling to coaches' commands

Move ball inside square.

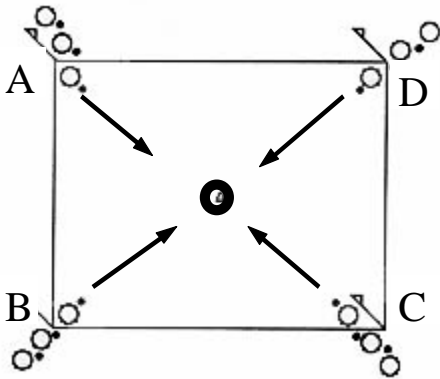
- Dribble with both feet in various directions, "stop" (using sole of foot)
- Dribble with both feet, "cone", players dribble around closest cone and back into center of grid.
- Dribble with both feet, "change direction" dragging the ball back with sole of foot and going in opposite direction.
- Dribble with "right foot only" and "turn" (with inside of foot only, outside of foot only)
- Dribble with "left foot only" and "turn" (with inside of foot only, outside of foot only) Dribble keeping the ball moving, "how many fingers am I holding up".
- Dribble, "stop & change" balls with another player as fast as you can. (Take a ball out of grid, take two balls out of grid)

Find Spaces. As kids move their ball inside square they try to find as much space as possible. When says stop the player with most space is winner.

Between legs. Have half the players stand in the grid with their legs apart and for one minute have the other players dribble and meg (ball through the legs) the standing players. Then reverse roles

2. Dribbling in a traffic jam grid (10x10 metres)

Formation



Traffic jam dribbling

4 lines of players follow the commands of the coach. Each exercise is designed to have the player dribble into a congested area around the central cone.

Commands

Dribble to cone and back (next player goes)

Dribble around cone left foot only

Dribble around cone right foot only

Dribble to cone and exchange ball with other player

Dribble to cone using the bottom of the feet only (ball walking)

Dribble to cone and back faster

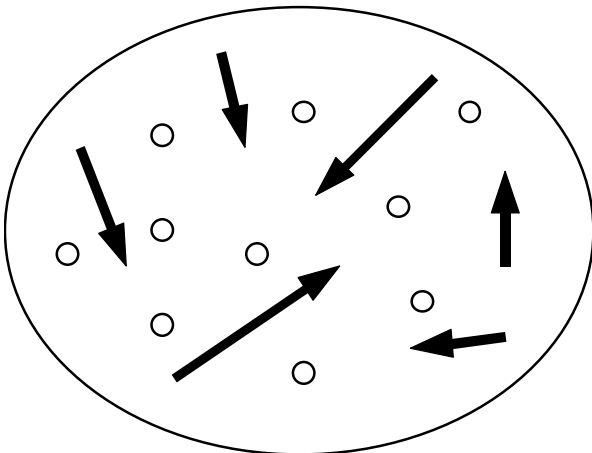
Line A dribble around the cone and end up at line B

Line B dribble around the cone and end up at line A

(same drill for lines C & D)

3. Dribbling in a maze of cones

Formation



Coaches commands

Dribble around the cones without touching them

Dribble with left foot only

Dribble with right foot only

Dribble and change directions when coach says "change"

Stand at a cone and:

Dribble around the cone using the outside of the left foot only

Dribble around the cone using the right foot only

Ball walk around cone

Follow the leader (shadow dribbling):

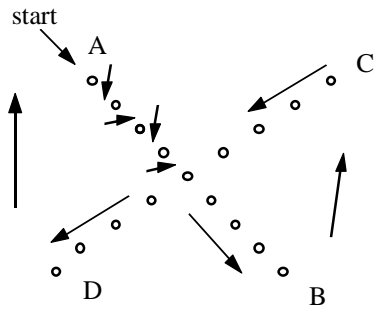
In pairs dribble around the cones one player shadowing the lead player

Speed dribbling

Dribble at varying speeds 1=slow up to 5=fast

4. Dribbling Obstacle course

Formation



Players line up at the starting cone.

At 5 second intervals players start dribbling the zig-zag obstacle course. From A to B to C to D and then to the start again. Players need to dribble carefully where the two lines meet to avoid collisions

Variations:

Dribble course left foot only

Dribble course right foot only

Dribble course slowly then speed up every time through

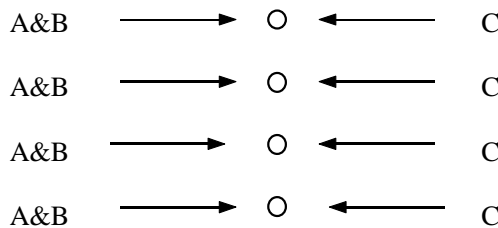
Add a goal to shoot on at the end of B and D

Weave the lines in different directions

Add a passing component between B and C or D and A

5. Dribbling in a relays

Formation



Dribbling in a relay 20 metres apart with a cone in the middle of three player (A<B<C)

Start with the end that has two players

Relay commands:

Dribble around cone and onto player C

Dribble left foot only around cone, onto C

Dribble right foot only around cone, onto C

Dribble to cone, ball juggle 3 times, onto C

Dribble using the bottom of your feet, onto C

Dribble ball shuttles (ball quickly between feet)

Dribble to cone, 3 jumps over ball, onto C

Dribble to cone, head ball to self, onto C

Variations:

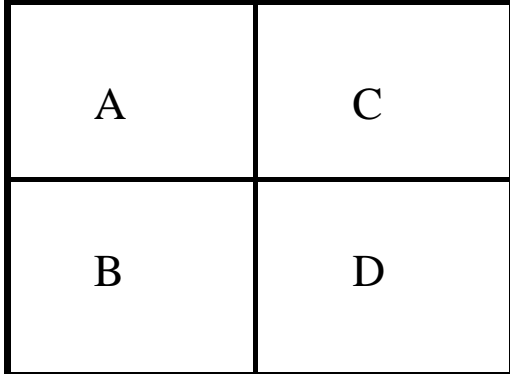
Do each relay continuously for a specific time

Perform a dribbling move at the cone, then onto C

Make the relay into a race

6. Multiple Squares

Formation



Multiple Square Drill (each square 5 metres)
Using 4 adjacent squares. All players start in one square with ball. Coach calls a square number and players move their ball to that square and keep dribbling inside new square until coach calls another letter

Have all players in square A dribbling very slowly because of the confined space, then call A& B now they can dribble in both squares and faster. With the addition of each square the players should dribble faster

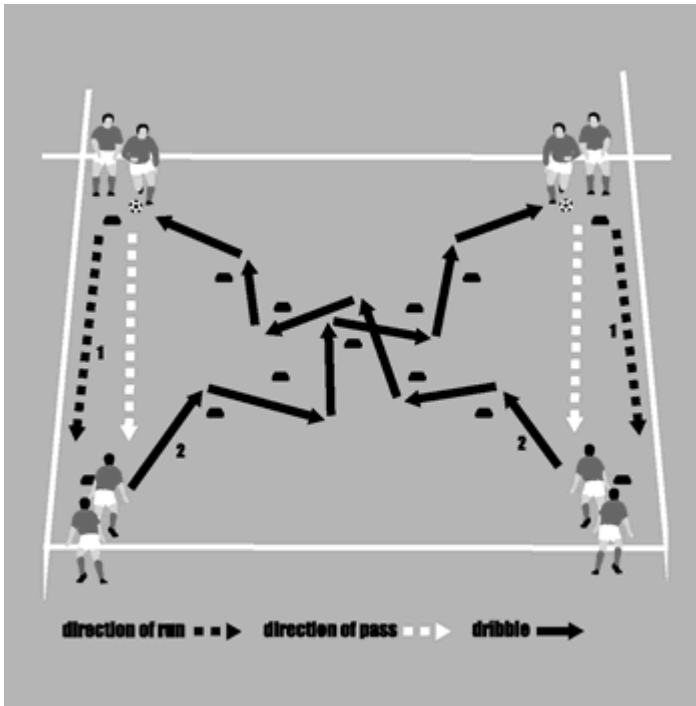
Split players into all 4 squares. Call 2 square letters and those players have to switch squares.

Variations:

Perform the above drills with left foot only and then right foot only

7. Dribbling and pass (great warm-up activity)

-dribble through the cones and then pass down the sides to the first person in the row, and then, join that row



Dribbling mini Games

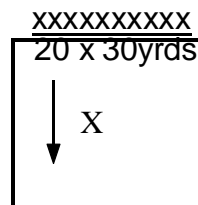
1. British Bull dog

British Bulldog (aka. sharks and fish)

Players line up at the end of the grid.

Players (fish) are to dribble ball to the opposite side of the grid on your command. The coach is the first bulldog (shark) and tries safely to knock the players' balls outside the grid.

If a player's ball is knocked out, the player becomes a dog. He/she takes a position in the middle and attempts safely to knock balls out of grid.



2.

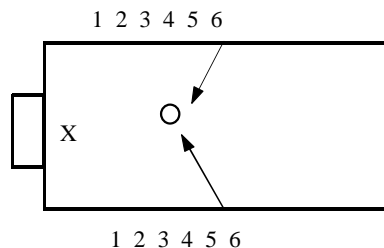
Numbers Game

Split players into two teams, number them and put on opposite sides of grid.

The coach (goalkeeper) X kicks a ball out and calls one or more numbers.

When a player's given number is called they quickly go to the ball. The first person to the ball becomes the attacker and the other becomes the defender.

The attacker dribbles towards the goal and tries to score on the goalkeeper. The defender tries to stop the attacker from scoring and at the same time tries to score themselves.



3.

Frozen Tag (ages 5-7)

Players dribble in a 20 metre square grid with the coach or some other player as it (the tagger). When a player is tagged they must freeze with legs open & hold their ball. They are unfrozen by any other player passing their ball through the frozen players open legs.

4.

Capture the flags

Players dribble in a 20 metre square grid with one end of a pinnie tucked into their shorts. The object is steal other players flags (pinnie) and tuck them into your shorts. When you lose your flag you are not out, you simply carry on and try to steal flags.

5.

Mr. Wolf (5&6 yrs)

Coach starts as the big bad wolf. Each little pig has a brick house (the end line where they begin). The Pigs shout "What's the time Mr Wolf" and the wolf shouts back a time. Each player advances the ball the number the wolf shouts out. Pigs ask again and repeat. When the Wolf shouts "Dinnertime", the pigs have to dribble their soccer balls back to their house and the wolf chases and tries to kick their ball away. Let each player have a go as the wolf.

6.

Go – Go Stop (5 & 6 yrs)

The players line up on the end line with the coach standing about 10' in front. Facing away from the players the coach starts walking calling out go-go-go (the players dribble in the same direction behind the coach). When the coach calls out stop, the players must sit on their ball as fast as they can. If the coach turns (after approx 3 seconds) and a player is not sitting on their ball they must return to the starting line. The object is to be able to go the length of the field without having to go back to the starting line.

7.

Shark attack

Players are dribbling in a grid with the coach dribbling as an attacker (shark). Players must dribble away from the shark or else he/she will kick their ball out of the square. If your ball is kicked out, you must retrieve your ball and "ball juggle" for 30 seconds before you get back into the game.

8.

Red Light/Green Light

Each player with a ball lines up at one end of the penalty area. A coach stands at the other end and yells, "Green light," and turns his back to the players. The kids race across the penalty area to see who can reach the coach first. After a few seconds, the coach yells, "Red light." At that command, the players must stop and put a foot on top of the ball. The coach turns back around and looks for players whose ball is still moving. Those players must move a certain distance back to the starting line. Repeat calling red light/green light until someone wins the race. This game encourages fast dribbling while keeping the ball close.

9.

Simon Says

Just like the common children's game, the coach gives instructions like "Simon says dribble with your left foot" or "Simon says switch balls with someone." The players only

follow the instructions if they being with "Simon says..." Anyone following instructions without the preface "simon says, pays a penalty such as make a funny face. The idea here is to give the players an interesting warm up and not to eliminate them from the activities.

10.

Sharks and Minnows

The Minnows start at one end of the area and must dribble across the area and across the opposite goal line without losing possession of their ball. The Sharks defend the area, trying to kick the Minnows' balls out of the defined area. Minnows who retain possession turn around and go back for round two. A Minnow who loses their ball join the Sharks for round two. The last successful Minnow is the Grand Champion.

Variations of Sharks and Minnows

- Sharks steal ball and go to a goal instead of just kicking the ball out.
- Instead of eliminating players until only one is left, give points to the sharks for kicking out balls but let everyone stay in the game. Everyone gets a turn as a shark.
- Sharks who take possession of a ball immediately become Minnows; Minnows who lose the ball become Sharks.

Players are not knocked out, but must perform some task before getting back into the game. (Such as ball dance.) 10.

Sharks and Minnows

- Start with a defined area marked, adjusted for size depending on the age of the players. Half the players have balls and are Minnows. The rest do not have balls and are the

Minnows must control the ball in a goal area to encourage good ball control instead of just kicking the ball over the end line if a Shark gets close.

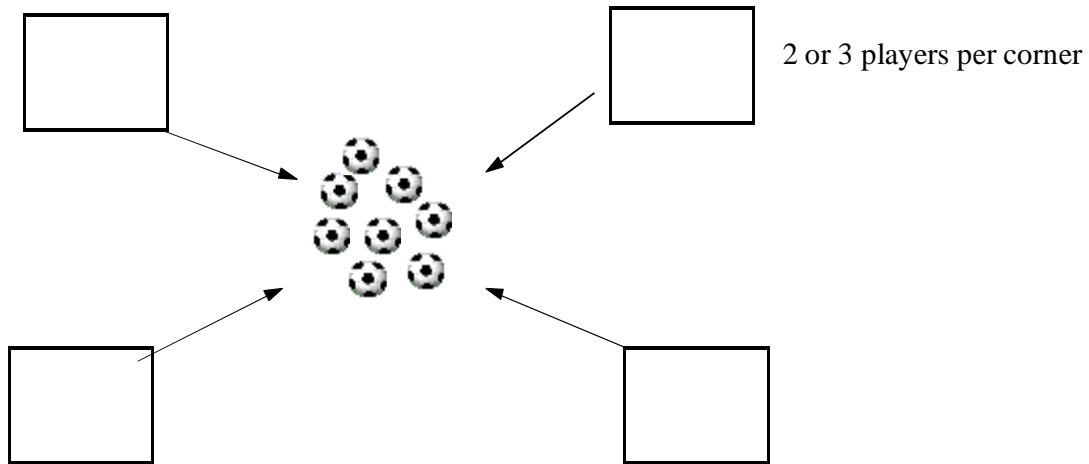
11.

Spiderman

Set up a large grid of 30x30 yards. This is a game of soccer tag where everyone but the coach (it) is dribbling in the square. When the coach (it) tags a player, they hold hands with the coach and carry on tagging players. When players get tagged they hold hands with the ever enlarging spider web. Last player to be tagged is the winner.

12.

Four corners dribble mania



In a 20' x 20' space, create four corner zones with cones. As many balls that as you have go in the middle of the space. In each corner you place 2 or 3 players. When the coach says "go"...players from each corner run to the middle and dribble a ball back to there corner. They continue to go to the middle as long as the balls last and then after that players go to the other corners to steal balls from the other teams (players cannot defend the balls already in there corner).

Play for a duration of about 3 minutes, the have a small rest and play again with variations on the dribbling condition: left foot only, right foot only, designate a defender player, outside of the foot only, inside of the foot only.

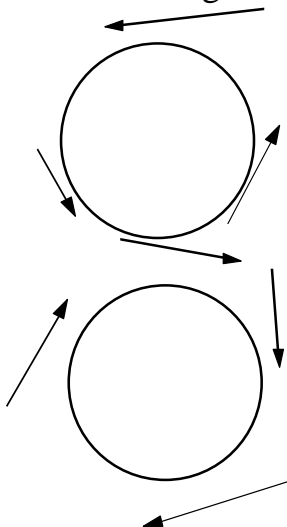
Play for 10 to 12 minutes over all (4 games)

13.

Race car drivers

Players dribble around a figure 8 race course.

Coaching variations:



1. Coach dictates a speed variation starting with 1 slow up to 5 fast
2. Dribble using one foot only
3. Dribble race, first player to dribble 3 laps wins

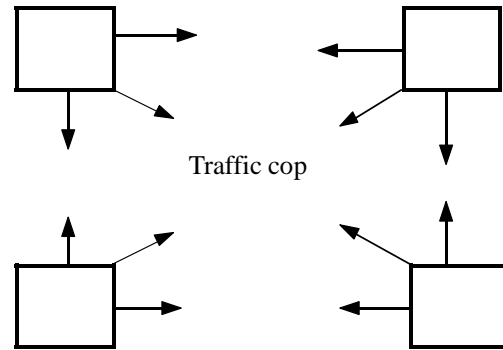
14.

Traffic Cop

Players are placed evenly in one of four corners. The coach is the Traffic cop and directs players to dribble in one of 3 directions: North-South, East-West or diagonally.

Variations:

- dribble one foot only
- Use speed variation
- Must use some dribbling move while crossing

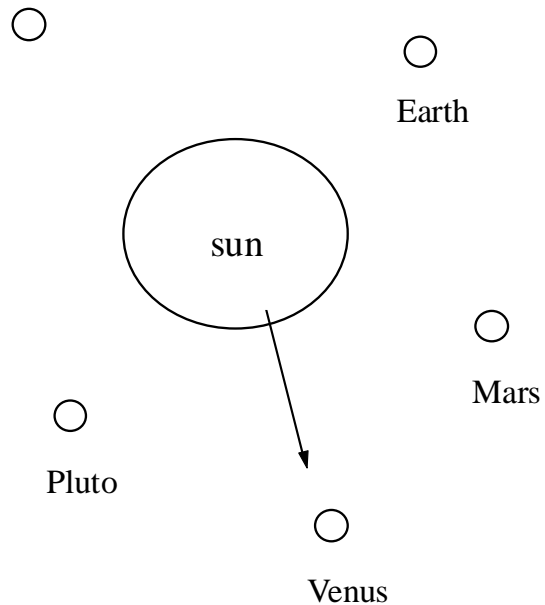


15.

Solar Soccer

Players dribble the Solar System.

Players dribble inside the sun using various coach directed variations. ie. Right foot only, left foot only etc. Then, when the coach calls out Blast-off Players must dribble around a planet and back to the sun as soon as possible. This can be done as a race or the coach can keep time and have the players complete the solar trip in ever decreasing time.



16.

Marbles

Split your team into two groups and line them up behind two opposing lines.

Each player should have a ball. Place an unusual color (or size) ball in the middle. This is the marble. Have them try to move the marble across the other team's line by striking it with a ball. After the game starts I don't require them to use their own ball. If they lose theirs, they are free to use any other ball they can find.

17.

Circle Game

Set up a 20x40 yard grid, make a center circle, and split players into two teams that can be identified by a color. Have all the kids dribble their balls in the center circle. Call out a color. That team dribbles toward their goal. The other team leaves their ball and runs to slow the attackers down trying to get them to a sideline and to dribble out-of-bounds, or not get to their goal line before the coach counts to 7 .

18.

dribble through the gate

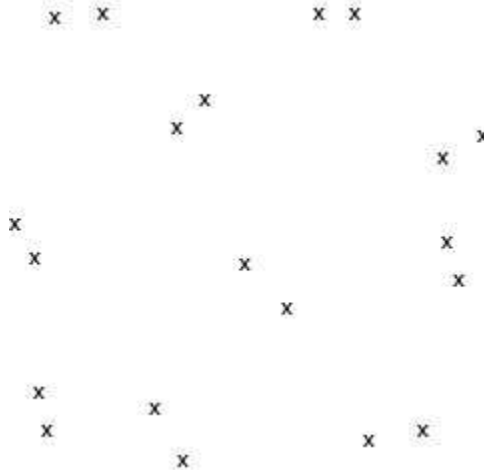
a soccer drill that works on dribbling, communication, vision and teamwork
from FineSoccer.com

Age group: 8 and up

Number of players: whole team

Equipment: flat cones, bibs (two colours)

The first thing to do is start with a warm up for this drill. Set a number of gates up throughout half of the field like below. Each gate should be 2 yards wide (a gate is imply two cones set up as things to go through such as a goal)



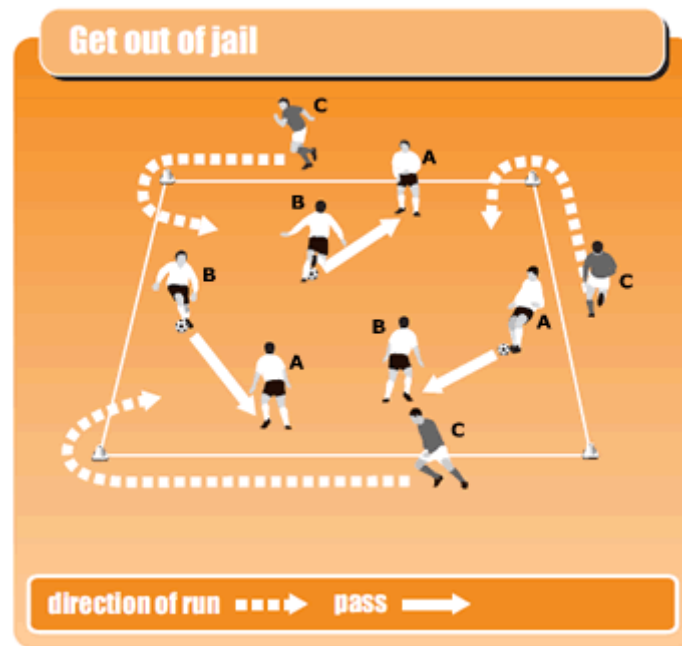
x's are cones

Have half the players wear white and the other half blue. Have a white and a blue player match up with each other with one ball per pair. This is simply a 1v1 game where the players try to score points by dribbling through as many gates as they can. The white player starts with the ball and tries to score as often as possible in the first one minute half. If the blue player wins the ball, then she tries to score goals. The only restriction is that the players can NOT dribble through the same goal two times in a row. After a one minute half, they rest (and stretch) for a minute, then play the second half with the blue player starting with the ball. With a team of 16 players, there will be 8 games of 1v1 going on at the same time. This will encourage the players to dribble with their heads up (or run into each other). At the end of the second half, you might let the winner rest for a minute while the loser does some type of "punishment" such as a couple of push-ups.

The key is to turn this into a very competitive match. The next game should feature a white winner matching up with a blue winner and also have the losers match up with each other. You can do this three times and get a very strenuous work out going which will continue into the next drill.

19. Tonight there's going to be a jailbreak

Jailbreak is a great game to give your players a bit of fun on training night. It gets them using skills and techniques to shield and hold the ball, improve quick passing and develop the art of closing down to win the ball.



How to set it up and play

- Set up so you have three pairs in a 20 yards by 20 yards square.
- Each pair should have a ball that they pass between them. One of the pair is A, the other B.
- You need three outside players who are in "jail". They are the Cs.
- Tell the Cs to jog around the outside of the square in any direction. When you shout "jailbreak" they must run around the cone on the corner of the square in front of them and enter the square to try and win a ball off one of the pairs.
- If one of the balls is won fairly, all of the players are out of jail and the Cs swap with the A players. The As go to jail outside the box and you start again.
- On your call of "jailbreak" the As try and win a ball. If they do, the As swap with the Bs. And so on.
- The jailbreak players must act independently, so each player tries to win a ball – they cannot double team any of the pairs.
- The pairs must move around the square passing to each other using skills like shielding, turning and passing into space.
- Play for a couple of minutes, if no one wins a ball the players go back to jail.
- It's a fast game with a fitness, skill and fun angle.

20. Rabbits and foxes

This is a game for players of all levels and improves close control at pace and overall movement in a bid to avoid pressure from the opposition.

Objective: To practise dribbling and ball control.

Skill level: Any.

Number of players: The whole squad.

Set up: All your players except one tuck a bib (a tail) in the back of their shorts. They are the rabbits. The one remaining player is a fox.

How to play: The rabbits run round the playing area while the fox tries to pull their tails from their shorts. Players who lose their tails become foxes. The last rabbit is the winner.

Progression: The foxes dribble a ball while they are chasing the rabbits.

Coaching point: Encourage the rabbits to change speed and direction quickly to avoid the fox.

21. Shadow Dribbling

This soccer dribbling drill uses partners who do not attempt to gain possession of the ball, but adds extra pressure as the following dribbler attempts to imitate the lead dribbler's every move.

soccer shadow dribbling drill, shadow dribbling practice, dribble skills



Setup; Create a small grid approximately 20X20 yard grid. Instruct players to pair up each player with a ball.

Instructions

The lead dribbler dribbles around inside the grid while the following dribbler attempts to mimic the lead dribbler's every move and keeping a good close distance. Change leaders after a minute.

Coaching Points

- lift head, eyes up

- close control
- control of body movements
- use all parts of their feet while dribbling (inside, outside, top, bottom).
- change of direction
- change of pace
- find space
- dribble with speed
- encourage players to be creative

22. The "Cole" game

By Tony Carr

This session is designed around the two "Coles" – Joe and Ashley Cole – who both play for England. This practice combines the two players' abilities, Ashley's 1v1 defending skills and Joe's 1v1 attacking skills.

How to set it up

- Use an area 30 yards by 20 yards with a four-yard square zone in the centre.
- Place mannequins (or poles and cones) five yards from each goal.

What players should do

The player must pass across to the opposite player and then run to jockey backwards. Once the player has jockeyed into the coned square, he must take the ball from the other player and quickly dribble to the mannequin and complete a skill and shoot at goal.

Therefore, the player defends and then reacts to winning the ball to become an attacker. Players shoot at the opposite goal from the previous "Cole".

Development: The Cole game

Pick two teams and have them take alternate turns in a continuous 1v1 game. When attacking, they are trying to score in the big goal, when defending they are trying to regain possession and score in the small goals.

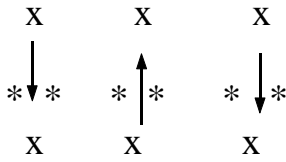
The first team to five goals is declared the winner. As soon as a player has attacked, they become the defender for the next ball.

PASSING – GENERAL TIPS

- Use inside of feet as your primary passing method
- Contact the ball at the equator (mid-line)
- Follow through in the direction of the pass
- Change body position so it's comfortable.
- Stay relaxed. Don't be like a robot.
- Look at ball when passing.
- Pass to other players, not just kick and hope.
- Move afterwards.
- Move away from players to receive ball.
- Turn body to face ball when receiving.
- Stay spread out.

Passing – Skill Drills

1. Passing in partners



Teaching pointers

Passing

- Pass with the side of the foot
- Contact the ball mid-seam
- Follow through in the direction of the pass

Throw-ins

- Throw from directly behind the head
 - Throw equally with both hands
- Keep both feet on the ground

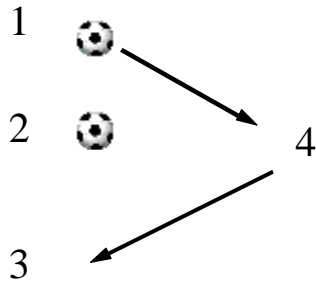
Instep pass to partner through a pair of cones.

- Pass and trap with strong foot
- Pass with weaker passing foot
- Throw-ins 10' apart
- Trap turn and heel kick
- Control a bouncing pass and return pass
- Pass and trap with the outside of both feet
- Move back slightly and pass with laces for a longer pass

- Passing mini game

Start 1 foot apart and pass to partner, with each successful pass through the cones take one step back & try to go back as far as you can before you miss. When you miss you both start again passing 1 foot apart.

2. Pressure Passing



Pressure passing

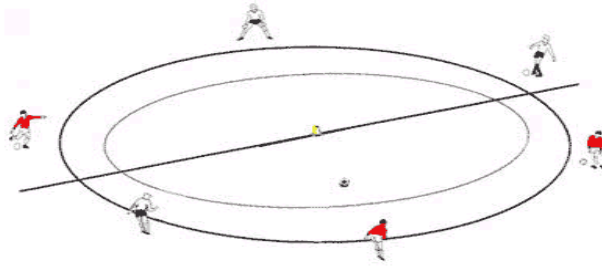
Have one player face 3 players (10' apart). Player 1 passes to player 4, who passes to player 3. When 3 receives the pass, player 2 then passes to 4, who passes to 1 and so on. Player 4 receives all the passes for two minutes and then rotate another player in to the pressure passing position.

3.

Super Circle

Objective:

- A challenging centre circle practice that develops accurate kicking.



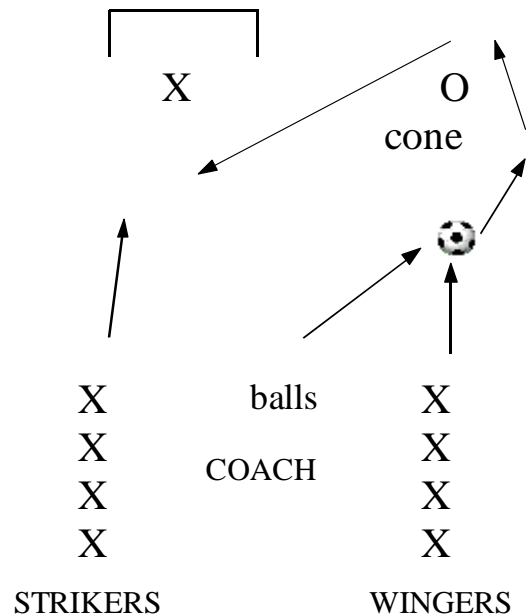
Organization:

- Extend the center circle by 2, 3 or 4 yards or use marker disks to make a circle.
- Each player on one side of the circle has a partner directly opposite.
- If there is an odd number the coach joins in.
- Each pair has one ball between them.
- One player passes the ball towards his or her partner, but tries to knock over the cone in the center circle.
- The partner retrieves the ball and returns the pass through the center circle, again trying to kick over a cone.
- The ball must be passed from outside the circle.
- Partners keep their score with the first pair to knock down the cone five times (or four; or three) being the winner.

Teaching:

- Encourage the players to use pace as well as accuracy of pass.
- Suggest they continue to kick towards the ball even after they have actually kicked (follow through).
- Encourage them to approach the ball at a slight angle to the direction they are kicking (45 degrees).
- Have at least one session where the players must use the "other" foot.

3. Crossing pass from winger



Form two lines (strikers and wingers), the coach stands between the lines with all the balls. The coach passes slightly in front of the winger to run onto and dribbles around the cone, then cross the ball to the striker (who shoots). Once the shot is taken, the striker retrieves the ball and goes to the end of the wingers line and the winger goes to the end of the strikers line.

5. **Keepaway with a purpose**

Keepaway is the best way to practice making space, support play, passing, receiving and shielding the ball. But children soon get bored with keepaway unless it has a 'soccer-like' end result.

Skill level: Any.

Number of players: The whole squad.

Set up:

Create a suitable sized rectangular playing area, with a goal at each end, for every six or seven players in your squad. For young or inexperienced players, make the area big enough for them to experience success. Make the playing area smaller for intermediate or experienced players. The smaller the area, the harder it is to keep possession.

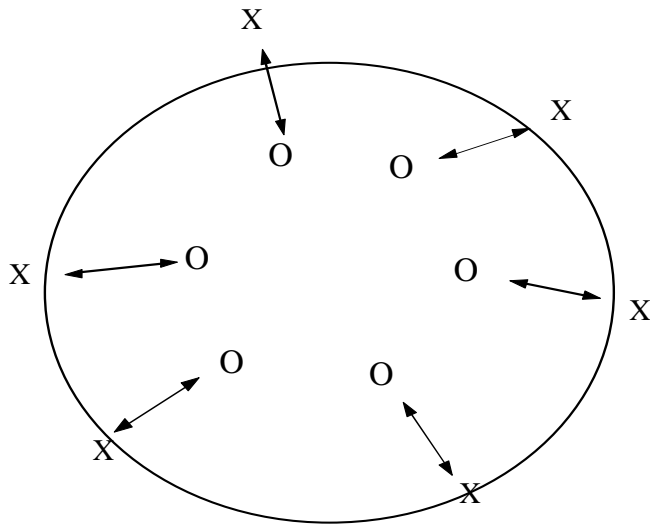
How to play:

Start with five attackers versus one defender in each playing area. Progress to 5 v 2 or 5 v 3 if your players find 5 v 1 too easy. Allow the attacking team to shoot if they put a set number of passes together without the defender(s) touching the ball. If the defender(s) intercept the ball, they can shoot. The first team to five goals wins. Rotate the defenders regularly.

Progression:

- Move to two or three touch only.
- Instruct the attackers to call the name of the player they are passing to before making the pass.

6..Circle Passing



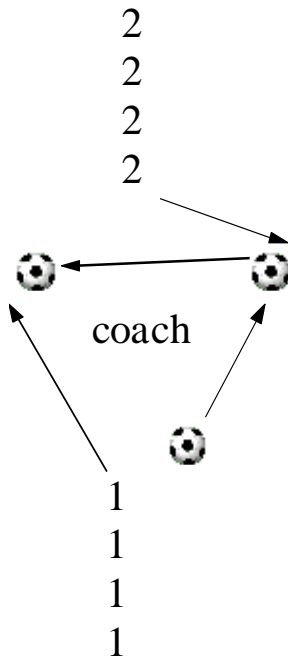
O players start with the ball, pass to X and get a return pass, & then proceed to the next X player.

Coach commands:

- Pass moving clock wise
- Pass moving anti clock wise
- Pass move random and pass to whatever receiver is open
- Pass to X, go around X, receive return pass

When completed, reverse roles, X move to the inside and O move to the outside as receivers

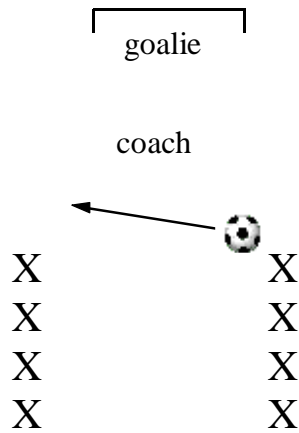
7. Give and Go (aka. 1-2)



Coach stands in the middle of two lines. Players must use the give and go pass around the coach. Player 1 waits for player 2 to show either left or right. Once player 2 moves to an open pass area 1 passes to 2, moves past the coach on the opposite side of the coach and receives a return pass.

This is the most important play in soccer...practice it often

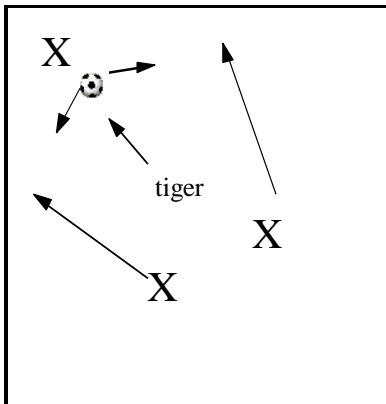
8. Two on one passing



The first player in each row X must make a minimum of 2 passes before they can shoot on goal. Coach provides passive resistance by generally getting in the way, but at the same time encouraging players to move into a good position to receive a return pass.

“When not in possession get into position”

9. Tiger ball (aka. Pig in the middle)



3 vs 1 passing

The object of this exercise is for the tiger (coach) to attack the ball and the 3 players to keep the ball away from the tiger.

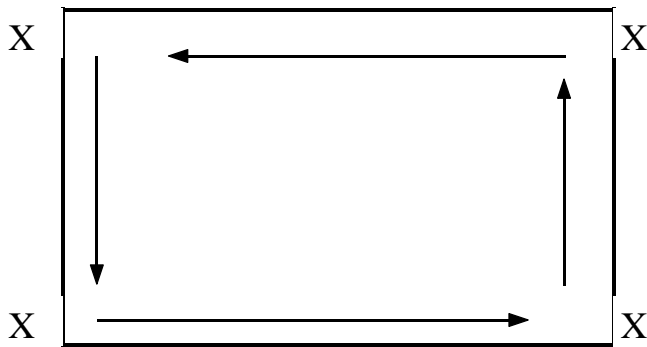
The two X players who do not have the ball Need to move into wide positions to give X player with the ball two easy pass options.

Play for about 2 minutes and rotate in another player to be the tiger

10. Passing in a square

a.. static passing for proper passing and control technique

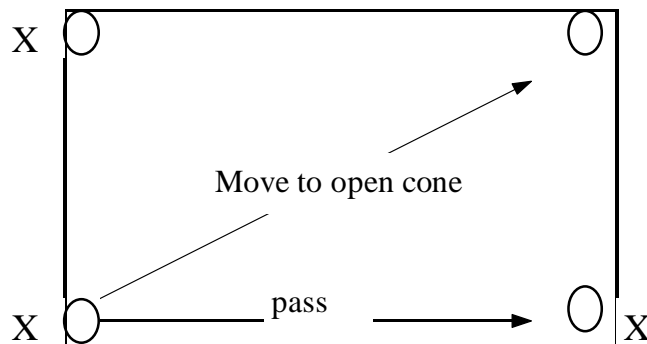
Passing in a square



In groups of 4, players practice the instep pass with the ball going clockwise or counter clockwise.

Coaching key: the players first touch on the ball must not only control the ball but guide the ball in the direction that he/she will be passing. Control the ball with the foot closest to the direction that you will be passing.

b. Pass and move to open cone



X Represents players
(3 players in a square with one open cone)

11. Bumper cars

Objective: This game improves dribbling skills, passing technique and encourages players to keep their heads up.

Age group: U5s to U9s (you also need a few willing adults)

Number of players: Whole team.

Set up: Create a 20x30 yard playing area with flat cones and a smaller rectangle just outside the playing area.

How to play: The players and the adults dribble a ball around the playing area. The children try to bump (pass) their "car" (the soccer ball) into an adult's "car."

If an adult's car is "bumped," the adult must take their car to the repair shop (an adjacent, small area designated by cones), and cannot leave until they count to 10.

Adults (coaches and parents) should encourage the children ("you can't catch me" etc.) so that the kids try very hard to bump their car.

As many parents as possible can play - kids LOVE to send their parents to the repair shop. Older siblings also are great targets.

12. Find the coach

Objective: to practise ball control, passing, support play and intercepting passes.

Age range: U4s to U7s

Set-up: create an area 20 yards long by 15 yard wide with flat cones.

Split your players up into two teams wearing different coloured bibs (pinnies) i.e., one team wearing white and one team wearing blue.

You stand in the middle of one side line and the teams stand either side.

How to play: put a ball in play and call out "white!" or "blue!".

The nominated team sends two players out who try to win the ball and pass it back to you. The other team sends out one player who also tries to win the ball and pass it to you.

You should move around the playing area so players must get their heads up to find you.

First team to "Find The Coach" five times, wins.

Coaching points: encourage your players to support each other and shield the ball when under pressure.

If neither team can pass the ball to you within 30 seconds, call "time" and start again.

Progression:

- Play 3v1 or 4v1.
- If your players are old enough, you can restrict the number of touches they are allowed before they have to pass.

13. In and out

Objective: to improve passing, receiving and movement off the ball.

Experience: intermediate.

Set up: create a 40 yards by 30 yards playing area with a five-yards square marked out in each corner.

Divide your players into two teams.

How to play: teams score a point by passing to a team mate who is in one of the boxes.

Coaching notes: to begin with, allow players to wait inside the boxes for a pass. Once they have got the hang of the game tell them that waiting in the boxes is no longer allowed – they must play possession soccer in the grid and only make a run into one of the boxes when a pass is on.

Passes only count if they are controlled inside the box by the receiving player.

Progression: points are only scored if the receiving player can pass out of the box to a team mate.

14. Keepaway wars

Experience: Any.

Set up: Split your players into two teams and number them from 1 upwards.

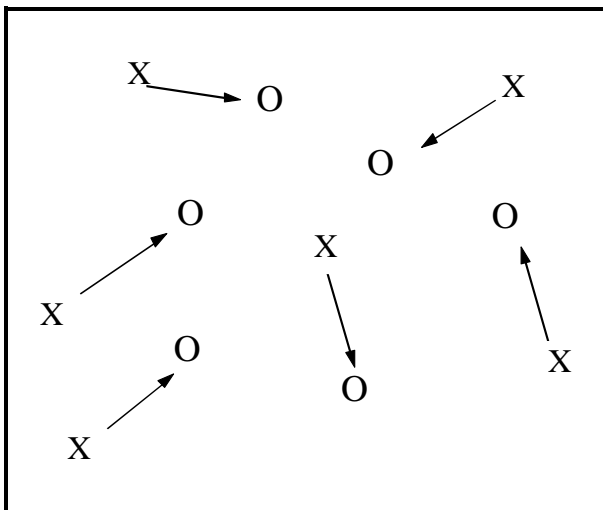
Create two playing areas. For team sizes up to six, 20 yards by 20 yards is fine. If you have more than that (or your players are inexperienced) make the grids bigger.

How to play: Use one team per grid. To begin with, your players pass the ball to each order in number order: 1 to 2 to 3 to 4 etc.

Make sure the players move after passing (no playing statues!) and they use the whole of the grid.

Progression: after a few minutes, call a number. The players with that number runs into the other team's grid and tries to steal the ball. Whoever steals the ball first gets a point for their team.

15 .Top Gun



Half the team have a ball X and half are in the grid without a ball O. The players with the ball try and pass onto the shins of the players without the ball. The last player to be hit is the top gun. The ball must hit the player below the knee.

Once top gun is achieved, players reverse roles and the O have the ball and X evades the passes

17. European Hand Ball

An excellent game to encourage players to pass and move into position to receive a return pass.

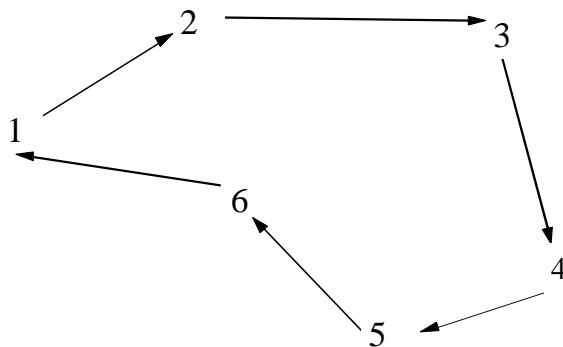
Divide your team into two teams.

Rules;

- pass by throwing the ball from hands to hands (as in basketball)
- When in possession player can only take 3 steps before passing
- On defence, players can only stand within 1 metre of the player with the ball and can intercept passes only (can't rip the ball from the attacking player)

Goal is scored when a pass is completed to a player standing passed the goal line of the other team

18. Soccer golf

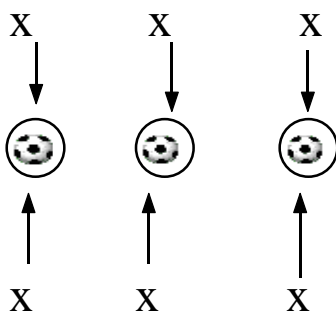


Set up a golf course using gates as the holes. Have players in groups of 3 or 4 pass their ball through the gates in the order you designate. Players count their number of passes. The lowest score wins.

Teaching points: A variety of passing techniques, short, angled, long.

Variation: have players design the course, or use obstacles such as trees, parents that players have to pass around.

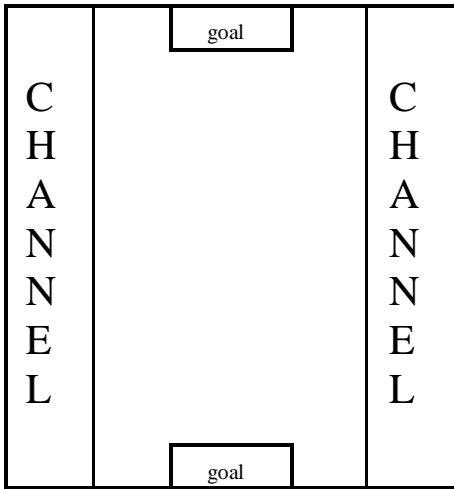
19. Soccer Bowling



Have players paired off approximately 10 metres apart with a ball balancing on a woz marker in the middle. Players pass their ball towards the ball in the middle in the hope of bowling off the marker. Score one point for every time the ball is knocked off the marker.

Players can compete in the pairs or make it a cooperative game and have the combined pairs total compete with other pairs.

20. Channel ball

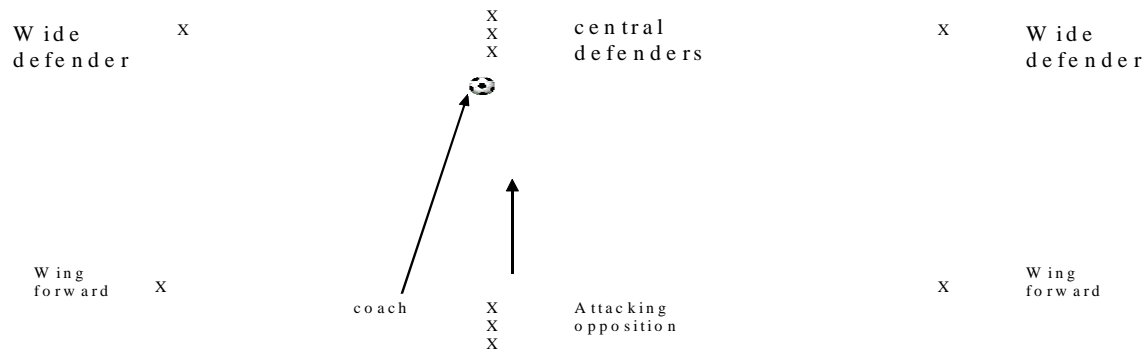


This passing game places two players (wingers) in the sideline channels. These players cannot be checked while in the channel and can dribble anywhere in the channel. Their job is to dribble up the field and cross the ball back to one of their players (channel wingers are playing for both teams, so when they receive a pass they return a pass to the same team).

A good game to encourage players to pass the ball out to the flanks instead of directly up the field

21. Pass wide and advance

Pass wide and advance



Central defenders receive a pass from the coach and practice passing wide (right or left) to keep ball out of trouble, then the receiving wide defender passes the ball forward to the wing forward. As soon as the coach passes the ball an attacking opposition player runs and attempts to intercept the passes. If the wing forward successfully receives the ball the defence get a point, if the attacking players intercept the ball they get a point. Rotate players into the various positions about every 6 pass sets.

22. black hole keep away

a soccer coaching drill designed to encourage young soccer players to spread out.

Focus: Possession through passing, spreading out, using space.

Age: U8-U10 (And older)

Equipment: Flat cones to define the playing area. Coloured bibs to identify teams. A couple of balls.

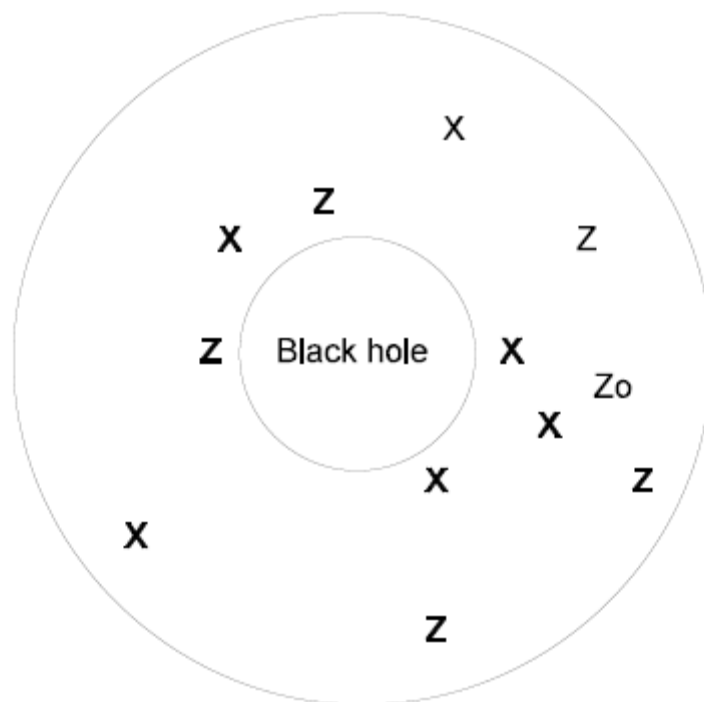
Players: 12-16 players work well, as few as 10 will work in a pinch, and as many as 20 can be accommodated.

Space: 30x30 to 40x40 or so. Can be done easily on half a field.

Introduction: Getting young players to recognize the usefulness of spreading out can be one of the most challenging aspects of coaching youth soccer. The plaintive cry of "Spread Out!" can be heard from the sidelines in many youth matches. This exercise should help the young players discover the value of spreading out and passing to maintain possession, in a fun and intuitive way.

Setup: Establish area boundaries compatible with the age and number of players present. Four U10's start with an area about 30 yards in diameter and define it with flat cones. Inside the area, create another, smaller circle about 7-10 yards in diameter. This is the "Black Hole". For older players like U12, make the area larger, like 40 yards in diameter, and the black hole proportionally larger, like 10-15 yards in diameter. I even use this with U14's with the centre circle (20 yards in diameter) as the "Black Hole".

Split the team evenly, and identify the teams with different colored pinnies. In the following diagram, the z team has possession of the ball, and the x team is defending/trying to get possession.



Execution: Simply play keep away, but players cannot touch the ball within the "Black Hole". They may freely run through the black hole, but cannot touch the ball inside it.

Coaching points:

- If marked, move to open space.
- Communicate to your teammates on both attack and defence.
- Pressure-cover defense roles.
- Square and drop pass support to maintain possession.
- If the edge of the black hole is crowded, find space away from it.
- You don't have to pass across the black hole.
- Touch the ball to open space with your 1st touch as you receive it.
- Lose your mark by checking (moving) away, and then back.
- Play the way you face.
- Receive and turn with one fluid movement if you are on the edge of the black hole and the ball comes across the black hole.
- Always know your options and have a plan before the ball arrives.
- Don't mark too tightly on defence, especially if you are marking near the black hole edge. You can intercept easier if you are away a bit and the receiver doesn't know exactly where you are, and where you are moving.

Variations:

- If too much dribbling away from the black hole takes place, consider reducing the size of the outer boundary, increasing the size of the black hole, or place a touch restriction on the players (like 2 touch).
- Place a minimum touch restriction on the players to encourage better support. For young players, simply tell them that they must control the ball with their 1st touch before passing with another. For older players, a minimum 3 touch, or even 4 touch restriction can dramatically change the game and place a much heavier emphasis on off ball teammates providing close support.
- You can intercept the ball within the black hole, but must be outside the black hole before the ball enters it in order to do this. This is good to work on cutting out passing lanes.

23. end zone game

one of [Pill's soccer drills](#)

Objectives: to improve passing, receiving, communication and team work

This 4 v.4 game is free flowing and gives players a lot of problems to solve. It is a good game to use towards the end of the session as it is very close to the 'real' thing.

One particularly good thing about this game is that since teams end up attacking in two different directions it forces players to play in different positions. They are at the back of the team when their team attacks one end-zone, while they will find themselves at the top of the team when they attack in the other direction. This is great for their development.

THE GAME:

- Set up the field as shown with a seven yard 'End-Zone' at each end.
- Score a goal by getting the ball from one 'End-Zone' to the other by passing or dribbling.
- Once a goal is scored, immediately attack going in the other direction. Do not give the ball to the other team. The 'End-Zones' are free, only the attacking team can enter these areas.



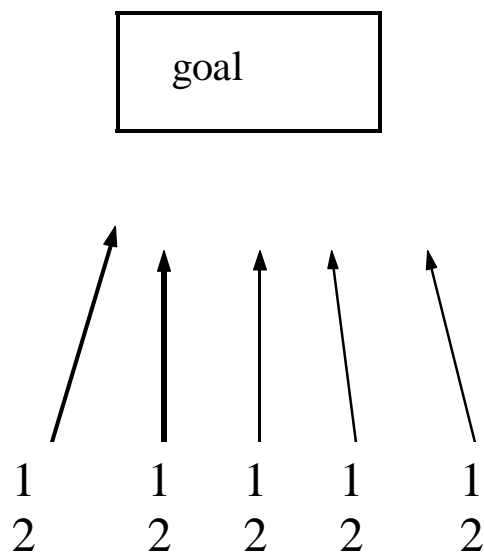
This game also encourages players to "SPREAD OUT" and work together, which, players are starting to be able to do at this age. At first, players will be tempted to just kick the ball up the field instead of passing. With patience, and demonstration of what is possible, this game could have a dramatic impact on their ability to play attractive, skilful soccer.

SHOOTING – GENERAL TIPS

- Keep toe pointing down.
- Lock ankle.
- Strike with shoelaces.
- Strike through center of ball.
- Keep your eye on the ball as you strike it
- Swing leg and follow through.
- Keep relaxed except keep foot locked.
- Accuracy before power.
- Keep knee and head over ball.
- Place standing foot alongside ball, not in front or behind.
- Aim for bottom corners of goal
- Follow after shooting for rebounds

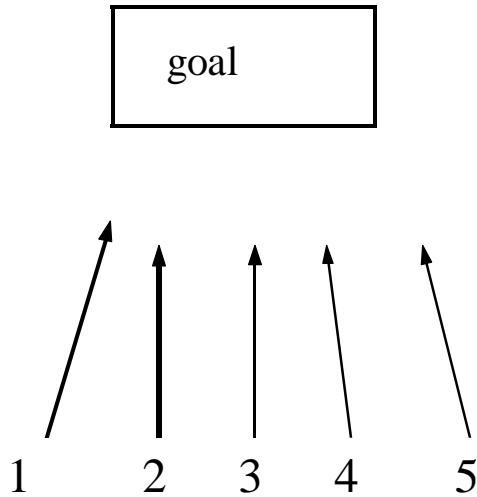
Shooting drills

1. Run and gun



Players form five lines of two players each approximately 25 metres from the goal. All #1 players dribble in and shoot on goal when the coach says go. As #1 players retrieve their ball, #2 players take their turn. This is a practice break-a-way so players should shoot about 10' from the goal. The coach should play goal to control the drill.

2. shooting by the numbers

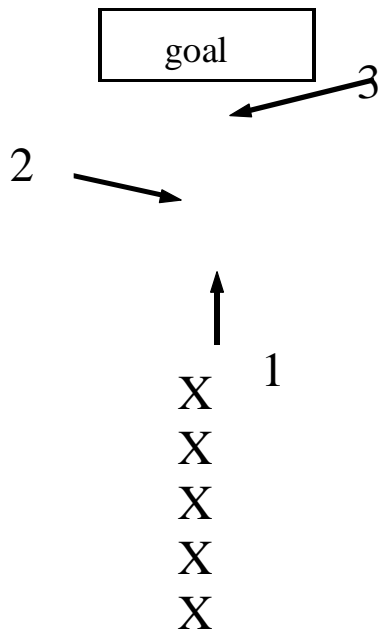


Five to eight players line up 25 metres from goal. When the coach calls your number you dribble in and shoot on goal. Two or three numbers at a time can be called to create a mini competition to see who scores first.

This is a practice break-a-way, so players should shoot about 10' from the goal. The coach should play goal to control the drill.

*An excellent drill to keep players attention because players must be ready to respond to their number being called at all times.

3. Triple shot shooting



Players line up 20 metres out from the goal.

1. Player touches the ball forward and takes a "laces" shot aiming at lower left or right side
2. Player proceeds with a side foot shot coming from the left at about 10 metres
3. Player proceeds further with another side foot shot coming in from the right side at about 6 metres.

Taking 3 shots in a row is an excellent practice from different distances and helps keep players focussed

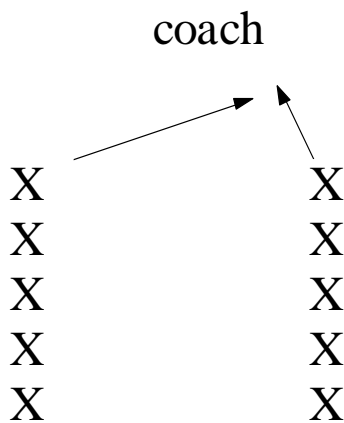
4. Blind Shot



Players line up approximately 20 metres from goal. First player gives their ball to the coach and faces the goal. The coach © stands behind the player and feeds the ball forward for the player to run onto and shoot at goal. The coach passes on the right side, left side, between the players legs or over players head and the player is blind to what delivery they are going to get until it happens.

A good drill to practice reaction time

5. two on one shot



Have two lines of players approximately 20 metres from the goal.

The first player in each row must make 2 passes to each other before they shoot on goal.

The coach is a passive defender, generally getting in the way but without tackling. Encouraging players to pass and then move into an open position to receive the ball for a shot.

6. Quick Fire Shooting

This game encourages link up play and finishing. It is also a simple exercise for improving your goalkeeper's technique.

Objective:

To improve shooting technique and to practice goalkeeping.

Age group:

U7 upwards.

Number of players:

Whole squad.

Set up:

Divide your players into groups of five. Set up a small goal with flat cones for each group of players. Have three or four balls per group positioned next to the goal.

How to play:

Put one player in each goal with the remaining four players in two pairs (pair A and pair B). Have each pair about 20 yards away on either side of the goal.

The goalkeeper passes a ball to a player in pair A, who lays off a pass for his partner to run onto. This player shoots. If he scores, the ball is retrieved by a player from pair B on the other side of the goal. He then provides a pass for his partner to run onto and shoot.

If a player misses the goal, he retrieves the ball and puts it with the spare balls you placed next to each goal. The goalkeeper uses one of these balls to pass to a player in the other pair and the game continues. If the goalkeeper saves the shot, he turns and passes it to one of the other pair of players.

Make the game competitive by challenging each pair to score as many goals as possible in a set time.

Note: You can play this game with groups of four by having a coach and/or assistants make up the numbers. You can also play in groups of three by having the goalkeeper provide a pass for the shooters to run onto.

7. Protect the Cone

Submitted by newsletter subscriber Will Thompson

Objective: To improve shooting power, accuracy and decision-making.

Experience: Any.

Number of players: Whole squad.

Equipment required: As many balls as possible, cones to mark out the playing area and four flat cones to place the target balls on.

Set up: Use a square playing area that is about one and a half times as long as your players can comfortably kick the ball.

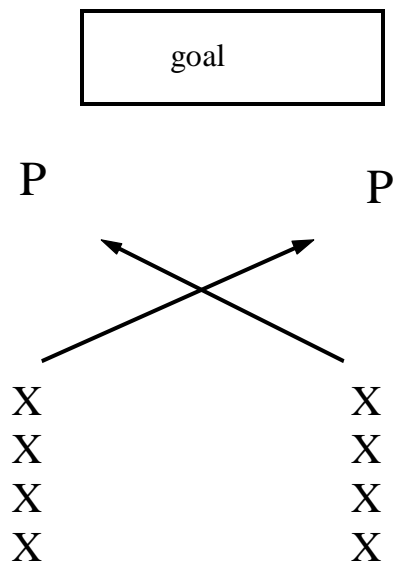
How to play: Choose two players to protect four targets (a ball on top of a cone). Spread the rest of your players outside the playing area. They should have a ball each.

The pair start by choosing where they want to put their targets within their playing area. On the shout of "GO", everyone else must stay outside the playing area and shoot the balls to try and knock off the targets. The pair in the middle are timed to see how long it takes for all their targets to be knocked off.

Tip: If you are playing outside, use a few helpers to return any stray balls.

If the pair have the targets close together, they have less running to do but the shooters don't have to be as accurate. If they place the targets far apart, the pair have more running to do but the shooters have to be more accurate...that's where the decision making comes in.

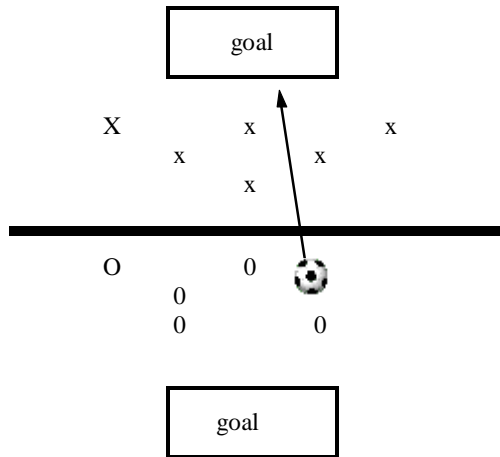
8. Criss - Cross



Two lines of shooters line up approximately 20 metres from goal. Alternately players pass the ball diagonally to the passer (P) and run onto a return pass for a shot at the 10 to 15 metre Spot.

Excellent drill for striking the ball coming across the goal and staying over the ball so it doesn't go up and over the goal.

9 King Louie

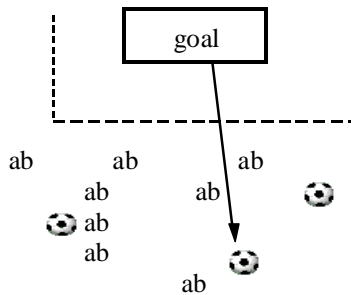


Divide the players into two even teams. Each team has a goalkeeper. The object is to shoot and score from your side.

Split the field in half with a set of woz markers. Coach serves a ball into one team and they must pass and spring a player open for a shot on the opponents goal from their own half of the field. Neither team can enter the others' half but players can block shots.

One variation is to allow one player to enter the other team's half to defend or attack.

9. World Cup



Divide your players into balanced pairs (weakest with strongest) ab.

The players stay outside the crease area (12 metres out from goal).

Balls are played out from the goalie and the pairs must win the ball from others, then, pass and shoot on goal.

When a pair score they go to the recording clip board and mark down their goal and then continue playing.

The two pair that have the most goals after playing for 10 minutes play in the world cup final (first pair to score wins).

10. 1v1 shoot-out battle

Objectives: to practise defensive and attacking skills in a competitive 1v1 situation. To encourage players to win a 50/50 ball. To give goalkeepers practice in dealing with one-on-one situations.

Set up: create a 20 yards by 30 yards playing area with a goal on one of the narrow ends and a cone in the middle of the opposite end line.

One player goes in goal and the rest of the players are split into two teams. One team stands next to the left-hand post, the other by the right-hand post.

How to play: on your command, the first player in each team runs along the outside of the playing area to the turning cone. As they run, you roll a ball into the playing area.

The first player to get to the ball is the attacker and tries to score a goal as quickly as possible. The second player to the ball is the defender. He is awarded a "goal" if he can either hold the attacker up for 30 seconds or win the ball and kick it out of the playing area.

The first team to score X number of goals is the winner.

Coaching points: this game teaches your players that defending is not necessarily about winning the ball. It is about stopping attackers from shooting. So encourage the defending player to direct the attacker towards the side and keep them there.

Encourage the attacking player to take a shot as quickly as possible.

Progression: give your players numbers. Call two numbers at a time so they are playing 2v2 in the grid.

11. Ladder shooting

This game will encourage your players to move the ball quickly from defence to attack. It will also encourage them to take their shots quickly and to follow up on their shots in case the goalkeeper drops the ball.

It is also a good workout for your goalkeeper and you can use it to reinforce the importance of good positioning as described in the article above.

Experience: any.

Objective: to be the first team to score.

Set up: place one normal-sized goal at one end of a playing area 40 yards long by 30 yards wide.

Split your squad into two teams of four plus one goalkeeper. If you have more than nine players consider setting up two games.

The first player in each team has a ball and stands on the end line furthest from the goal. Each team's players form a zig-zag line between the first player in their team and the goal. The teams should be separated by about ten yards.

How to play: on your command, the first player in both teams pass to their nearest team mate. This player passes to the next player and so on. When the ball reaches the player nearest the goal, they have to control it quickly, shoot and score.

After a goal is scored, the shooter takes the place of the player on the end line and everyone else moves down one position.

If the goalkeeper saves a shot, the ball is thrown out and the shooter has another go. If a shot misses the goal, the shooter retrieves the ball and tries again.

The first team to score gets a point and X number of points wins the game.

Coaching points:

- Does the shooter follow her shot in? Remember, it's the first team to score that gets the point, not the first team to shoot.

- Is the goalkeeper moving out to narrow the shooting angle?

Progression: add a defender who plays between the shooters and the goal.

12. Quick Fire Shooting

This game encourages link up play and finishing. It is also a simple exercise for improving your goalkeeper's technique.

Objective: To improve shooting technique and to practice goalkeeping.

Age group: U7 upwards.

Number of players: Whole squad.

Set up: Divide your players into groups of five. Set up a small goal with flat cones for each group of players. Have three or four balls per group positioned next to the goal.

How to play:

Put one player in each goal with the remaining four players in two pairs (pair A and pair B). Have each pair about 20 yards away on either side of the goal.

The goalkeeper passes a ball to a player in pair A, who lays off a pass for his partner to run onto. This player shoots. If he scores, the ball is retrieved by a player from pair B on the other side of the goal. He then provides a pass for his partner to run onto and shoot.

If a player misses the goal, he retrieves the ball and puts it with the spare balls you placed next to each goal. The goalkeeper uses one of these balls to pass to a player in the other pair and the game continues. If the goalkeeper saves the shot, he turns and passes it to one of the other pair of players.

Make the game competitive by challenging each pair to score as many goals as possible in a set time.

Note: You can play this game with groups of four by having a coach and/or assistants make up the numbers. You can also play in groups of three by having the goalkeeper provide a pass for the shooters to run onto.

13. Shoot! Score! Win!

This game is designed to improve your players' ability to shoot quickly and accurately. It will also encourage them to follow up on their shots which, on it's own, will result in your team scoring many more goals this season!

The variation of Shoot! Score! Win! is also a great workout for your goalkeepers.

Experience: any.

Set up:

- Divide your squad into two teams of between four and six players. If you have more than 12 players, set up two games.

- Create a playing area about 30 yards long and about 20 yards wide.
- Place a team behind each end line.
- Make a goal in the centre of the playing area with poles or corner flags.
- Place a cone between each team and the goal to mark the point at which your players should take their shot
- Place a few balls at both ends of the playing area.

How to play:

1. To start the game, team A sends one of its players to be goalkeeper.
2. The first player in team B dribbles a ball (at speed) to the marker cone and shoots. This player follows their shot and shoots again if team A's goalkeeper drops the ball.
3. Team A's goalkeeper retrieves the ball and returns to her team.
4. The shooter from team B is now in goal and faces a player from team A who dribbles out and shoots. After taking their shot, this player takes over in goal and so on.
5. The first team to score X number of goals wins.

Coaching points: impress on your players the need to dribble at speed, shoot quickly and follow their shot. You can, if you wish, further encourage a "finishing" mentality by awarding two goals if a player scores from a fumbled shot.

Also, if the shooter does not follow her shot and get into goal quickly, the opposition will have an open goal to shoot at.

You probably won't need to, but make sure the next shooter doesn't wait for the goalkeeper to get ready. They should start to dribble at goal as soon as they have the ball.

Vary the distance to goal and the size of the goal so players can experience success then make it harder by increasing the distance to goal and making the goal smaller.

Encourage players to shoot hard.

Variation: choose one player to be the goalkeeper. The rest of the players take it in turns to dribble and shoot, ie. a player from team A shoots followed by a player from team B in quick succession. The goalkeeper has to work hard: save, turn, save, turn.

Note: although this game involves players waiting in line, the speed of the game means they should only be waiting for a few seconds.