

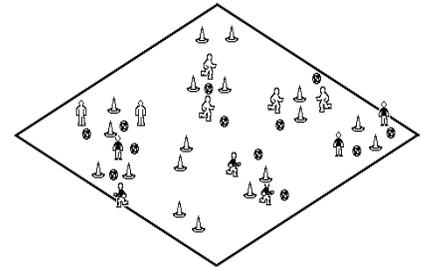


U6 --- Session Five

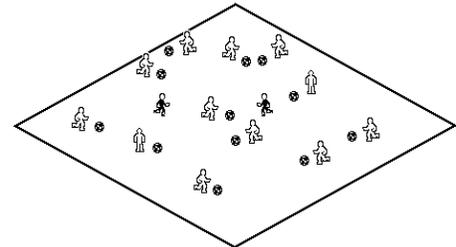
Objective: To provide fun, active, age appropriate activities that foster comfort with the ball for each player. It is important, if possible, that all players have a ball in most activities so that they can have “LOTS” of touches as they attempt to dribble (propel) the ball. (*Sessions should be about 45 minutes in duration.*)

1) Body Part Dribble---In designated area, coach has all players dribble a soccer ball. When coach yells out the name of a body part, players must touch that body part to the ball as quickly as possible. Coach should vary body parts and rate at which he calls out body parts. At times, call out body parts consecutively (i.e. tummy, nose, elbow) during one stoppage or call out two body parts at once (i.e. both hands or both feet). (6 minutes)

2) Gates---Set up many pairs of cones (with roughly 2 yards in between pairs) all around the playing area. These pairs serve as gates or many mini-goals. Players each have a ball and must dribble through the gate in order to score. Have players count how many goals they score in 30 seconds and when playing a second time ask them if they can beat their score by one goal. Coaches can vary this by asking players to dribble with left foot or right foot. If players end up dribbling back and forth through only one goal, set up a rule to protect against this. (8 minutes)

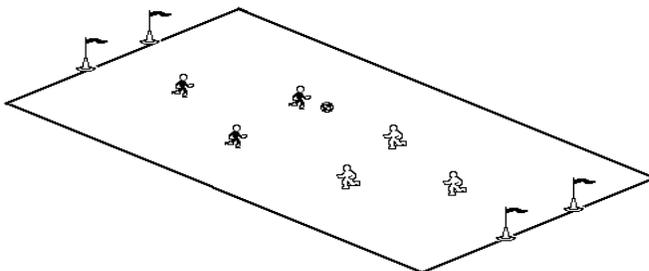


3) Ball Tag---Similar to other tag games except players try to tag others with their soccer ball, by kicking it at another player's feet or ball. Have them keep count of how many times they kick their soccer ball and tag another person. **Options:** If the players tag the coach, they are awarded 10 or 20 points. If the players tag other selected players, they can be awarded 50 or 100 points etc. (8 minutes)



4) Cops and Robbers---Coach sets up 8-10 stand-up cones in a 15yd x 15yd space. Robbers all have soccer balls and knock over the cones (banks) by kicking their balls into the cones and knocking them over. Cops (have 2 or 3 cops for each game) do not have soccer balls and need to stand the cones back up (before all the banks are robbed). Rotate who gets to be cops. **Variation (If don't have stand-up cones):** ½ group (cops) take soccer balls and put on top of disc cones. Other ½ of group (robbers) try to knock over those soccer balls by kicking their soccer balls at them. Cops must replace the soccer balls on the cones as quickly as possible. (8 minutes)

5) 3v3 or 4v4 Game---Separate players into two teams and play a game of 3 against 3 or 4 against 4 without goalkeepers. Let the players play and give plenty of positive feedback to them as they compete. **REINFORCE the GOOD STUFF!** (15 minutes)





U6 --- Session Six

Objective: To provide fun, active, age appropriate activities that foster comfort with the ball for each player. It is important, if possible, that all players have a ball in most activities so that they can have “LOTS” of touches as they attempt to dribble (propel) the ball. (*Sessions should be about 45 minutes in duration.*)

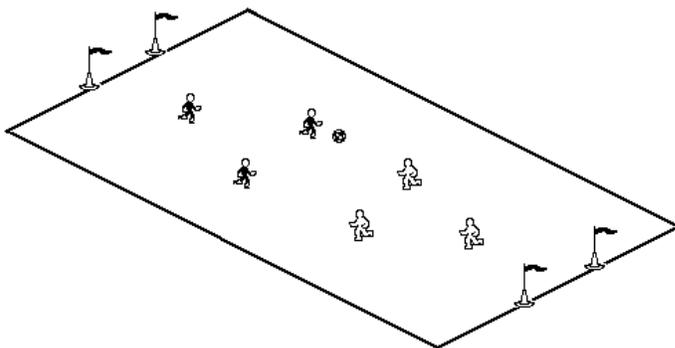
1) Tag--Every child dribbles a soccer ball in a defined space while trying to tag other players with their hand. Players cannot leave their own ball. Have them keep count of how many people they have tagged and, if playing twice in a row, see if players can tag more people than they did in the first game. *Version 2:* Players must tag other players on their knees. (8 minutes)

2) Juggling--Everyone with a ball. Hold hands out with ball in between, drop ball directly down and kick back up to hands, etc. Players practice keeping the ball in the air with their feet and thighs. Players count how many times they touch the ball before it drops to the ground. *Version 2:* Controlled juggling...juggle on one thigh, then add other thigh, then add one foot, then add the other foot...thigh-thigh-foot-foot (6 minutes)

3) Tail Steal-- All players tuck a pennie into the back of their shorts to give themselves a tail. All players dribble their soccer ball while trying to pluck the tails of other players and trying to make sure their tail does not get plucked. Players play until the last tail is plucked. (6 minutes)

4) Freeze Tag--Everyone has a ball and coach can pick one or two players who are the Freeze monsters. Freeze monsters (with ball) try and dribble around and tag other players (who also have a ball and are dribbling around). The frozen player must stand still holding their ball over their head. Players can become unfrozen if the coach comes over and unfreezes them OR the coach can have the other players unfreeze each other (by simply touching them again). If all players are frozen, game ends and the coach can have new Freeze monsters. *Version 2:* Freeze monsters can now try to freeze (tag) the other players by kicking their soccer ball at someone else’s soccer ball or at their feet. *Version 3:* Coach can be the freeze monster and try to tag all the players; players can unfreeze each other. (8 minutes)

5) 3v3 or 4v4 Game--Separate players into two teams and play a game of 3 against 3 or 4 against 4 without goalkeepers. Let the players play and give plenty of positive feedback to them as they compete. **REINFORCE the GOOD STUFF!** (15 minutes)





U6 --- Session Seven

Objective: To provide fun, active, age appropriate activities that foster comfort with the ball for each player. It is important, if possible, that all players have a ball in most activities so that they can have “LOTS” of touches as they attempt to dribble (propel) the ball. (*Sessions should be about 45 minutes in duration.*)

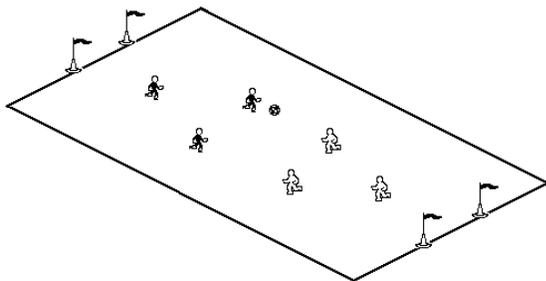
1) Free Dribble---Everyone dribbling a ball, using insides, outsides, and soles of their feet. Players can dribble with speed (outsides of the feet and toes), try moves of their choice or moves that the coach introduces, or they can change direction. The Coach can manipulate the session by calling out different commands...”stop, go, turn, tap”. Kids can carry the ball towards someone and try a move. *Version 2:* As players get comfortable, the coach can walk around and put pressure on players as they are performing dribbling tasks. This adds fun and interaction. (8 minutes)

2) Hospital tag---Same as tag in that each player dribbles a soccer ball and that they try to tag each other with their hands. In this game, each time a player is tagged he/she must place their hand on the spot on their body where they were tagged. Obviously, if tagged a third time, players have no more hands to cover those spots, so they must go to the hospital to see the doctor. The coach acts as the doctor and performs a magical task (pretend) to heal all the injuries of the little soccer players so they can continue playing the game. (6 minutes)

3) Snake---In an appropriate space, have all players dribble their soccer balls, except for 2-3 players (the snake). The snake players hold hands or lock arms and work together to tag the other players. The players dribbling the balls try to avoid getting tagged by the snake. If they are tagged, they join hands or lock arms with the snake. The snake grows until all players are part of the snake. The snake must work together and stay connected...they cannot break into little parts. Encourage fun by having the snake hiss. (8 minutes)

4) Sharks and Minnows---Set up a grid roughly 10yds x 15yds. Have 3-4 players inside the grid acting as sharks. The sharks do not have a soccer ball. The rest of the players (Minnows) start at one end of the grid and when the coach says “Go”, they attempt to dribble their soccer balls to the other end of the grid. The sharks try to kick their soccer balls out of the grid. If a dribbler’s ball goes out of the grid, that player becomes a shark as well. If the minnows reach the other end of the grid with their soccer ball, they wait for the coach’s command and play again. Play continues until all players turn into sharks. (8 minutes)

5) 3v3 or 4v4 Game---Separate players into two teams and play a game of 3 against 3 or 4 against 4 without goalkeepers. Let the players play and give plenty of positive feedback to them as they compete. **REINFORCE the GOOD STUFF!** (15 minutes)





U6 --- Session Eight

Objective: To provide fun, active, age appropriate activities that foster comfort with the ball for each player. It is important, if possible, that all players have a ball in most activities so that they can have “LOTS” of touches as they attempt to dribble (propel) the ball. (*Sessions should be about 45 minutes in duration.*)

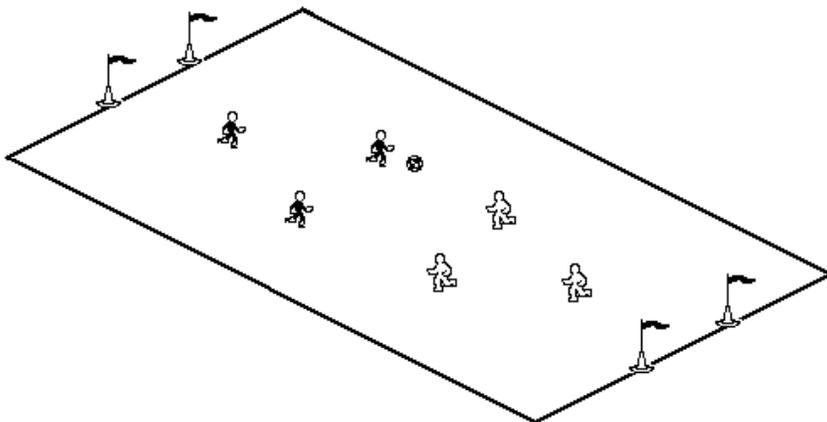
1) Kangaroo Jack---All players except two or three begin with a ball. Players without balls are kangaroo jacks and must hop like a kangaroo and try to tag players. If a player gets tagged, he/she becomes a kangaroo as well until all players are turned into kangaroos. (6 minutes)

2) Red light/Green light---All players have a ball and dribble in a limited space (or towards the coach). When coach says “red light”, players must stop ball and put foot on top of ball. When coach says “yellow light”, players must dribble very slowly. When coach says “green light”, players dribble fast. Coach controls this game with frequency of “light changes” and variety of changes. Once players catch on to this game, add light of other colors and affix different actions to them. (i.e. purple light = hop back and forth over ball, orange light = run around the ball, black light = dance, blue light = hide behind the ball etc. etc.). (8 minutes)

3) Shrek/Spiderman/Spongebob---Place a couple players in pennies and have everyone else get a soccer ball. Set up a 20 yd x 15 yd grid and have the players with soccer balls dribble around in the space. The players in pennies are Shrek (or Spiderman or SpongeBob, etc.) and try to tag the players who have soccer balls. When players are tagged they go to into the goal (castle, spidernet etc. etc.) and can only get back out if a teammate with a ball tags them or the coach uses his/her magic powers to let everyone free. Use any character or images you like for this and make sure all players get a chance to be one of the special characters at some point during every practice. (8 minutes)

4) Cops and Robbers---Coach sets up 8-10 stand-up cones in a 15yd x 15yd space. Robbers all have soccer balls and knock over the cones (banks) by kicking their balls into the cones and knocking them over. Cops (have 2 or 3 cops for each game) do not have soccer balls and need to stand the cones back up (before all the banks are robbed). Rotate who gets to be cops. *Variation (If don't have stand- up cones):* ½ group (cops) take soccer balls and put on top of disc cones. Other ½ of group (robbers) try to knock over those soccer balls by kicking their soccer balls at them. Cops must replace the soccer balls on the cones as quickly as possible. (8 minutes)

5) 3v3 or 4v4 Game---Separate players into two teams and play a game of 3 against 3 or 4 against 4 without goalkeepers. Let the players play and give plenty of positive feedback to them as they compete. **REINFORCE the GOOD STUFF!** (15 minutes)



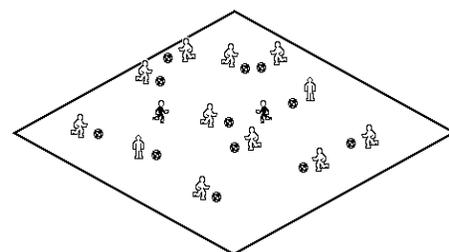


U6 --- Session Nine

Objective: To provide fun, active, age appropriate activities that foster comfort with the ball for each player. It is important, if possible, that all players have a ball in most activities so that they can have “LOTS” of touches as they attempt to dribble (propel) the ball. (*Sessions should be about 45 minutes in duration.*)

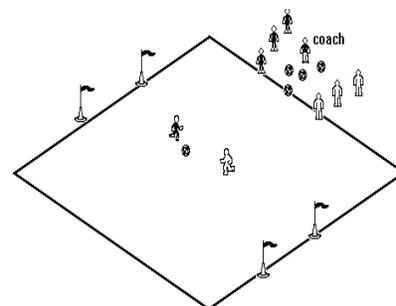
1) Juggling---Everyone with a ball. Hold hands out with ball in between, drop ball directly down and kick back up to hands, etc. Players practice keeping the ball in the air with their feet and thighs. Players count how many times they touch the ball before it drops to the ground. *Version 2:* Controlled juggling...juggle on one thigh, then add other thigh, then add one foot, then add the other foot...thigh-thigh-foot-foot (6 minutes)

2) Ball Tag---Similar to other tag games except players try to tag others with their soccer ball, by kicking it at another player's feet or ball. Have them keep count of how many times they kick their soccer ball and tag another person. **Options:** If the players tag the coach, they are awarded 10 or 20 points. If the players tag other selected players, they can be awarded 50 or 100 points etc. (8 minutes)

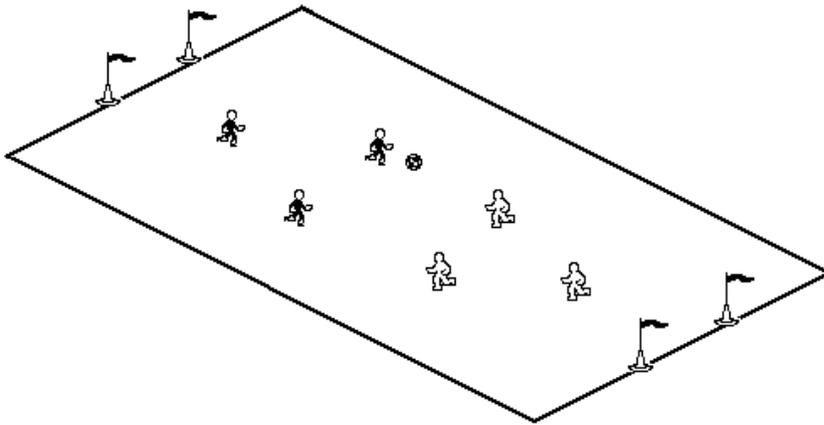


3) Freeze Tag---Everyone has a ball and coach can pick one or two players who are the Freeze monsters. Freeze monsters (with ball) try and dribble around and tag other players (who also have a ball and are dribbling around). The frozen player must stand still holding their ball over their head. Players can become unfrozen if the coach comes over and unfreezes them OR the coach can have the other players unfreeze each other (by simply touching them again). If all players are frozen, game ends and the coach can have new Freeze monsters. *Version 2:* Freeze monsters can now try to freeze (tag) the other players by kicking their soccer ball at someone else's soccer ball or at their feet. *Version 3:* Coach can be the freeze monster and try to tag all the players; players can unfreeze each other. (8 minutes)

4) Get “Outta” There---Place two small (2 yard) goals at the end of a field 15 x 10 yards. The coach stands at the halfway line with all of the soccer balls. Half of the players are lined up on his left side and half of the players are lined up on his right side in different colored bibs. When the coach kicks a ball onto the field, the first two players in each line run out and try to score on each other's goal. If the ball goes in the goal or out of bounds, the coach yells “get outta there” and plays a new ball into the field immediately for the next two players. *Version 2:* Coach can stop yelling “get outta there” and see if the 1st players in each line recognize that they should begin play when a new ball is kicked into the field. *Version 3:* Coach can vary service of ball. Sometimes play it to one player, sometimes toss the ball up in the air. (8 minutes)



5) 3v3 or 4v4 Game---Separate players into two teams and play a game of 3 against 3 or 4 against 4 without goalkeepers. Let the players play and give plenty of positive feedback to them as they compete. **REINFORCE the GOOD STUFF!** (15 minutes)





U6 --- Session One

Objective: To provide fun, active, age appropriate activities that foster comfort with the ball for each player. It is important, if possible, that all players have a ball in most activities so that they can have “LOTS” of touches as they attempt to dribble (propel) the ball. (*Sessions should be about 45 minutes in duration.*)

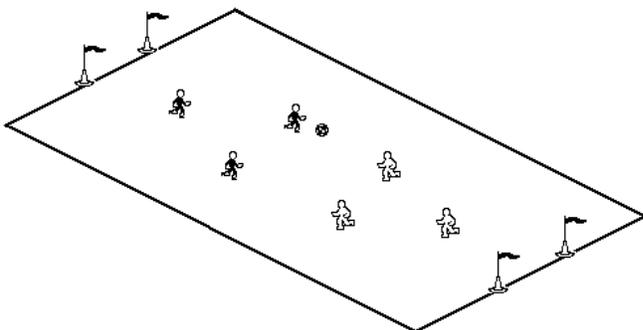
1) Tag--Every child dribbles a soccer ball in a defined space while trying to tag other players with their hand. Players cannot leave their own ball. Have them keep count of how many people they have tagged and, if playing more than one game, see if players can tag more people than they did in the first game. *Version 2:* Players must tag other players’ knees. (6 minutes)

2) Hospital tag---Same as tag in that each player dribbles a soccer ball and that they try to tag each other with their hands. In this game, each time a player is tagged he/she must place their hand on the spot on their body where they were tagged. Obviously, if tagged a third time, players have no more hands to cover those spots, so they must go to the hospital to see the doctor. The coach acts as the doctor and performs a magical task (pretend) to heal the injuries of all the little soccer players so they can continue playing the game. (8 minutes)

3) Body Part Dribble---In designated area, coach has all players dribble a soccer ball. When coach yells out the name of a body part, players must touch that body part to the ball as quickly as possible. Coach should vary body parts and rate at which he calls out body parts. At times, call out body parts consecutively (i.e. tummy, nose, elbow) during one stoppage or call out two body parts at once (i.e. both hands or both feet). (8 minutes)

4) Red light/Green light---All players have a ball and dribble in a limited space (or towards the coach). When coach says “red light”, players must stop ball and put foot on top of ball. When coach says “yellow light”, players must dribble very slowly. When coach says “green light”, players dribble fast. Coach controls this game with the frequency of “light” changes and variety of changes. Once players catch on to this game, add other color lights and affix different actions to them. (i.e. purple light = hop back and forth over ball, orange light = run around the ball, black light = dance, blue light = hide behind the ball etc. etc.). (8 minutes)

5) 3v3 or 4v4 Game---Separate players into two teams and play a game of 3 against 3 or 4 against 4 without goalkeepers. Let the players play and give plenty of positive feedback to them as they compete. **REINFORCE the GOOD STUFF!** (15 minutes)





U6 --- Session Two

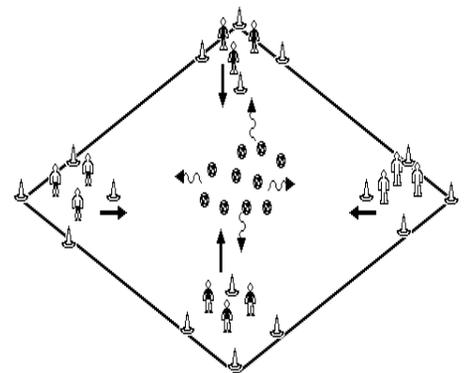
Objective: To provide fun, active, age appropriate activities that foster comfort with the ball for each player. It is important, if possible, that all players have a ball in most activities so that they can have “LOTS” of touches as they attempt to dribble (propel) the ball. (*Sessions should be about 45 minutes in duration.*)

1) Tail Steal--- All players tuck a pennie into the back of their shorts to give themselves a tail. All players dribble their soccer ball while trying to pluck the tails of other players and trying to make sure their tail does not get plucked. Players play until the last tail is plucked. (6 minutes)

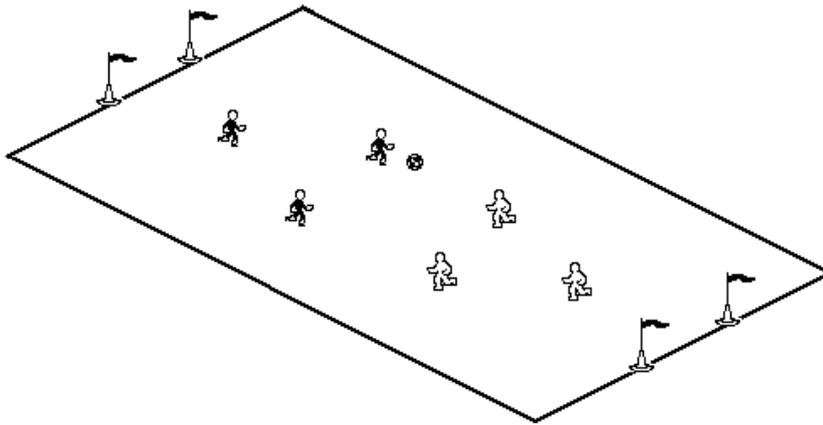
2) Snake---In an appropriate space, have all players dribble their soccer balls, except for 2-3 players (the snake). The snake players hold hands or lock arms and work together to tag the other players. The players dribbling the balls try to avoid getting tagged by the snake. If they are tagged, they join hands or lock arms with the snake. The snake grows until all players are part of the snake. The snake must work together and stay connected...they cannot break into little parts. Encourage fun by having the snake hiss. (8 minutes)

3) Freeze Tag---Everyone has a ball and coach can pick one or two players who are the Freeze monsters. Freeze monsters (with ball) try and dribble around and tag other players (who also have a ball and are dribbling around). The frozen player must stand still holding their ball over their head. Players can become unfrozen if the coach comes over and unfreezes them OR the coach can have the other players unfreeze each other (by simply touching them again). If all players are frozen, game ends and the coach can have new Freeze monsters. *Version 2:* Freeze monsters can now try to freeze (tag) the other players by kicking their soccer ball at someone else’s soccer ball or at their feet. *Version 3:* Coach can be the freeze monster and try to tag all the players; players can unfreeze each other. (8 minutes)

4) Capture the Balls---Set up three or four “home bases” (squares) with cones roughly 2-3 yards wide. Break up the players into teams and have each team get together in their home base. Place all the balls in the center of the space between the home bases. On the coach’s command the teams are free to gather as many soccer balls as they can into their home base. Players cannot use hands and there is no pushing each other or sitting/laying on the balls. Teams try to gather as many balls as possible into their home bases. Teams can steal balls from each others’ home bases. Coach calls time and counts up how many balls are in each base to determine a winner. Coach allows team 1 minute to make up a new team strategy before playing again. (8 minutes)



5) 3v3 or 4v4 Game---Separate players into two teams and play a game of 3 against 3 or 4 against 4 without goalkeepers. Let the players play and give plenty of positive feedback to them as they compete. **REINFORCE the GOOD STUFF!** (15 minutes)





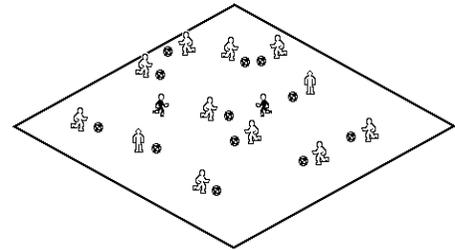
U6 --- Session Three

Objective: To provide fun, active, age appropriate activities that foster comfort with the ball for each player. It is important, if possible, that all players have a ball in most activities so that they can have “LOTS” of touches as they attempt to dribble (propel) the ball. (*Sessions should be about 45 minutes in duration.*)

1) Free Dribble---Everyone dribbling a ball, using insides, outsides, and soles of their feet. Players can dribble with speed (outsides of the feet and toes), try moves of their choice or moves that the coach introduces, or they can change direction. The Coach can manipulate the session by calling out different commands...”stop, go, turn, tap”. Kids can carry the ball towards someone and try a move. *Version 2:* As players get comfortable, the coach can walk around and put pressure on players as they are performing dribbling tasks. This adds fun and interaction. (8 minutes)

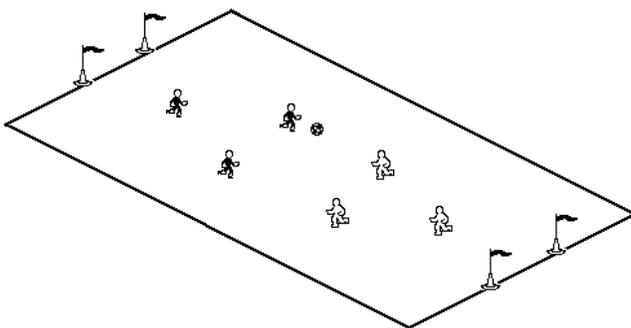
2) Kangaroo Jack---All players except two or three begin with a ball. Players without balls are kangaroo jacks and must hop like a kangaroo and try to tag players. If a player gets tagged, he/she becomes a kangaroo as well until all players are turned into kangaroos. (6 minutes)

3) Ball Tag---Similar to other tag games except players try to tag others with their soccer ball, by kicking it at another player’s feet or ball. Have them keep count of how many times they kick their soccer ball and tag another person. **Options:** If the players tag the coach, they are awarded 10 or 20 points. If the players tag other selected players, they can be awarded 50 or 100 points etc. (8 minutes)



4) Moving Goal---2 coaches use a pennie or an extra piece of clothing to form a movable goal with each coach serving as a post and the shirt serving as the crossbar. Players each have a ball and try to score by kicking their ball through the goal. However, the coaches constantly move and turn to force the players to keep their head up and to change direction as they dribble. (8 minutes)

5) 3v3 or 4v4 Game---Separate players into two teams and play a game of 3 against 3 or 4 against 4 without goalkeepers. Let the players play and give plenty of positive feedback to them as they compete. **REINFORCE the GOOD STUFF!** (15 minutes)





U6 --- Week Four

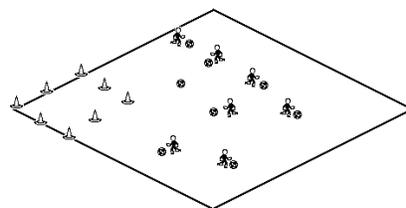
Objective: To provide fun, active, age appropriate activities that foster comfort with the ball for each player. It is important, if possible, that all players have a ball in most activities so that they can have “LOTS” of touches as they attempt to dribble (propel) the ball. (*Sessions should be about 45 minutes in duration.*)

1) Juggling--Everyone with a ball. Hold hands out with ball in between, drop ball directly down and kick back up to hands, etc. Players practice keeping the ball in the air with their feet and thighs. Players count how many times they touch the ball before it drops to the ground. *Version 2:* Controlled juggling...juggle on one thigh, then add other thigh, then add one foot, then add the other foot...thigh-thigh-foot-foot (6 minutes)

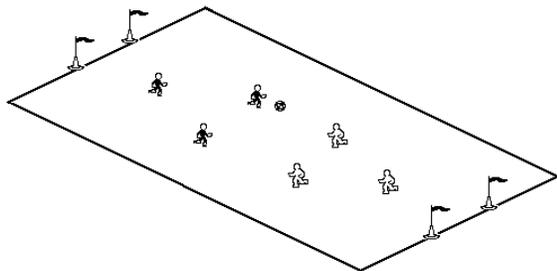
2) Paint the Field--Every player dribbles their ball in the area defined. You explain to them that their ball is actually a paintbrush and wherever it rolls on the ground, it paints that area. The task is to paint as much of the area as possible in the time allotted by dribbling their soccer balls all over the grid. *Version 2:* Can ask them to paint with only their left foot, then their right foot. (8 minutes)

3) Red light/Green light--All players have a ball and dribble in a limited space (or towards the coach). When coach says “red light”, players must stop ball and put foot on top of ball. When coach says “yellow light”, players must dribble very slowly. When coach says “green light”, players dribble fast. Coach controls this game with frequency of “light changes” and variety of changes. Once players catch on to this game, add lights of other colors and affix different actions to them. (i.e. purple light = hop back and forth over ball, orange light = run around the ball, black light = dance, blue light = hide behind the ball etc. etc.). (8 minutes)

4) Pirate Ship---Set up a 20x20 grid (Pirate ship deck) with a small 6x6 grid (safe shark cage) just in one of the corners of the field. Coach makes up variations and adds them to their pirate ship journey one at a time. Variations on the ship can be: *Scrub the deck*-players must roll the ball back and forth with the sole of their foot, then coach can ask them to do this while moving all around the Pirate Ship deck. *Hoist the sail*-players can knock the ball back and forth between their feet (foundation), then dribble all around the Pirate Ship deck as fast as they can. *Walk the plank*-players must do toe touches on their soccer ball, then dribble all around the Pirate Ship deck as fast as they can. *Shark attack*-Coach (aka: ‘Shark’) runs after players and they have to try and dribble their soccer ball into the 6x6 (safe shark cage) before the ‘shark’ catches them. (8 minutes)



5) 3v3 or 4v4 Game---Separate players into two teams and play a game of 3 against 3 or 4 against 4 without goalkeepers. Let the players play and give plenty of positive feedback to them as they compete. **REINFORCE the GOOD STUFF!** (15 minutes)





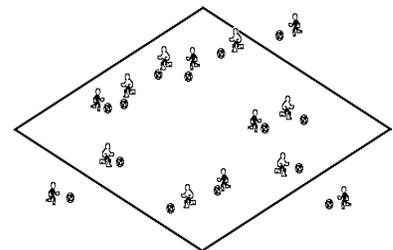
U8 --- Session One

Objective: To provide fun, active, age appropriate activities that foster comfort with the ball for each player. At this age we introduce activities that foster dribbling, passing, shooting and receiving. *(Sessions should be about 45-60 minutes in duration.)*

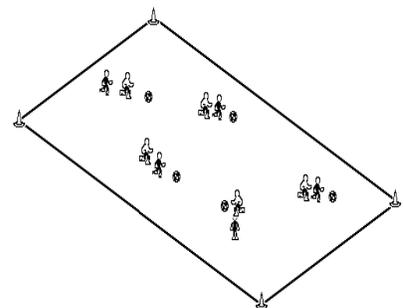
1) Tag---Every child dribbles a soccer ball in the space defined while trying to tag other players with their hand. Players cannot leave their own ball. Have them keep count of how many people they have tagged and, if playing twice in a row, see if players can tag more people than they did in the first game. *Version 2:* Players must tag other players on their knees. (10 minutes)

2) Free Dribble---Everyone with a ball, use inside, outside, and sole of the foot. Have players dribble with speed (laces/instep dribble), change direction (“spin in” with inside of foot and “spin out” with outside of foot), and perform moves. Coach calls out moves or changes in direction and sets the pace as the manipulator of the session, kids carry the ball towards someone and try a move. *Version 2:* As players get comfortable, coach can walk around and put pressure on players as they are performing dribbling tasks. This adds fun and interaction. (10 minutes)

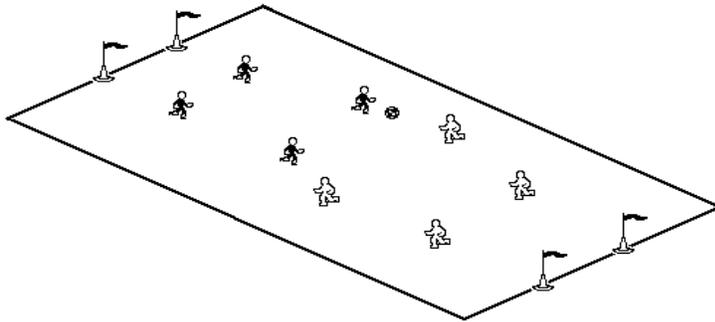
3) Knock Out---In same space as previous activity, have players dribble balls while trying to knock other player’s balls outside of the grid. Players can never leave their own ball. If their ball gets knocked out have them retrieve it quickly and get back into the game. (You may wish to have them perform a skills task before re-entering such as 10 sole of the foot touches or juggling 5 times). (10 minutes)



4) Shield-Steal---Two players (partners) with one ball. One player starts with the ball and, on the coach’s command, her partner tries to steal the ball from her. Play 30-45 second matches. Whoever has the ball at the end of the time allotment, receives a point. Play many matches. If ball goes out of bounds, one of the players must get it back into play quickly. ***Coaching points:*** Show shielding technique with body sideways on to opponent, arm providing protection, ball on outside foot, knees bent, turning as defender attacks, using feel to understand where defender is going. Fix technical shielding errors throughout this activity and make sure entire group knows how to properly shield. (8 minutes)



5) 4v4 Game---Separate players into two teams and play a game of 3 against 3 or 4 against 4 without goalkeepers. Let the players play and give plenty of positive feedback to them as they compete.
REINFORCE TECHNIQUE! (20 minutes)



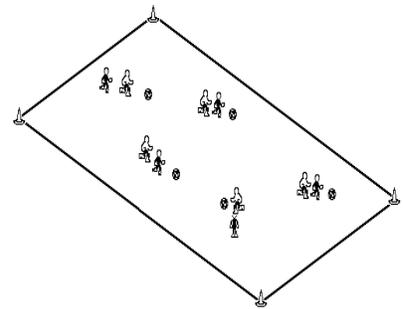


U8 --- Session Two

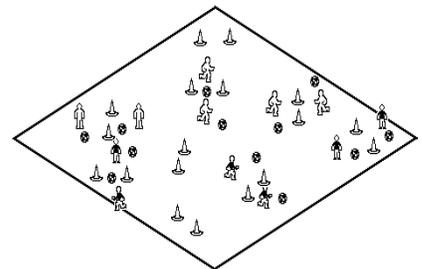
Objective: To provide fun, active, age appropriate activities that foster comfort with the ball for each player. At this age we introduce activities that foster dribbling, passing, shooting and receiving. (*Sessions should be about 45-60 minutes in duration.*)

1) Shadow Dribble---One player with a ball and another player behind them with a ball as well. The player in front can go anywhere in the 20x20 yard box and the player behind must try to keep as close to them as possible and follow where they are going and what they are doing. The leader determines where they are going and the player who is the shadow tries to keep up with them. Then reverse the roles. Players can use both feet to start, then can choose to use one foot, then the other. *Version 2:* Now the leader adds in moves while they are dribbling and the shadow player must do the same. (10 minutes)

2) Snake---In an appropriate space, have all players dribble their soccer balls, except for 2-3 players (the snake). The snake players hold hands or lock arms and work together to tag the other players. The players dribbling the balls try to avoid getting tagged by the snake. If they are tagged, they join hands or lock arms with the snake. The snake grows until all players are part of the snake. The snake must work together and stay connected...they cannot break into little parts. Encourage fun by having the snake hiss. (8 minutes)

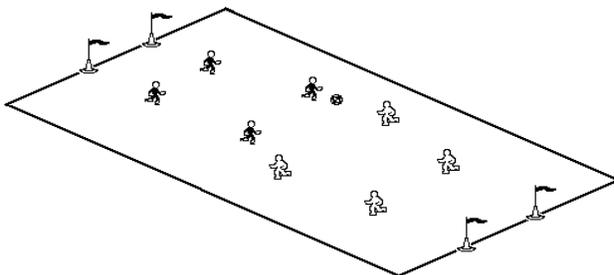


3) Gates---Set up many pairs of cones (with roughly 2 yards in between pairs) all around the playing area. These pairs serve as gates or small mini-goals. Players each have a ball and must dribble through the gate in order to score. Players must count how many goals they score; when playing a second time, ask them if they can beat their score by one goal. Coaches can vary this by asking players to dribble with left foot or right foot. If players end up dribbling back and forth through only one goal, introduce a rule to protect against this. (8 minutes)



4) Gates with Bandits---Same game as above, but add 2 or more bandits (without soccer balls) who try to steal soccer balls from the other players. If bandits are successful and steal soccer balls, they are no longer bandits. Players who lose their soccer balls become bandits! Play multiple 1-2 minute games. Play is continuous for the 1-2 minute period. Players who have possession of a soccer ball at the end of time are awarded a point. (10 minutes)

5) 4v4 Game---Separate players into two teams and play a game of 3 against 3 or 4 against 4 without goalkeepers. Let the players play and give plenty of positive feedback to them as they compete. **REINFORCE TECHNIQUE!** (20 minutes)

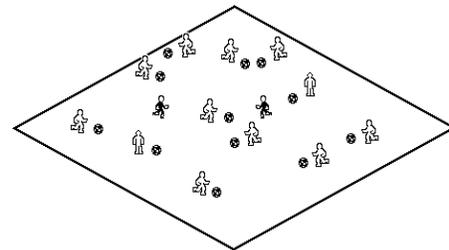




U8 --- Week Three

Objective: To provide fun, active, age appropriate activities that foster comfort with the ball for each player. At this age we introduce activities that foster dribbling, passing, shooting and receiving. (*Sessions should be about 45-60 minutes in duration.*)

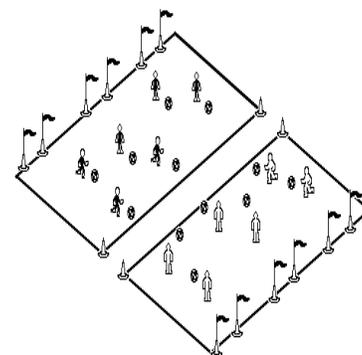
1) Ball Tag---Similar to other tag games except players try to tag others with their soccer ball, by kicking it at another player's feet or ball. Have them keep count of how many times they kick their soccer ball and tag another person. **Options:** If the players tag the coach, they are awarded 10 or 20 points. If the players tag other selected players, they can be awarded 50 or 100 points etc. (8 minutes)



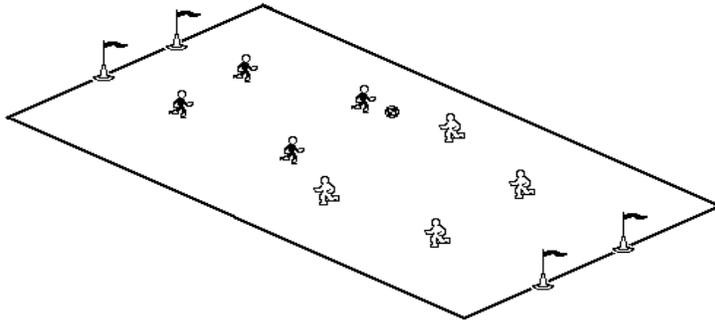
2) Team Ball Tag---Split into two teams. One team (*the Taggers*) is trying to tag the players on the other team by kicking their soccer ball at them below their knee or on their soccer ball. They keep track of how many times they tag the other team; after each game the coach can help them add up their numbers. Then the other team gets a chance to do the same thing. In each game, only one team is designated as the *Taggers*. The other team is trying to keep away and shield their soccer balls. **Version 2:** Can only have the teams tag the other team's soccer balls. (10 minutes)

3) Soccer Marbles---Players are in pairs, each with a ball. One player plays out their ball (using the inside of the foot) and the partner passes their own ball in an attempt to strike the ball their partner played out. Players should keep track of how many times they hit their partner's ball. **Version 2:** Once players understand this game, make it fast paced by having the players take turn at trying to hit each other's ball without ever stopping. If player 2 misses player 1's ball, then player 1 immediately runs to their own ball and tries to hit player 2's ball (player 2 does not get to touch his ball after missing player 1's ball). After player 1 has a chance, then player 2 immediately tries to hit player 1's ball right back. etc. etc. This game is continuous and players should keep score. Hint: If 2 balls are very close to each other a player should kick their ball hard at the other ball so when they hit it, it is more difficult for the other to hit their ball back. **Version 3:** Three players start the game in a triangle, ten giant steps apart. They take turns trying to hit another player's ball. Number one goes first and so on. They keep score, and the first to ten points wins. If they hit two balls with one shot, they get two points. (10 minutes)

3) Clean Your Backyard---Break group into two teams and have each team stay only on their half of the field. Place a 6 yard buffer zone between halves that no one can enter or cross. Each player needs a ball. Place three small (3yd) goals at the far end of each side of the field. Have both teams shoot balls at the other team's goals in an attempt to score through any one of the 3 small goals (below knee height). Players can only enter the buffer zone to retrieve a ball that has stopped inside. Otherwise they cannot enter the buffer zone or go into the other team's half. Balls get recycled naturally in the game. This is a competition and teams need to keep score. Play 2 or 3 games and have teams re-strategize between each game. Teams can play defense, though no hands allowed. Options: Shots with laces are awarded 2 points. **Version 2:** Allow teams to defend with hands as well. **Version 3:** Take out the buffer zone and play a normal game except with 3 goals at each end. (10 minutes)



5) **4v4 Game**---Separate players into two teams and play a game of 3 against 3 or 4 against 4 without goalkeepers. Let the players play and give plenty of positive feedback to them as they compete. **REINFORCE TECHNIQUE!** (20 minutes)



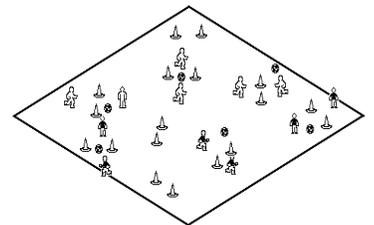


U8 --- Week Four

Objective: To provide fun, active, age appropriate activities that foster comfort with the ball for each player. At this age we introduce activities that foster dribbling, passing, shooting and receiving. (*Sessions should be about 45-60 minutes in duration.*)

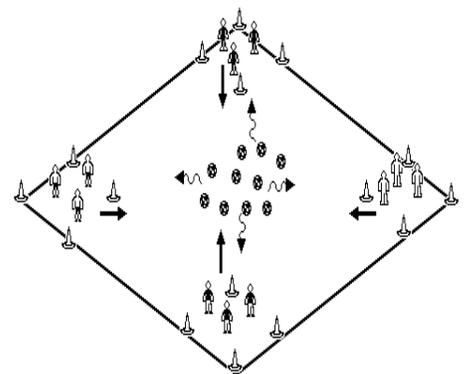
1) Freeze Tag---Break up the group into two teams. Everyone must dribble their soccer ball, but one team tries to tag (freeze) the other team. If they do tag a player on the other team, that player must freeze, place their ball above their head and spread their legs. Another player on their team must kick his/her ball through the frozen player's legs to unfreeze the teammate. If all players are frozen, game ends and the frozen team becomes the **Taggers**. Otherwise, stop game after a few minutes and have teams reverse roles. *Version 2:* Coach can be the freeze monster and try to tag all the players; players continue to unfreeze each other. (8 minutes)

2) Gates Passing---Using cones, set up many small goals (gates) approximately 2 yards wide all around the playing area. Players are now paired up with one ball and must successfully pass the ball through the gates to their teammate to earn a point. Players try to accumulate as many points as possible in the time allotted. Coach can manipulate the game by requiring the players to pass only with their left foot, right foot, or the outside of their foot. (10 minutes)

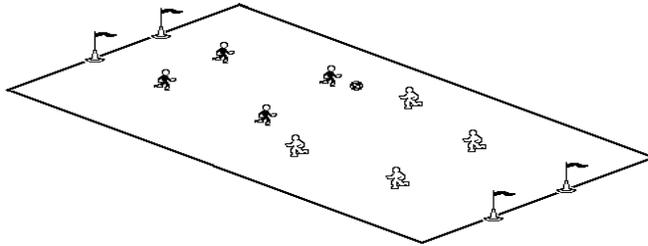


3) 4 vs. 1 keepaway---In a grid 15yds x 15yds, five players play 4 vs. 1 timed keepaway. Four attackers combine to keep the ball away from one defender. The four attackers are awarded a point each time they complete 3 consecutive passes without losing possession. If the defender wins the ball, he or she immediately attempts to dribble out of the grid for a point. The four attackers try to prevent this from occurring by trying to win possession of the ball back immediately. Balls out of play are dribbled in or passed into the grid by one of the attackers. Play multiple 1 minute games, changing the defender each game. (10 minutes)

4) Capture the Balls---Set up three or four "home bases" (squares) with cones roughly 2-3 yards apart. Organize the players into 3-4 teams and have each team get together in their home base. Place all the balls in the center of the space between the home bases. On the coach's command the teams are free to gather as many soccer balls as they can into their home base. Players cannot use hands and there is no pushing each other or sitting/laying on the balls. Teams try to gather as many balls as possible into their home bases. Teams can steal balls from each others' home bases. Play multiple 2 minute games. When time is up, the Coach counts the number of soccer balls in each base to determine a winner. Coach allows each team 1 minute to make up a new team strategy before playing again. (10 minutes)



5) 4v4 Game---Separate players into two teams and play a game of 3 against 3 or 4 against 4 without goalkeepers. Let the players play and give plenty of positive feedback to them as they compete.
REINFORCE TECHNIQUE! (20 minutes)





U8 --- Session Five

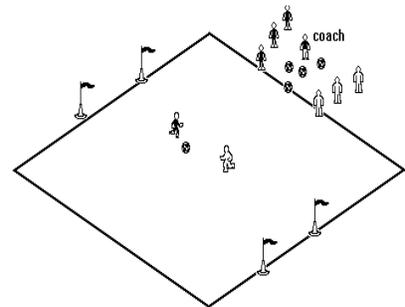
Objective: To provide fun, active, age appropriate activities that foster comfort with the ball for each player. At this age we introduce activities that foster dribbling, passing, shooting and receiving. *(Sessions should be about 45-60 minutes in duration.)*

1) Juggling---Everyone with a ball. Hold hands out with ball in between, drop ball directly down and kick back up to hands, etc. Players practice keeping the ball in the air with feet, thighs, and head. Players count how many times they touch the ball before it drops to the ground. **Version 2:** Controlled juggling...juggle on one thigh, then add other thigh, then add one foot, then add the other foot...thigh-thigh-foot-foot (8 minutes)

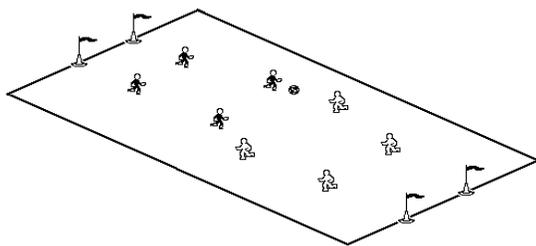
2) Free Dribble---Everyone with a ball, use inside, outside, and sole of the foot. Have players dribble with speed (outside of foot), change direction, and perform moves. Coach calls out moves or changes in direction and sets the pace as the manipulator of the session, kids carry the ball towards someone and try a move. **Version 2:** As players get comfortable, coach can walk around and put pressure on players as they are performing dribbling tasks. This adds fun and interaction. (12 minutes)

3) 1 vs. 1 to Endlines---In a space that is wider than long (15 x 20 yds) each player defends one endline and attacks the other. Players score by dribbling the ball in control over the opposing player's endline. *Note: Coaches should make multiple 1v1 fields and have 1 or 2 players on deck at each field.* (10 minutes)

4) Get "Outta" There---Place two small (2 yard) goals at the end of a field 15 x 10 yards. The coach stands at the halfway line with all of the soccer balls. Half of the players are lined up on his left side and half of the players are lined up on his right side in different colored bibs. When the coach kicks a ball onto the field, the first two players in each line run out and try to score on each other's goal. If the ball goes in the goal or out of bounds, the coach yells "get outta there" and plays a new ball into the field immediately for the next two players. **Version 2:** Coach can stop yelling "get outta there" and see if the 1st players in each line recognize that they should begin play when a new ball is kicked into the field. **Version 3:** Coach can vary service of ball. Sometimes play it to one player, sometimes toss the ball up in the air. (10 minutes)



5) 4v4 Game---Separate players into two teams and play a game of 3 against 3 or 4 against 4 without goalkeepers. Let the players play and give plenty of positive feedback to them as they compete. **REINFORCE TECHNIQUE!** (20 minutes)



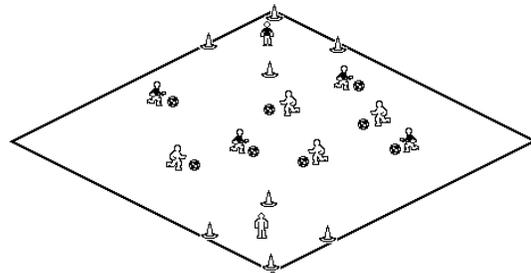


U8 --- Week Six

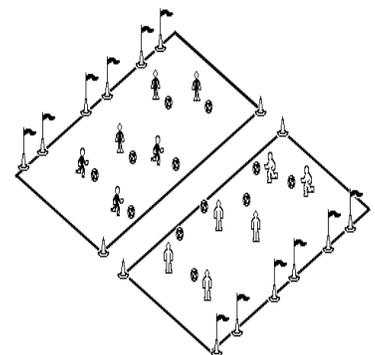
Objective: To provide fun, active, age appropriate activities that foster comfort with the ball for each player. At this age we introduce activities that foster dribbling, passing, shooting and receiving. (Sessions should be about 45-60 minutes in duration.)

1) Paint the Field---In pairs, players move around the grid and pass their ball back and forth in the area defined. At first have each pair in their own grid. You explain to them that their ball is actually a paintbrush and wherever it rolls on the ground, it paints that area. The task is to paint as much of the area as possible in the time allotted by passing (kicking) their soccer balls all over the grid. Progressively build this so that players go from moving slowly in their own grid to having multiple pairs in the same grid moving at a faster pace. *Version 2:* Have players use opposite foot. (10 minutes)

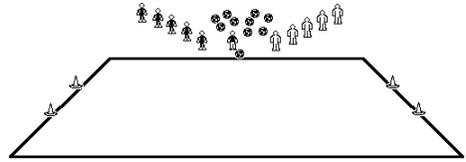
2) Doctor-Doctor---Break team into 2 groups. Send each team into their own hospital (at opposite corners of the grid). Select a doctor for each team. The doctor will be able to unfreeze (cure) their own players if they are frozen (injured) by the other team. Each team tries to freeze the other team by kicking their own soccer balls and hitting either the other team's soccer balls or someone on the other team below the knee. If a player gets frozen, they must stay where they are, hold their soccer ball above their head and yell out "Doctor-Doctor". The doctors do not have a ball and their role is to rush to the aid of their teammates to unfreeze them, by simply touching them, so they can continue playing. The Doctor is always safe (cannot be frozen) if standing in their hospital, but once they leave the hospital and enter the open grid, they can be frozen by the other team. When a Doctor is frozen, the game is over. (10 minutes)



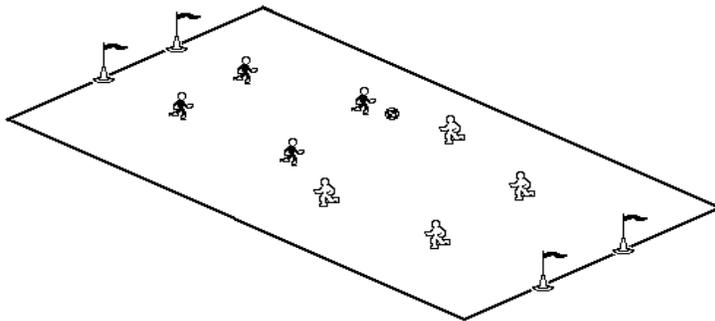
3) Clean Your Backyard---Break group into two teams and have each team stay only on their half of the field. Place a 6 yard buffer zone between halves that no one can enter or cross. Each player needs a ball. Place three small (3yd) goals at the far end of each side of the field. Have both teams shoot balls at the other team's goals in an attempt to score through any one of the 3 small goals (below knee height). Players can only enter the buffer zone to retrieve a ball that has stopped inside. Otherwise they cannot enter the buffer zone or go into the other team's half. Balls get recycled naturally in the game. This is a competition and teams need to keep score. Play 2 or 3 games and have teams re-strategize between each game. Teams can play defense, though no hands allowed. Options: Shots with laces are awarded 2 points. *Version 2:* Allow teams to defend with hands as well. *Version 3:* Take out the buffer zone and play a normal game except with 3 goals at each end. (10 minutes)



4) Get Outta' There with Numbers--- Place two small (2 yard) goals at the end of a field 15 x 10 yards. The coach stands at the halfway line with all of the soccer balls. Half of the players are lined up on his left side and half of the players are lined up on his right side in different colored bibs. The players on each team are assigned numbers (1-4 or 1-5, depending on the total number of players) The coach then calls out a number, kicks a ball onto the field and the player assigned that number on each team enters the field to play 1v1. If the ball goes in the goal or out of bounds, the coach yells “get outta there”, calls out a new number and plays the next ball into the field immediately for the next 1v1 dual. *Version 2:* Coach can vary service of ball. Sometimes play it to one player, sometimes toss the ball up in the air. *Version 3:* Coach can set up particular matchups and call out more than one number at a time for 2 vs. 2 or 3 vs. 3 competition. (10 minutes)



5) 4v4 Game---Separate players into two teams and play a game of 3 against 3 or 4 against 4 without goalkeepers. Let the players play and give plenty of positive feedback to them as they compete. **REINFORCE TECHNIQUE!** (20 minutes)



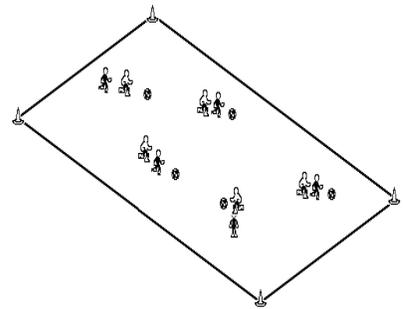


U8 --- Session Seven

Objective: To provide fun, active, age appropriate activities that foster comfort with the ball for each player. At this age we introduce activities that foster dribbling, passing, shooting and receiving. (*Sessions should be about 45-60 minutes in duration.*)

1) Tag---Every child dribbles a soccer ball in the space defined while trying to tag other players with their hand. Players cannot leave their own ball. Have them keep count of how many people they have tagged and, if playing twice in a row, see if players can tag more people than they did in the first game. *Version 2:* Players must tag other players on their knees. (8 minutes)

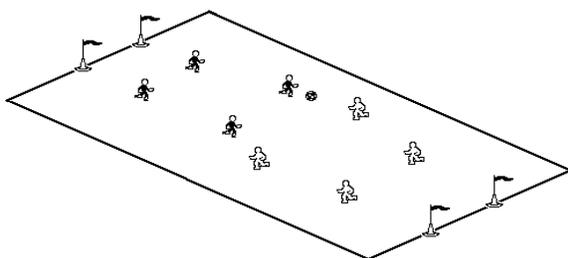
2) Shield-Steal---Two players (partners) with one ball. One player starts with the ball and, on the coach's command, her partner tries to steal the ball from her. Play 30-45 second matches. Whoever has the ball at the end of the time allotment, receives a point. Play many matches. If ball goes out of bounds, one of the players must get it back into play quickly. ***Coaching points:*** Show shielding technique with body sideways on to opponent, arm providing protection, ball on outside foot, knees bent, turning as defender attacks, using feel to understand where defender is going. Fix technical shielding errors throughout this activity and make sure entire group knows how to properly shield. (8 minutes)



3) 2 vs. 2 to Endlines---In a space that is wider than long (20 x 25 yds) each team defends one endline and attacks the other. Players score by dribbling the ball, under control, over the opposing team's endline. *Note: Coaches should make multiple 2v2 fields and have 1 team on deck at each field.* (10 minutes)

4) Team Gates--- Using cones, set up many small goals (gates) approximately 2 yards wide all around the playing area. Players are split into two teams and each team has a ball and must pass the ball through the gates in order to score. Players must count how many goals their team scores in 45 seconds. After the two teams get comfortable moving and passing through the gates with their own soccer ball, play a competitive game with only one ball. (10 minutes)

5) 4v4 Game---Separate players into two teams and play a game of 3 against 3 or 4 against 4 without goalkeepers. Let the players play and give plenty of positive feedback to them as they compete. **REINFORCE TECHNIQUE!** (20 minutes)



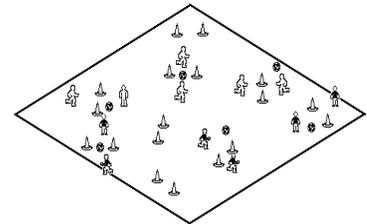


U8 --- Week Eight

Objective: To provide fun, active, age appropriate activities that foster comfort with the ball for each player. At this age we introduce activities that foster dribbling, passing, shooting and receiving. (Sessions should be about 45-60 minutes in duration.)

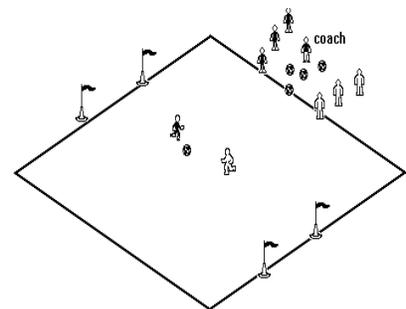
1) Soccer Marbles---Players are in pairs, each with a ball. One player plays out their ball (using the inside of the foot) and the partner passes their own ball in an attempt to strike the ball their partner played out. Players should keep track of how many times they hit their partner's ball. *Version 2:* Once players understand this game, make it fast paced by having the players take turn at trying to hit each other's ball without ever stopping. If player 2 misses player 1's ball, then player 1 immediately runs to their own ball and tries to hit player 2's ball (player 2 does not get to touch his ball after missing player 1's ball). After player 1 has a chance, then player 2 immediately tries to hit player 1's ball right back. etc. etc. This game is continuous and players should keep score. Hint: If 2 balls are very close to each other a player should kick their ball hard at the other ball so when they hit it, it is more difficult for the other to hit their ball back. *Version 3:* Three players start the game in a triangle, ten giant steps apart. They take turns trying to hit another player's ball. Number one goes first and so on. They keep score, and the first to ten points wins. If they hit two balls with one shot, they get two points. (10 minutes)

2) Gates Passing---Using cones, set up many small goals (gates) approximately 2 yards wide all around the playing area. Players are now paired up with one ball and must successfully pass the ball through the gates to their teammate to earn a point. Players try to accumulate as many points as possible in the time allotted. Coach can manipulate the game by requiring the players to pass only with their left foot, right foot, or the outside of their foot. (10 minutes)

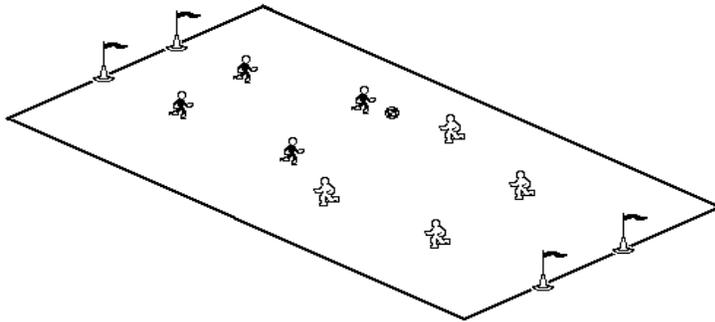


3) Freeze Tag---Break up the group into two teams. Everyone must dribble their soccer ball, but one team tries to tag (freeze) the other team. If they do tag a player on the other team, that player must freeze, place their ball above their head and spread their legs. Another player on their team must kick his/her ball through the frozen player's legs to unfreeze the teammate. If all players are frozen, game ends and the frozen team becomes the **Taggers**. Otherwise, stop game after a few minutes and have teams reverse roles. *Version 2:* Coach can be the freeze monster and try to tag all the players; players continue to unfreeze each other. (10 minutes)

4) Get "Outta" There---Place two small (2 yard) goals at the end of a field 15 x 10 yards. The coach stands at the halfway line with all of the soccer balls. Half of the players are lined up on his left side and half of the players are lined up on his right side in different colored bibs. When the coach kicks a ball onto the field, the first two players in each line run out and try to score on each other's goal. If the ball goes in the goal or out of bounds, the coach yells "get outta there" and plays a new ball into the field immediately for the next two players. *Version 2:* Coach can stop yelling "get outta there" and see if the 1st players in each line recognize that they should begin play when a new ball is kicked into the field. *Version 3:* Coach can vary service of ball. Sometimes play it to one player, sometimes toss the ball up in the air. (10 minutes)



5) 4v4 Game---Separate players into two teams and play a game of 3 against 3 or 4 against 4 without goalkeepers. Let the players play and give plenty of positive feedback to them as they compete.
REINFORCE TECHNIQUE! (20 minutes)





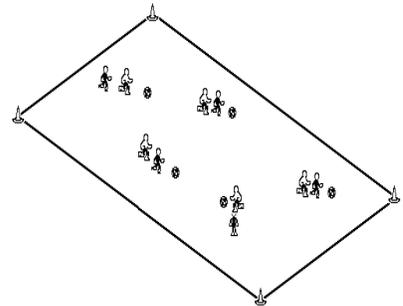
U8 --- Session Nine

Objective: To provide fun, active, age appropriate activities that foster comfort with the ball for each player. At this age we introduce activities that foster dribbling, passing, shooting and receiving. (Sessions should be about 45-60 minutes in duration.)

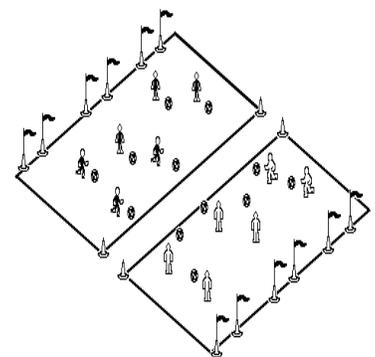
1) Paired Tag---Pair players up, each pair has 2 balls. One player starts and is given a 2 second lead to get away from his/her partner. The chaser ("it") dribbles after the first player and tries to tag him/her with his/her hand. If tagged, the roles reverse and the player who was previously "it" has two seconds to get away before their partner tries to tag them. Players must always dribble their soccer ball during this activity. (8 minutes)

2) Paint the Field---15 yds x 20 yds rectangular grid. In pairs, players move around the grid and pass their ball back and forth in the area defined. At first have each pair in their own grid. You explain to them that their ball is actually a paintbrush and wherever it rolls on the ground, it paints that area. The task is to paint as much of the area as possible in the time allotted by passing (kicking) their soccer balls all over the grid. Progressively build this so that players go from moving slowly in their own grid to having multiple pairs in the same grid moving at a faster pace. *Version 2:* Have players use opposite foot. (8 minutes)

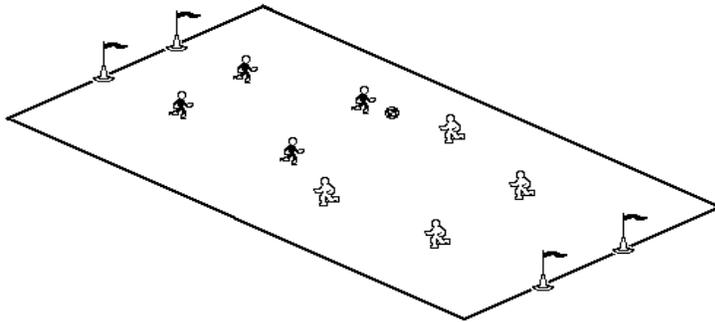
3) Shield-Steal---Two players (partners) with one ball. One player starts with the ball and, on the coach's command, her partner tries to steal the ball from her. Play 30-45 second matches. Whoever has the ball at the end of the time allotment, receives a point. Play many matches. If ball goes out of bounds, one of the players must get it back into play quickly. **Coaching points:** Show shielding technique with body sideways on to opponent, arm providing protection, ball on outside foot, knees bent, turning as defender attacks, using feel to understand where defender is going. Fix technical shielding errors throughout this activity and make sure entire group knows how to properly shield. (8 minutes)



4) Clean Your Backyard---Break group into two teams and have each team stay only on their half of the field. Place a 6 yard buffer zone between halves that no one can enter or cross. Each player needs a ball. Place three small (3yd) goals at the far end of each side of the field. Have both teams shoot balls at the other team's goals in an attempt to score through any one of the 3 small goals (below knee height). Players can only enter the buffer zone to retrieve a ball that has stopped inside. Otherwise they cannot enter the buffer zone or go into the other team's half. Balls get recycled naturally in the game. This is a competition and teams need to keep score. Play 2 or 3 games and have teams re-strategize between each game. Teams can play defense, though no hands allowed. Options: Shots with laces are awarded 2 points. *Version 2:* Allow teams to defend with hands as well. *Version 3:* Take out the buffer zone and play a normal game except with 3 goals at each end. (10 minutes)



5) 4v4 Game---Separate players into two teams and play a game of 3 against 3 or 4 against 4 without goalkeepers. Let the players play and give plenty of positive feedback to them as they compete.
REINFORCE TECHNIQUE! (25 minutes)





U10 Dribbling

by Mario Prata, MYSA Development Coach

OBJECTIVE: To improve dribbling and shielding technique and inspire the confidence in our players to keep the ball (possess the ball) under pressure with the intention to delay play until help arrives, beat an opponent or simply keep possession for your team.

1) Free Dribble (10 minutes): Everyone with a ball, use inside, outside, and sole of the foot. Have players dribble with speed (outside of foot), change direction, and perform moves. Coach calls out moves or changes in direction and sets the pace as the manipulator of the session; kids dribble the ball towards someone and try a move. **Version 2:** As players get comfortable, coach can walk around and put pressure on players as they are performing dribbling tasks. This adds fun and interaction. **Version 3:** Make the game a knockout game in which players try to knock each other's soccer balls out of the grid while maintaining possession of their own. **Note:** You may wish to have them perform a skills task before re-entering such as 10 sole of the foot touches or juggling 5 times. You do not want players sitting out.

Coaching Points:

- Bend your knees and get down low
- Use your arms to keep balance
- Keep the ball close using the inside, outside and sole of the foot
- Keep your head up

2) Shield-Steal (10 minutes): use entire space, half of players in the group have a ball and half do not. If you do not have a ball you need to steal one from someone who does. If the ball goes out of bounds, the person who touched it last LOSES possession. When the coach yells freeze, those who have possession of a ball receive a point. Play multiple games. Go over technical points as a group and at the start of the activity, show the shielding technique. Fix technical shielding errors throughout this activity and make sure entire group knows how to properly shield. **Version 2:** make the activity competitive by creating two teams; the team who has possession of the most soccer balls at the end of time is the winner.

Coaching Points:

- Reinforce the coaching points from the Free dribble activity
- Survey the area
- Recognize when and were to change direction
- Body sideways between defender and the ball when shielding
- Arm providing protection when shielding
- Ball on outside foot when shielding
- Spin/turn as defender attacks when shielding
- Hands become your eyes; use them to feel for defender



3) 5 Goal Game (15 minutes): 4v4+2 or 5v5+2 in 35x40 yard grid. Five 2-yard goals are spread out throughout the grid. The 2 neutral players are always on the attacking team. Each team can score by dribbling through any of the 5 goals. The first team to 10 points wins. Players need to be able to see where the open goals are, and receive the ball with a “picture” of what is around them.

Coaching Points:

- Dribbling to keep the ball “Shielding”
- Dribbling to beat an opponent “Inviting a tackle, change of speed, change of direction, feints”
- When to dribble to break pressure: This is used most commonly by midfielders and by forwards. It involves simply getting beside the pressuring defender for a split second. Once beside a defender, sudden, explosive changes in pace or direction and feints are the most common means of breaking pressure.
- Where to dribble to gain space “With any sort of space ahead of him, an attacker will run with the ball forward to gain territory”
- Recognizing what goal is open

4) 4v4 or 5v5 to Four Goals (15 minutes): Teams defend one goal and have the opportunity to score on the other three, you must dribble through a goal to score a point. The goals are on the ends of a large cross in a square grid roughly 25yd X 25yds. Have one team of 4 or 5 on deck, they come on when a team gets scored on twice. Game is continuous, they must run on immediately. Look for open space and attack it with speed.

Coaching Points: Reinforce coaching points covered in previous activities.

5) 6 vs. 6 (includes GK’s) Game (25 minutes)

Coaching Points:

- Stress dribbling & shielding technique

6) Cool Down (10 minutes) – Controlled juggling (thigh-thigh-foot-foot). Statically stretch the large muscle groups.



Receiving - Lofted Balls

by Laura Ray, Mass Youth Soccer Development Coach

Objectives: To improve the technique of receiving soccer balls played in the air. To help players practice using different surfaces when receiving lofted balls (feet, thighs, chest).

1) Dutch Circle (Warm-up – 15 minutes):

Half of the players (servers) create a 25-35 yd outer circle and have soccer balls in their hands. These players must always be alert and on their toes. The other half of the players (receivers) are in the middle of this circle and do not have soccer balls. The receivers check to the servers to receive a ball out of the air from them. They receive the ball with feet, thighs or chest and then play the ball to any server on the outer circle who does not have a ball (except the player who tossed it to them). They then check to another server on the outside that has a ball and repeat the process for about 2-3 minutes until coach switches players on outside and inside. Focus on both feet, receiving with the top of foot and then turning with it; the thigh, taking it in the direction they want to go; the chest.

Coaching Points:

- on toes and get body behind ball
- move to the ball, do not wait for it
- try to drop the ball a bit in front of your body using one touch so the ball is in your control but not under you

Thigh:

- lift thigh up to meet ball and once ball touches thigh drop your leg down to cushion the ball
- torso should be leaning forward
- make sure you push ball slightly in front of you so you can handle it easily
- ball should not pop up as you cushion it
- point of contact on leg is the bottom of the quadriceps muscle

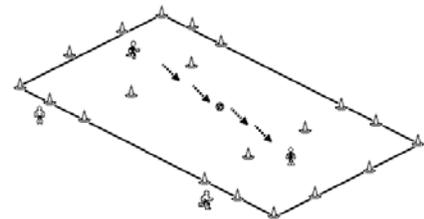
Chest:

- bend knees with feet staggered
- slightly arch back while using arms for balance
- cushion ball (collapse chest) as it hits your chest and guide it just in front of your feet
- do not push out chest to pop the ball out too far in front of you
- ball should droop down, not pop up
- once contact is made move forward to stay over the ball and protect it

2) Box to Box (15-20 minutes):

Two players per team. Two boxes are made approximately 20-30 yards apart. There is a player from each team in one box. One team starts the game. When the ball is *lofted* to the other box, the attacking team gets the opportunity to get the first touch. Then they have to dribble outside of the box (square) to receive a point. The defending player is outside the box and has to wait until the attacking player gets the first touch. The defending player tries to win the ball after the first touch has been made.

If the attacking player is successful in bringing the ball down and dribbling outside of the square then they keep it. If the defending player wins the ball after the first touch, then they become the attacking team. Coach may allow the serving players to toss the ball in the air or punt it in the air to the opposite box.

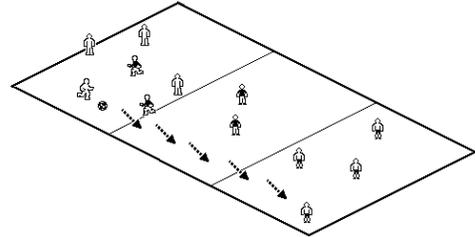


Coaching Points:

- reinforce coaching points listed in activity #1
- first touch and importance of cushioning ball
- get in line with the ball
- select controlling surface early
- relax body part at impact
- take first touch away from where pressure is coming from

3) Arsenal Drill (15-20 minutes):

Split grid into three even zones (zone 1, 2 and 3). Split team into three even teams (can have 3 to 6 players in each zone). If have three teams of 4, then Team in Zone 1 is trying to possess the ball (can ask them to have 2 to 4 passes before they can play the ball down) and then play it in the air to team in Zone 3. Meanwhile, team in Zone 2 sends two defenders into Zone 1 to try and win the ball. If they win the ball, they turn, play it down to Zone 3 and then switch zones with team in Zone 1 (team in Zone 1 then has to then send two defenders into Zone 3 and try to win the ball back). If team in Zone 1 is able to play it down to team in Zone 3, they get a point. That means the other two players waiting in Zone 2 are entering into Zone 3 to win the ball back. Team that gets to 5 points first, wins. *Variation:* Make a restriction that the ball played into other zone has to be in the air.



Coaching Points:

- reinforce the coaching points listed in activity #1 and #2
- first touch and importance of cushioning ball
- get in line with the ball
- select controlling surface early
- relax body part at impact
- take first touch away from where pressure is coming from

4) 6v6 Scrimmage (25-30 minutes)

Play a regular game with goalkeepers.

Coaching Points:

- Reinforce the coaching points listed in activity #1 and #2
- Highlight the technique of receiving the ball in the air
- Reinforce positive decision making opportunities (what surface they use to receive it, where their first touch goes, body positioning, etc.)

5) Cool-down (10 minutes):

Groups of 3. One player is the server and has the ball in their hands and the other two are ready to juggle. Server says 2 and 2 which means the server tosses the ball to the first player who has to juggle the ball two times before getting it to the next player who has to juggle the ball twice and get it back to the server (ball should not touch the ground). Server can change numbers of juggles to 1 and 1, 1 and 5, 3 and 4, 4 and 2, etc.



Receiving - Low Balls

by Laura Ray, Mass Youth Soccer Development Coach

Objectives: To improve the technique of receiving soccer balls played on the ground. To help players see different methods of receiving ground balls (inside of foot, outside of foot, across body, through legs, etc.).

1) Dutch Circle (Warm-up – 15 minutes):

Half of the players create a 25-35 yd outer circle and have soccer balls at their feet. These players must always be alert and on their toes. The other half of the players are in the middle of this circle and do not have soccer balls. The inner players check to players on the outside to receive a pass from them. They receive the pass and then play to any player on the outer circle who does not have a ball (except player who passed to them). They then check to another person on the outside that has a ball and repeat this process for about 2-3 minutes until coach switches players on outside and inside. Focus on both front foot and back foot receptions and add in feints (i.e. ball runs through legs, ball runs across body, or take ball early). Work on receiving with both feet and receiving sideways-on.

Coaching Points:

- get body behind the ball and be on toes
- go to the ball, do not wait for it
- keep ankle of receiving foot locked
- cushion ball as it arrives (as you would catching an egg)
- point of contact is the middle of the ball
- keep feet moving before ball arrives
- make your first touch active by pushing the ball in the direction in which you want to go (typically away from pressure)
- get head up before and after receiving
- always try to receive the ball facing the way you want to play

2) Numbers Passing (15 minutes):

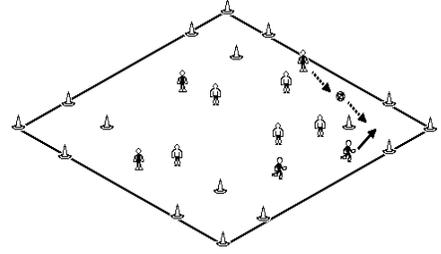
Split the team into groups of 4-5 players. Give every player a number. Have them spread out and pass the ball from number 1 to 2, from 2 to 3, etc. through the whole group. The highest numbered player simply passes back to number 1 and the activity continues. Tell all the players that the ball cannot stop moving, and they cannot stop moving. As they become proficient at the activity, introduce another ball to the group; they now have to pay attention to where they are receiving the ball from as well as where they need to play the ball next. **Version 2:** Have the whole team as one group and follow the same information above (but can add more than one soccer ball to group).

Coaching Points:

- Reinforce the coaching points listed in activity #1
- Player receiving must have head up to know what they are going to do with the ball before they get it

3) Four Square Passing (15 minutes):

Form a grid 35yds x 35yds with squares roughly 4 yds across in each corner. Two teams of 4 to 6 players try to score by passing the ball to a teammate who makes a run into one of the four squares. Only players from the attacking team can enter a corner square. Once a player in the square receives a ball, they can pass to a teammate or dribble the ball out for a point. Balls out of play can be passed or dribbled back into play.

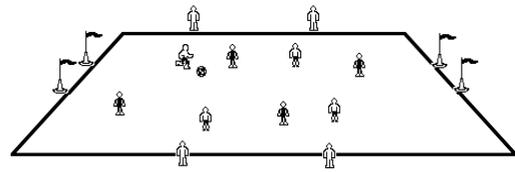


Coaching Points:

- Reinforce the coaching points listed in activity #1 and #2

4) Bread and Butter (15 minutes):

Typical 4 vs. 4 but with an additional 4 players who stand on outside of field and can be used by either team as outlets (can limit the touches of these players if they have the ability (ie: two touches)). If a team gets scored upon, they become the team on the outside and the outside team plays on the field. Use approximately a 20x25 yd area. May restrict the players to 2 or 3 touches to force quicker decisions, and better body position before the ball arrives. Keep score and make the game competitive.



Coaching Points:

- Reinforce the coaching points listed in activity #1 and #2
- when receiving balls with back to goal or in midfield, try to receive sideways on (with body sideways to the length of the field) and look over shoulder before receiving the ball

5) 6v6 Scrimmage (25-30 minutes)

Play a regular game with goalkeepers.

Coaching Points:

- Reinforce the coaching points listed in activity #1 and #2
- Highlight the technique of receiving
- Reinforce positive decision making opportunities (how they receive the ball in relation to where they are on the field and the options they have)

6) Cool-down (10 minutes):

Top cross bar chip. All players, each with a soccer ball on the penalty mark try to chip the ball to hit the crossbar. Can have them then try from the edge of the penalty area (and farther if they need to be challenged more). Coach can make a competition out of it – when team hits top crossbar certain number of times, they can go home, etc.



Dribbling Session (penetration)

By Laura Ray, Mass Youth Soccer Development Coach

Objectives: To improve the technique of dribbling, help with confidence to take players on and allowing players to recognize when to take players on versus using other options (passing, shooting, shielding).

1) Technical Box (Warm-up - 15-20 minutes including dynamic stretching):

Everyone with a ball, use inside, outside, and sole of the foot. Have players dribble with speed (outside of foot), change direction, and perform moves. Coach calls out moves or changes in direction and sets the pace as the manipulator of the session; players carry the ball towards someone and try a move. *Version 2:* As players get comfortable, coach can walk around and put pressure on players as they are performing dribbling tasks. This adds fun and interaction. *Version 3:* Make the game a knockout game in which players try to knock each other's balls out of the grid while maintaining possession of their own. Note: You may wish to have them perform a skills task before re-entering such as 10 toe touches or juggling 5 times. You do not want players sitting out.

Coaching Points:

- Keep ball within 1 giant step and maintain balance at all times, use arms to help maintain balance
- Try to keep your head up (once comfortable with ball at feet)
- Keep both knees bent and lean over the ball, do not stand upright with ball
- Slow down to change direction
- After making a move, dribbling into an open space or changing direction, you need a burst of speed
- Stress movement of body and burst of speed when doing moves
- Use outside of foot or laces when dribbling for speed
- Use all parts of your feet
- Try new things and be creative

2) 1v1 to lines (15 minutes):

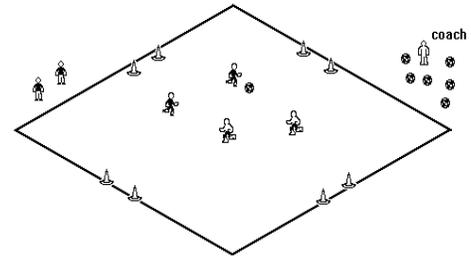
In a 15x10 yard grid, two players play 1v1 and try to score by beating the defender and dribbling over the line opposite them. They play toward the ten-yard lines and use their favorite feints. When the ball goes out of bounds it is dribbled in. Switch partners between grids every 2-3 minutes. Keep score.

Coaching Points:

- Reinforce the coaching points listed in activity #1
- When taking on the defender the attacker will have bent knees, the ball close to his or her dribbling foot and be balanced
- He or she will execute a feint or combination of feints to unbalance the defender and dribble behind him or her
- Players should look to attack the defenders front foot to off balance the defender
- Players who are dribbling past an opponent should dribble past them with the foot furthest from the defender

3) **2v2 to Four Cross Goals (15-20 minutes):**

Teams defend one goal and have the opportunity to score on the other three goals; you must dribble through a goal to score a point. The goals are on the ends of a large cross in a square grid roughly 10yd X 10yd. Have one team of 2 on deck; they come on when a team gets scored on twice. Game is continuous, they must run on immediately.

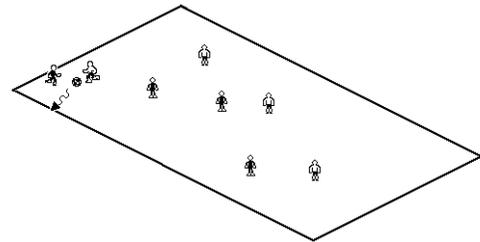


Coaching Points:

- Help players to recognize where the open space is and when to attack it on the dribble
- Assist players in recognizing when to dribble at speed (there is open space ahead), and when to slow down (they need to make decisions, combine with 2nd attacker, or are getting closer to opponents)
- The first attacker (player with the ball) needs to make a decision on whether to combine with the second attacker or attack the space themselves
- This decision is based on where the first defender is in relation to the field, the goal, the first attacker, and the second attacker

4) **4v4 to lines (15-20 minutes):**

In a 25x30 yard grid, two teams play to the opposite 30 yard lines. They score by dribbling the ball over end-line in control. When the ball goes out of bounds it can be passed or dribbled in to play.



Coaching Points:

- Reinforce the coaching points listed in #1, #2 and #3
- Stress attacking the open space on the dribble and recognition of one versus one opportunities.

5) **6v6 scrimmage (25-30 minutes):**

Depending upon numbers, space will change and numbers will change. Ideally, finish with the number you normally play with in games. Play a regular game with goalkeepers.

Coaching Points:

- Reinforce the coaching points listed in #3
- Highlight the technique of dribbling
- Reinforce positive decision making opportunities (recognizing opportunities to take players on, how they attack –get in and behind for a shot / attack endline and get cross off, etc.).

6) **Cool-down (5-10 minutes):**

Groups of 5 heading challenge. One player in the middle, four players circle around them. Player in the middle tosses ball to player on the outside who heads in back to player in the middle. Player in the middle then heads to next player on the outside, who then heads it back to player in the middle and so on. Give player in the middle multiple chances to get the ball all the way around the circle, and then switch up players to ensure everyone gets a chance to be the middle player.



U10 Passing (Short)

by Mario Prata, MYSA Development Coach

OBJECTIVE: Improve passing technique with the inside and outside of their feet.
Recognize the correct timing and opportunity to pass.

1) Gates Passing (10 Minutes)--- Randomly place many pairs of cones making small goals (1 yard wide) in a large space (30 x 20 yards). Players are paired up and must successfully pass the ball through the cones to their teammate to earn a point. Again, players try to accumulate as many points as possible in the time allotted. Have them pass only with their left foot or right foot, or the outside of their foot.

Coaching Points:

Kicker

- Stress passing techniques
- Point your toe side-ways and with up locked ankle
- Strike the middle of the ball
- Follow thru to partner
- Knees bent
- Head down...eyes on ball at moment of contact
- Placement foot pointed to target and parallel to ball; pay attention to proper weight and angle

Receiver

- Support – get to an angle at which passing lane is clear and have your hips open to the playing field
- Communicate...call for the ball
- Head up
- Move toward pass (check to ball)

2) 3 vs. 1 keep away (10 Minutes)---In a grid 10x15 yards, play 3 vs. 1 continuous keep away. Three attackers combine to keep the ball away from one defender. When the defender wins the ball, he or she immediately combines with the attackers he or she did not win the ball from and the attacker who lost the ball becomes the defender. Balls out of play are dribbled in or passed in. **Version 2:** Add another defender and play 3v2 keep away.

Coaching Points:

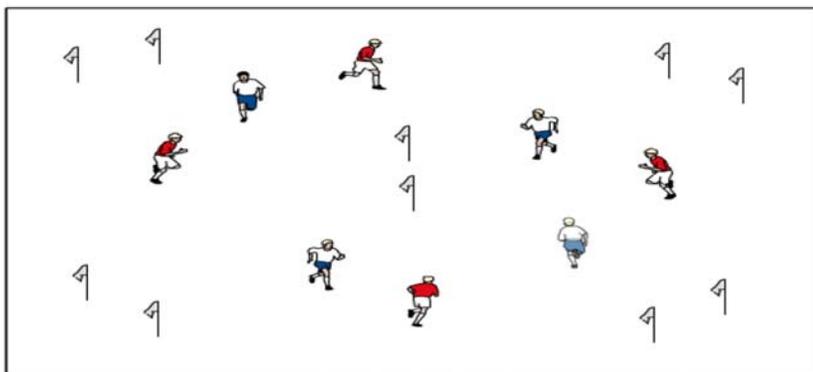
- Stress coaching points from above
- Read the situation

Receiver

- Support – position yourself at an appropriate angle and distance so that you are a good option for the passer



3) 5 Goal Game (10 Minutes)---4v4 in 25x30 grid. Five 2-yard goals are spread out throughout the grid. The teams score by passing through any of the goals to a teammate. First team to 10 points wins.



Coaching Points:

Kicker

- Players need to be able to see where the open goals are

Receiver

- Receive with a “picture” of what is around them.

4) 4 vs 4 To Four Small Goals (10 Minutes)---In a 35 X 30 yard grid with a small goal in each corner teams attack the two opposite goals and defend their two goals. The coach will set up as many grids as needed to accommodate the players. When the ball goes out of bounds it can be passed or dribbled in to play. The teams should be rotated every three minutes until all groups have played against each other.

Coaching Points:

- Stress recognizing opportunities
- Timing of passes
- Playing away from pressure by changing the point of attack
- Efficiency of touches

5) 5 vs. 5 + GK's Game(30 Minutes)

Coaching Points:

- Stress passing technique
- Stress recognizing opportunities
- Timing of passes
- Playing away from pressure by changing the point of attack
- Efficiency of touches
- Movement of the ball

6) Cool Down (10 minutes) – Juggling,” in the next two minutes, let’s see who can juggle the most touches without letting your ball hit the ground. If hits the ground, start a new count.” . Statically stretch the large muscle groups.



U10 Passing (long)

by Mario Prata, MYSA Development Coach

OBJECTIVE: Improve long passing technique (using different techniques).
Recognize the correct timing and opportunity to pass long versus short.

Low drive

- Approach the ball from a slight angle.
- Place the non-kicking foot alongside the ball, pointing in the direction of the target.
- Drive diagonally through the ball, kicking the ball with the inside of instep (laces).
- The knee and body are over the ball at the time of contact.
- Follow through low with the kicking foot.

Lofted pass

- Approach the ball from a slight angle.
- Place the non-kicking foot alongside but towards the back of the ball, pointing in the direction of the target.
- Drive diagonally through underside of the ball using the upper instep above big toe.
- Lean back slightly at the moment of contact to impart loft on the ball.
- Follow through towards target.

1) Inter passing in 2's (10 minutes):

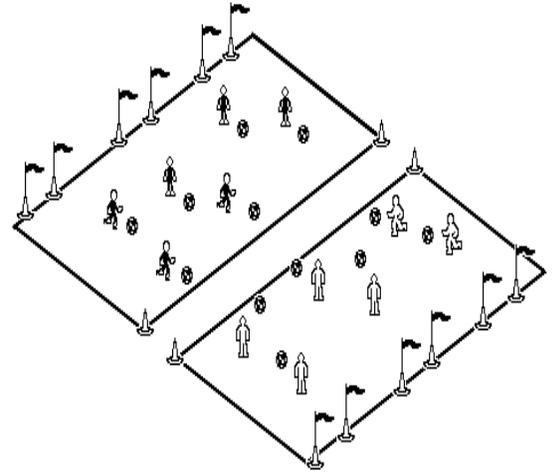
Short Passing & moving in 2's (10-15 yards)...insides, outsides and laces/instep
Gradually increase the distance between the 2 players (20-30 yards)...focus on laces/instep
The purpose of this warm-up activity is to clean up the mechanics of passing & receiving, allow lots of repetition and increase the players' technical speed.

Coaching Points:

- Stress passing techniques
- Survey the playing area at all times so that you can anticipate what to do next with and without the ball.
- Keep body open to as much of the field as possible based on where you are on the field.
- Take first touch toward the target.
- Strike ball with proper weight and proper surface.

2) Clean Your Backyard (10 minutes)

Break the group into two teams and have each team stay only on their own half of the field. Place a 15 yard buffer zone between halves so that no one can enter or cross. Each player needs a ball. Place three small (3-5yd) goals at the far end of each side of the field. Have both teams shoot balls at the other team's goals in an attempt to score through any one of the small goals (below knee height). Players cannot cross the buffer zone or go into the other half. Balls get recycled naturally in the game. This is a competition and teams need to keep score. Play 2 or 3 games and have teams re-strategize between each game. Teams can play defense but no use of hands. Only shots (or passes) with laces count as goals.

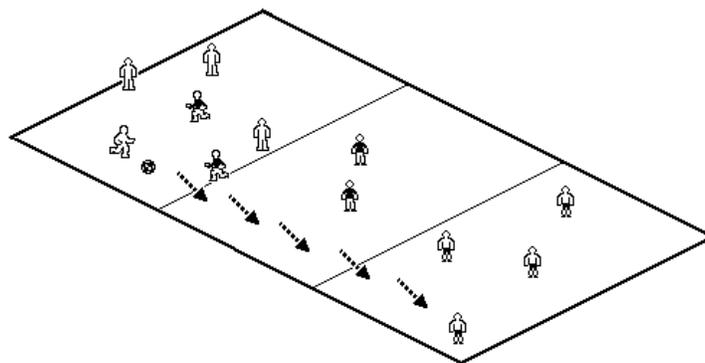


Coaching Points:

- Stress long passing technique
- Point your toes down and lock ankle
- Placement foot pointed to target and behind the ball, pay attention to proper weight and angle (for air ball pass)
- Placement foot pointed to target and parallel to ball, pay attention to proper weight and angle (for low ball pass)
- Strike the middle of the ball
- Follow thru and land on your kicking (passing) foot

3) Three Zone Game (15 minutes):

Split grid into three even zones (zone 1, 2 and 3). Split team into three even teams (3 to 6 players in each zone). Each team occupies a Zone. The Team in Zone 1 starts with the ball. The team in Zone 2 sends two of their players into Zone 1 to defend. The team in Zone 1 tries to possess the ball a minimum of 3-4 passes before attempting to play the ball to the team in Zone 3. If the two defenders win the ball in Zone 1, they turn and attempt to play it down to Zone 3 and then switch zones with the team in Zone 1 (the team in Zone 1 then has to then send two defenders into Zone 3 and try to win the ball back). If the team in Zone 1 is able to play it down to team in Zone 3, they get a point. That means the other two players waiting in Zone 2 are entering into Zone 3 trying to win the ball back. The team that gets to 5 points first, wins. *Variation:* Make a restriction in which the ball played into the other zone has to be in the air.

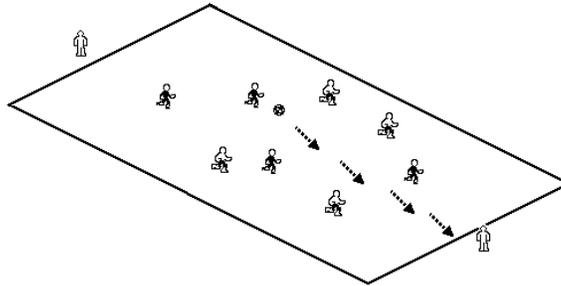


Coaching Points:

- Stress the proper technical points as well as the proper timing of the passes
- Read the situation. Read the game
- Supporting players must get to an angle that provides a good passing option
- Proper communication by supporting players

4) 4v4 + 2 Targets (15-20 minutes):

In a 50x40 yard grid, 4 red versus 4 yellow with targets on opposite end lines. In order to get a point, team must find the Target. *Version 2:* Team must look to find a Target, get the ball back and attack the opposite end and try to get the ball to the other target. Three points if a player finds the Target in one long penetrating pass *from their own half* and one point if a player finds the Target through shorter combinations.



Coaching Points:

- Stress on the quality of the pass (which surface of which foot, which direction and why)
- Stress communication and organization.
- Reinforce the coaching points listed in activity #1 and #2 and #3
- Encourage finding the end line/target as quickly as possible.

5) 8v8 regular game (30-40 Minutes)

On a 70x50 yard field with goalies and large goals, play a regular match. This is the US Youth Soccer recommend field size and numbers.

6) Cool Down (6 minutes)

Controlled juggling (thigh-thigh-foot-foot) or any combination of 4-6 juggles that will challenge the players. Statically stretch the large muscle groups.



Goalkeeping (body position, footwork, catching)

by Laura Ray, Mass Youth Soccer Development Coach

Objectives: To help goalkeepers work on and improve the technical aspects of proper footwork, body position and handling the ball, through team training.

1) Dribbling / Hands Warm-Up (15 to 20 minutes):

One ball per player. All players, including goalkeepers, freely dribble with inside and outside of their feet. Change speed & direction, and perform moves. *Version 2:* The GK's in the group get rid of their soccer balls. The field players call out their names and pass the ball towards them so that the goalkeepers can begin to field the soccer balls with their hands (on the ground first, then change to service in air).

Coaching Points:

- Make sure when catching ball, the hands always lead, not the knees.
- Prior to catching the ball, get into a "Gorilla" shape...shoulders rounded, knees bent, feet square to body, arms out to sides and slightly forward with elbows slightly bent, palms facing forward.
- Always be on balls of the feet, moving while ball is moving, ready to come out to meet the ball or cut down the angle.
- Getting set when shooter plants non-kicking foot to shoot.
- "W" hand position for chest high and overhead balls. The "W" is formed by the thumbs and index fingers.
- Both palms of the hands must always be turned outwards to the ball. This means the body position will have to be adjusted to ensure that both palms get behind the ball. The object is to present the maximum amount of palm and fingers to the ball.
- Hands leading (bent elbows, giving a strong, shock-absorbing effect), shoulders square to the ball.
- Hands together, fingers pointed towards ground for low balls...shovel ball into body (scooping low and into body).

2) Shooting Warm – Up (15 to 20 minutes):

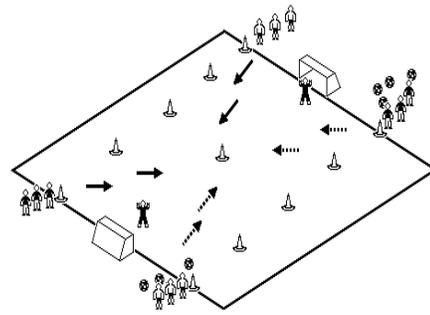
Set up two goals about 40 yards apart and the width of the penalty area, with GK's in each and have players partner up with a ball. Partners dribble and pass together around the area, call out the GK's name and then shoot on net (to warm them up). *Version 2:* Player with ball can play ball outside the area (into the flanks) to their partner to get a cross off. If GK makes save, can quickly throw ball out to player who crossed it. *Version 3:* Partners now try and dribble at GK with partner and try to score.

Coaching Points:

- Coach should be behind goalkeeper (if there is an assistant coach, he can coach another goalkeeper in the other goal) reinforcing coaching points listed in Activity #1

2) **Shooting Stars (15-20 minutes):**

Two goals set about 2 penalty boxes apart with cones separating field into two. Split team into two teams, yellow and blue. Blue has half of their team, with soccer balls, at one side of one goal, and the other half of their team at the other goal (on the opposite side), without soccer balls. Yellow will set up the same way. A blue player in the group with the soccer balls passes across to a blue player opposite them. The blue player receiving the pass tries to run onto it, receive it before the half way mark, and then has 1-2 touches to get a shot off by the halfway mark. Yellow is doing the same task at the same time. Have them switch sides; choose which foot they pass it to and which foot shooter shoots with. *Version 2:*



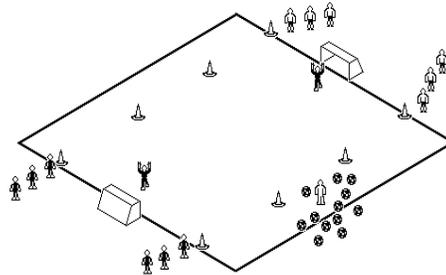
Make it competitive and first team to 10 goals win.

Coaching Points:

- Coach should be behind goalkeeper (if there is an assistant coach to help, he can work with the goalkeeper in the other goal) reinforcing coaching points listed in Activity #1.

3) **GK / Team Challenge (15 to 20 minutes):**

Split teams into two (blue and yellow). Blue group is at one goal (on both sides of goal) and yellow is at the opposite goal (on both sides of goal). Have a server on the side with all of the soccer balls. Server calls out number of players they want from each team and plays ball into area (number can vary-2/3/4). Players try to score and must keep track of their goals. First team to 10 goals wins. Server can take a shot on a goalkeeper as well to keep them on their toes.



Coaching Points:

- Coach should again position themselves behind goalkeeper and reinforce coaching points listed in Activity #1

5) **6v6 Scrimmage (25-30 minutes):**

Depending upon numbers, space will change and numbers may change. Ideally, finish with the number you normally play with in games. Play a regular game with goalkeepers.

Coaching Points:

- Reinforce positive technical goalkeeping points (on balls of their feet, hands out in front, attack the ball, "W" hand position, etc.).

5) **Cool-down (10 minutes):**

Individual juggling; have them compete to see who gets the most in a 2 minute period.



Goalkeeping (body position, footwork, catching)

by Laura Ray, Mass Youth Soccer Development Coach

Objectives: To help goalkeepers work on and improve the technical aspects of proper footwork, body position and handling the ball, through team training.

1) Dribbling / Hands Warm-Up (15 to 20 minutes):

One ball per player. All players, including goalkeepers, freely dribble with inside and outside of their feet. Change speed & direction, and perform moves. *Version 2:* The GK's in the group get rid of their soccer balls. The field players call out their names and pass the ball towards them so that the goalkeepers can begin to field the soccer balls with their hands (on the ground first, then change to service in air).

Coaching Points:

- Make sure when catching ball, the hands always lead, not the knees.
- Prior to catching the ball, get into a "Gorilla" shape...shoulders rounded, knees bent, feet square to body, arms out to sides and slightly forward with elbows slightly bent, palms facing forward.
- Always be on balls of the feet, moving while ball is moving, ready to come out to meet the ball or cut down the angle.
- Getting set when shooter plants non-kicking foot to shoot.
- "W" hand position for chest high and overhead balls. The "W" is formed by the thumbs and index fingers.
- Both palms of the hands must always be turned outwards to the ball. This means the body position will have to be adjusted to ensure that both palms get behind the ball. The object is to present the maximum amount of palm and fingers to the ball.
- Hands leading (bent elbows, giving a strong, shock-absorbing effect), shoulders square to the ball.
- Hands together, fingers pointed towards ground for low balls...shovel ball into body (scooping low and into body).

2) Shooting Warm – Up (15 to 20 minutes):

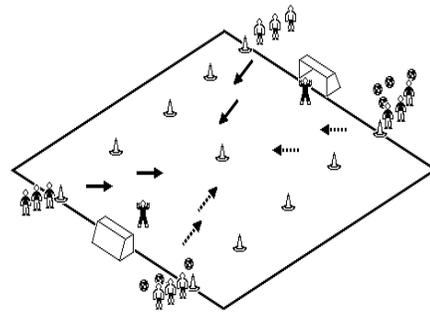
Set up two goals about 40 yards apart and the width of the penalty area, with GK's in each and have players partner up with a ball. Partners dribble and pass together around the area, call out the GK's name and then shoot on net (to warm them up). *Version 2:* Player with ball can play ball outside the area (into the flanks) to their partner to get a cross off. If GK makes save, can quickly throw ball out to player who crossed it. *Version 3:* Partners now try and dribble at GK with partner and try to score.

Coaching Points:

- Coach should be behind goalkeeper (if there is an assistant coach, he can coach another goalkeeper in the other goal) reinforcing coaching points listed in Activity #1

2) **Shooting Stars (15-20 minutes):**

Two goals set about 2 penalty boxes apart with cones separating field into two. Split team into two teams, yellow and blue. Blue has half of their team, with soccer balls, at one side of one goal, and the other half of their team at the other goal (on the opposite side), without soccer balls. Yellow will set up the same way. A blue player in the group with the soccer balls passes across to a blue player opposite them. The blue player receiving the pass tries to run onto it, receive it before the half way mark, and then has 1-2 touches to get a shot off by the halfway mark. Yellow is doing the same task at the same time. Have them switch sides; choose which foot they pass it to and which foot shooter shoots with. *Version 2:*



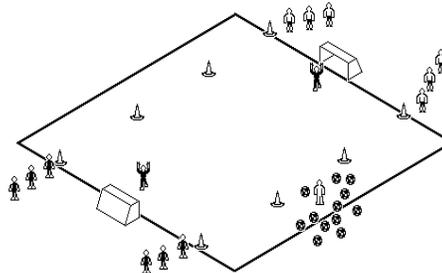
Make it competitive and first team to 10 goals win.

Coaching Points:

- Coach should be behind goalkeeper (if there is an assistant coach to help, he can work with the goalkeeper in the other goal) reinforcing coaching points listed in Activity #1.

3) **GK / Team Challenge (15 to 20 minutes):**

Split teams into two (blue and yellow). Blue group is at one goal (on both sides of goal) and yellow is at the opposite goal (on both sides of goal). Have a server on the side with all of the soccer balls. Server calls out number of players they want from each team and plays ball into area (number can vary-2/3/4). Players try to score and must keep track of their goals. First team to 10 goals wins. Server can take a shot on a goalkeeper as well to keep them on their toes.



Coaching Points:

- Coach should again position themselves behind goalkeeper and reinforce coaching points listed in Activity #1

5) **6v6 Scrimmage (25-30 minutes):**

Depending upon numbers, space will change and numbers may change. Ideally, finish with the number you normally play with in games. Play a regular game with goalkeepers.

Coaching Points:

- Reinforce positive technical goalkeeping points (on balls of their feet, hands out in front, attack the ball, "W" hand position, etc.).

5) **Cool-down (10 minutes):**

Individual juggling; have them compete to see who gets the most in a 2 minute period.



Goalkeeping (Throwing-bowl, side arm, round house, baseball)

by Laura Ray, Mass Youth Soccer Development Coach

Objectives: To help goalkeepers work on and improve the technical aspects of throwing the soccer ball and to know what type of throw is appropriate in different situations.

1) Passing / Throwing Warm-Up (15 to 20 minutes):

Half of group with soccer balls and half of group without. All players and goalkeepers passing and moving around area. As begin to loosen up, increase the distance players are passing and moving. *Version 2:* Goalkeepers in group now use hands to receive ball and distribute out to players by 1-bowl throw / 2-side-arm throw / 3-round house throw / 4-baseball throw.

Coaching Points:

Bowl:

- Ball in dominant throwing hand ("cupped")
- Step forward with one foot, knee bent and put opposite foot behind with knee bent-to get low
- Release ball low and follow through at target
- Most accuracy and least distance

Side Arm:

- Arm is extended back slightly behind the body just below shoulder level (note: not straight to the side)
- The ball is delivered with a bit of a slinging, sweeping motion
- Because the arm position is sideways, the best way to put backspin on this throw is by passing the palm of the hand under the ball when releasing it
- Let the ball roll off the middle and index finger and the thumb
- Keep the fingers over the top of the ball so it stays low
- Medium accuracy and distance

Round House:

- Ball in dominant throwing hand ("cupped")
- Step forward with one foot and hand without ball facing target, have other hand with ball straight back behind you
- Bring hand without ball down and hand with ball up over (keep hand on top and elbow locked), with shoulder going forward and release ball as hand comes up over shoulder
- Can release ball high (early) or low (late) depending upon point of release and body position (high with knees bent or low with knees bent)
- Least accurate and most distance

Baseball:

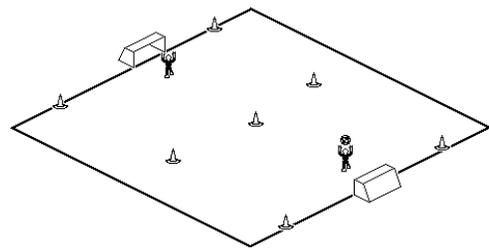
- Ball starts in the palm of the hand, beside the head, and is thrown straight forward as the keeper steps into the throw
- Some backspin on the ball will help it settle quicker and make it easier to receive
- Keeper can let the ball roll off their fingertips slightly at the end of their release
- Make sure the fingers are slightly over the top of the ball to keep it level
- Medium accuracy and distance

2) GK Wars / Team Possession (15 to 20 minutes):

GK's are playing *GK Wars*, while rest of team is playing a *5v5 possession game* on other side of field.

5v5 Team Possession: 4 consecutive passes equals a point. First team to 10 points wins. *Version 2:* Limit touches (3/2/1), then go back to unrestricted.

GK Wars: In an area 20-30 yds long and 20-25 yds wide (depending upon ability level of GK's-you will need to adjust) with two goals on either end and a dividing line in between the distance, GK 1 can shoot or throw ball and try to get into GK 2's goal. GK 2 makes the save and can shoot or throw ball into GK 1's goal. GK's cannot go over dividing line. The first GK to score 10 goals wins.

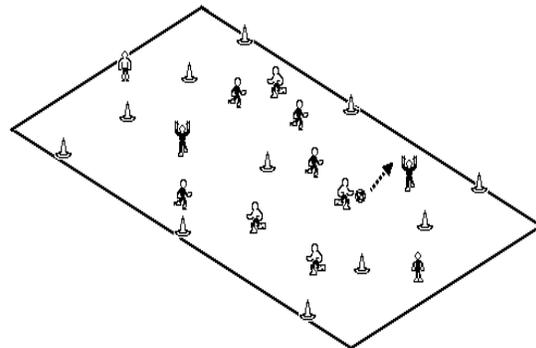


Coaching Points:

- Reinforce coaching points listed in Activity #1

3) Team/GK to Targets (15 to 20 minutes):

Have a field set up that is 50 yd long x 40 yd wide with two 5 yd x 40 yd zones on either end. Split group into two teams, blue and yellow. Blue needs 4 players on the field, one target player in one zone and one GK who stays on their defensive side of the field. Yellow team does the same, just going in the opposite direction. Blue field players are trying to keep possession and get the ball to their blue target in the zone for 1 point (GK can only use their feet if ball is passed to them on the ground) AND blue field players can chip the ball into their GK's hand, who then can throw the ball (from their own defensive half) into the blue target for 3 points. Yellow team does the same, just going the opposite direction. Once the ball gets to the target and 1 or 3 points is scored, ball starts with other team.

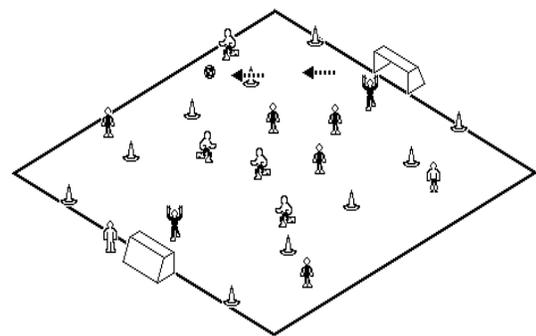


Coaching Points:

- Reinforce coaching points listed in Activity #1

4) Flank Distribution (15 to 20 minutes):

Set up two goals about 50 yards apart and the width of the field. Mark out the left and right flanks with cones using the width of the penalty area for the size. Goalkeepers should be in goals. Play 5 blue vs 5 yellow (3 blue and 3 yellow on the inside and each flank should have a blue and a yellow player in it). Ball will start with the blue GK, who throws it out to one of the blue flank players. Blue flank player dribbles down, unopposed, gets cross off and three blue in the middle try to score. NOTE: Yellow and Blue in middle are not defending against each other in the first version of the activity. Then Yellow GK gets ball, distributes to one of yellow flank players, who gets cross off for teammates to score, then cycle begins again. Be sure GK's alternate which side they distribute to. *Version 2:* Players in the middle now defend against each other. *Version 3:* Players on flank now defend against each other as well. *Version 4:* Take out flanks and play regular game with only stipulation when the ball goes out of bounds, it is always distributed from the GK's hands.



Coaching Points:

- Coach should be behind goalkeeper (If there is an assistant coach, she can work with the goalkeeper in the other goal) reinforcing coaching points listed in Activity #1.

5) 6v6 Scrimmage (25-30 minutes):

Depending upon numbers, space will change and numbers may change. Ideally, finish with the number you normally play with in games. Play a regular game with goalkeepers.

Coaching Points:

- Reinforce positive goalkeeping throwing technique as well as decision making...what type of throw and when.

6) Cool-down (10 minutes):

Groups of 3. One player is the server and has the ball in their hands and the other two are ready to juggle. Server says 2 and 2 which means the server tosses the ball to the first player who has to juggle the ball two times before getting it to the next player who has to juggle the ball twice and get it back to the server (ball should not touch the ground). Server can change numbers of juggles to 1 and 1, 1 and 5, 3 and 4, 4 and 2, etc.



U10 Combination Play

by *Mario Prata, MYSA Development Coach*

OBJECTIVE: Improve passing technique. Introduce and train combination play (*take-over and wall-pass*)
Recognize the correct timing and opportunity to pass.

When do players perform a wall-pass?

- When the 1st defender is approaching quickly & aggressively or when the 1st defender is undecided and is standing still.
- Supporting players must recognize this to provide the correct timing, angle and distance of support.
- Supporting players should one-touch the ball back to the 1st attacker. The 1st attacker must explode into the space behind the 1st defender to receive the return pass.

When do players perform a take-over?

- The second attacker runs by the first, close in the opposite direction
- The first attacker protects the ball by keeping it on the far side of his or her body from the defender.
- If the defender stays in position to block the path to goal, the first attacker calls the second attacker's name and lets the ball roll to him or her (neither passing it nor stopping it). The second attacker takes the ball away with the same foot as that used by the first attacker where he or she last touched the ball (right foot to right foot, left to left!).
- If the defender slows down to "pick-up" the second attacker, the first attacker can call his or her own name and continue to dribble.

Some general points:

- Wall-passes and Takeovers are most effective in the attacking half of the field
- Attackers should try to increase the momentum and the speed of the attack. A delay or slowing down favors the defense.

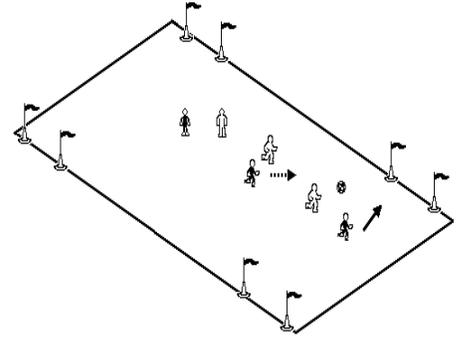
1) Colors-Warm Up (15 minutes)---Half of the players in red pennies, half in blue. Ball can never stop, players can never stop moving, and ball cannot leave area of play. *Pass and move variations:* 1-pass and move by passing to anyone, 2-pass and move by only passing to same team, 3-execute wall passes, 4-execute takeovers.

Coaching Points:

- Stress correct passing and receiving techniques.
- Stress wall-pass and take-over technique and visual cues listed above.



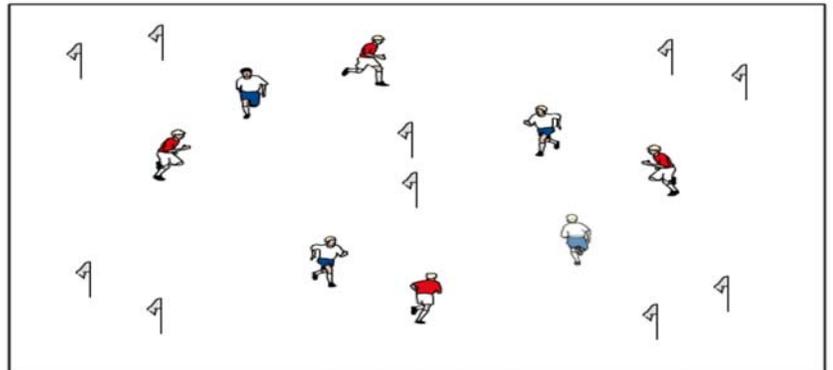
2) **Four goal game (10 minutes)**---In a grid 20x30 yards with four goals measuring 3 feet across in each corner, two teams of three attack two goals and defend two goals. Coach within the game, and work on team shape, specifically stretch, width on attack, and compactness on defense. *Variation:* To encourage combination play: the attacking team will receive 5 points if they combine with a wall pass or takeover before they score. Otherwise, they receive 1 point for scoring. *Recommendation:* Add a “plus” player who always plays for the attacking team if they cannot keep possession long enough to create a combination.



Coaching Points:

- Stress recognizing opportunities
- Timing of passes
- Playing away from pressure by changing the point of attack
- Efficiency of touches

3) **5 Goal Game (10 minutes)**---4v4 in 25x30 yard grid. Five 2-yard goals are spread out throughout the grid. The teams score by passing through any of the goals to a teammate. The attacking team must combine with a wall pass or a take-over before they can score. First team to 10 points wins.



Coaching Points:

Kicker

- Players need to be able to see where the open goals are

Receiver

- Receive with a “picture” of what is around them.

4) **5 vs. 5 + GK’s Game (30 Minutes)**

Coaching Points:

- Stress correct passing and receiving techniques.
- Stress wall-pass and take-over technique and visual cues listed above.

5) **Cool Down (10 minutes)** – juggling, in groups of four, first group that juggles the ball 20 times without the ball touching the ground is the winner. . Statically stretch the large muscle groups



Heading & Volleying (To Clear)

by Mass Youth Staff Coach

OBJECTIVE: To help our players recognize when to clear the ball. To help our players improve in the techniques of heading and volleying when clearing the ball.

1) Warm-up - Heading Progression (10-15 minutes):

a) *Seated*—2 players per ball positioned 1-2 feet apart, facing each other. One player sits on the ground with legs out in front and their partner gently serves the ball toward their head. The seated player must head the ball back to their partner. The purpose for this activity is to make sure that the players are using the proper part of their head, tightening their necks and striking through the ball.

b) *Knees*--One partner on knees. When the ball is served, player snaps torso and neck forward to head ball back to their partner.

c) *Standing*--Standing on balls of feet with one foot forward, partner heads ball back to server with power and accuracy.

Note: This progression can be done in 10-15 minutes once players become familiar with it. It is a quick and effective way to make sure our players master heading

Coaching Points: (Heading)

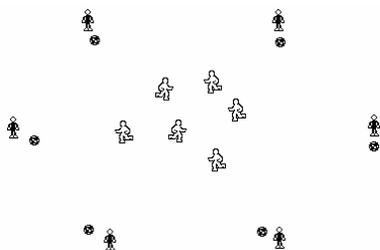
- Keep eyes open and focused on the ball
- Mouth closed
- Surface of contact should be the upper part of the forehead
- Strike the ball on the middle to lower half of the ball
- Players should arch their backs, tighten their necks and snap head and torso through ball for maximum power
- Use arms for balance, protection and to create space

Mistakes to watch for: (these are common mistakes that we want to watch for and correct.)

- Heading the ball with the top of head
- Closing their eyes before they head the ball
- Not driving towards the ball (resulting in the ball hitting them in their face)

2) Dutch Circle (15 minutes):

Half of the players create a 25-35 yard outer circle and have balls. These players must always be alert and on their toes. The other half of the players are in the middle of this circle and do not have soccer balls. The inner players check to players on the outside who serve an air ball to them. The inside players play the ball back to the player who served it to them with their head or the inside or instep of their foot (volley). They then check to another person on the outside who has a ball, repeat this process for about 2-3 minutes until coach switches players from outside to inside.

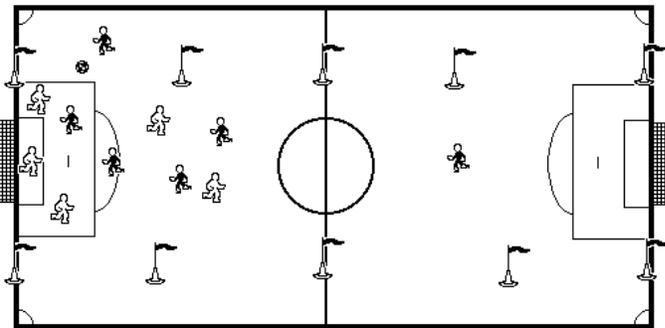




Coaching Points: (Volleying)

- Keep eyes focused on the ball
- Use the inside of the foot or the instep of the foot to strike up and through the ball
- Strike the ball, do not let the ball strike you
- Surface of contact should be in the middle to lower half of the ball
- Use arms for balance

3) Channel Game (20 minutes): The players will split into 2 teams. On either side of the field there will be channels length wise. The players will play a regular game inside the middle of the field. An attacking player can dribble into the channel in order to cross the ball. No defenders may go in the channels to chase him. 2 points will be awarded for a goal by the attacking team. The defending team will get 1 point every time they defend a cross with a header or volley and clear it out of danger. Focus on timing and direction of their clearances.



4) 6v6 Game (25 minutes):

2 Teams play a game. 1pt is awarded for a goal. 1 pt is awarded if the defending team clears the ball by heading or volleying it.

Coaching Points:

- Same as above
- Keep reminding players to hit the ball on the bottom ½ to clear it up and away.

COOL- DOWN (10 minutes): Juggling in 2's and 3's only using their feet or head. Static stretching of the major muscle groups.



U10 Combination play

By Mario Prata, MYSA Development Coach

OBJECTIVE: Improve passing technique. Introduce and train combination plays (double pass and overlap/run around). Recognize the visual cues, correct timing and options to combine.

The double-pass combination.

- A double pass is an UP BACK and THROUGH ball.
- Player B (back to opponent's goal) checks on an angle to Player A (facing opponent's goal); this is the visual cue that the double-pass is **ON**.
- Player A passes the ball to the feet of Player B;
- Player B one-touches it back to Player A and spins past the defender into the space behind the defender created by his original checking run;
- Player A one-touches the ball into the space, ahead of and leading Player B.
- Players perform this combination when one Player (Player B) is tightly marked from behind and is trying to make space live (open) behind the defender.

The overlap/run-around combination.

- The first attacker dribbles the ball on an inward angle directly at the 1st defender and in the direction of his 2nd attacker (supporting attacker); this is a visual cue to the 2nd attacker to run around behind the 1st attacker into the space being created by the 1st attacker's dribbling action.
- If the defender stays in position to block the first attacker's path to the goal, the ball can be played into the space, created by the 1st attacker's dribbling action, to the overlapping player.

Some general points:

- Double pass and overlap are most effective in the attacking half of the field
- Attackers should try to increase the momentum and the speed of the attack. A delay or slowing down favors the defense.

- 1) **Colors-Warm Up (15 minutes)**---Half of the players in red pennies, half in blue. Teams playing together in the same space combine passing. Ball can never stop, players can never stop moving, and ball cannot leave area of play. Use entire space, half with balls and split groups into two with pennies. Pass and move variations: 1-pass and move by passing to anyone, 2-pass and move by only passing to same team, 3-pass and move practicing the double pass combination, 4-pass and move practicing the overlap combination.

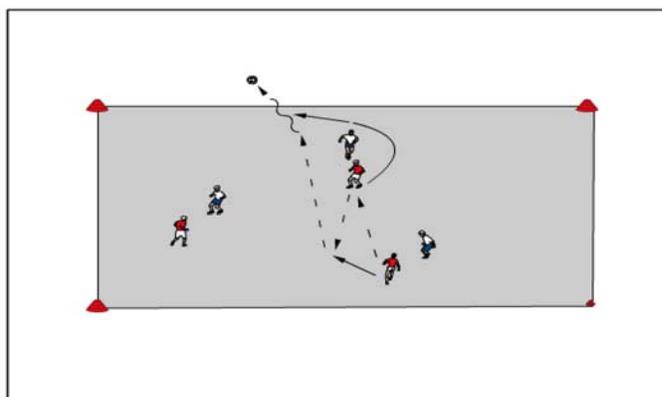
Coaching Points:

- Stress passing and receiving techniques...use of the inside and outside of the foot, and the toe when passing
- Reinforce the double pass and over-lap coaching points
- Coach non-verbal cues...angle and timing of runs with and without the ball
- Coach verbal cues..."Hold!"

- 2) **3 vs. 3 To Lines (10 minutes)**---In a 20 X 25 yard grid, two teams of three play to the opposite lines. When the ball goes out of bounds it can be passed or dribbled into play. If attackers combine with an overlapping run or double-pass before they cross the endline, they receive 2 points...otherwise they receive 1 point.

Coaching Points:

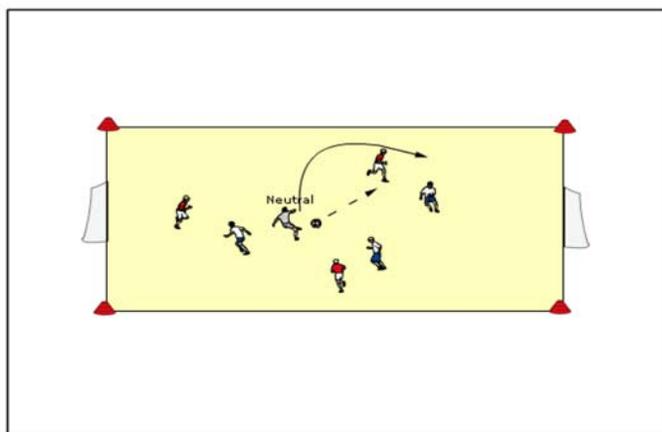
- Reinforce the double-pass and over-lap coaching points from above.



- 3) **3v3+1 to goal. (10 minutes)** In a 25X 30 grid add two 3 yard goals on each end line. The attacking team must set up an overlap, take-over or wall pass before scoring.

Coaching Points:

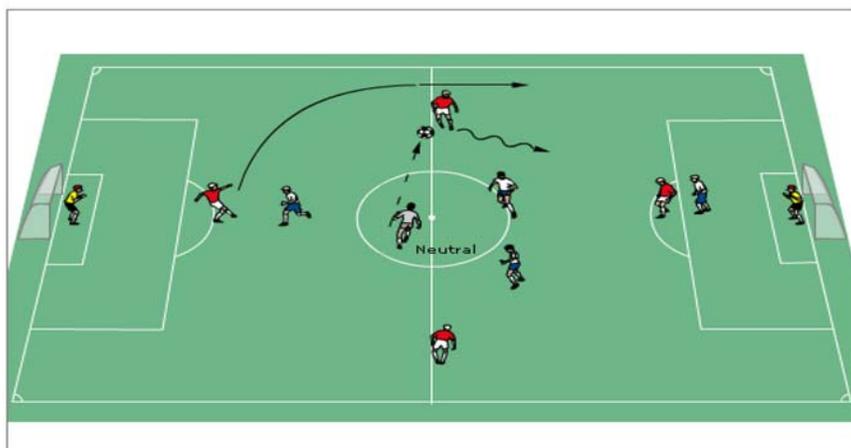
- Reinforce the double-pass and over-lap coaching points from above.



- 4) **4v4+1+2GK'S to two goals. (20 minutes)** Two teams of 4 + 2 GK's and a neutral player that plays for the attacking team. In a grid 30X45 yards with 2 (U10) regular size goals in each end line. The attacking team gets 1 pt for a goal and 2 pts if they combine with the double-pass or overlap before they score.

Coaching Points:

- Reinforce the double-pass and over-lap coaching points from above.



- 5) **5v 5 + GK's Game(30 Minutes)**

Coaching Points:

- Reinforce the double-pass and over-lap coaching points from above.

- 6) **Cool Down (10 minutes)** – Controlled juggling (thigh-thigh-foot-foot) or any combination of 4-6 juggles that will challenge the players. Statically stretch the large muscle groups.



U10 Defending (Pressure)

by Mass Youth Staff Coach

OBJECTIVE: This session is designed to teach players the technical points of pressuring the ball. The 1st defender's speed of approach, body shape and tackling technique.

1.) Defensive Stance Warm-up (5-7 minutes): In pairs passing about 10-15 yds away. When coach signals one player stops ball with the sole of their foot, the other player approaches to defend. Then players back up and passing resumes. *Variation 2:* After a few passes, one of the players lets the ball go through their legs, the other player approaches to defend and 'force' the player in the direction they are facing

Coaching Points:

- Angle of approach – We want to direct the player one way on the field
- Speed of approach – Approach fast arrive slow
- Body Shape- knees bent, on the balls of their feet
- Mobility – able to make a quick change or adjustment

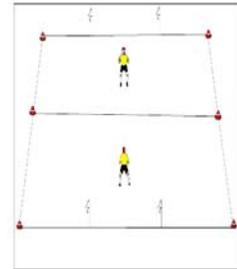
Mistakes to watch for: (these are common mistakes that we want to watch for and correct.)

- Planting their feet once they get to defender
- Sprinting straight at the attacker (diving in)
- Standing straight up

2.) 1v1 to two small goals: (15 minutes): Set up a multiple 15yd x 10yd grids with small goals at each end. Play multiple 1v1 games for 45-60 seconds per game. Rotate players from field to field.

Coaching Points:

- Same as above
- Reading the attackers body language- try to anticipate their next move
- Deciding how to win possession of the ball...block tackle or toe poke (see coaching points below)



Coaching Points: (Block Tackle)

- Attack the player fast, closing the distance between yourself and the ball as fast as possible
- Position your feet in a staggered stance, one foot slightly further than the other.
- Your knees should be slightly bent, allowing you to quickly extend your feet either way, in case the attacker tries to dribble past you.
- Extend your arms sideways, to gain some balance and always stay on the balls of your feet, so you can block the ball with either foot
- When you decide it's time to move in for the block, keep your body low and drag the inside of your tackling foot through the ball. It's important that the ankle of your tackling foot is locked and your non-kicking foot is planted firmly near the ball. Otherwise you risk injuring yourself.

Coaching Points: (Poke Tackle)

- Attack the player fast, closing the distance between yourself and the ball as fast as possible
- Position your feet in a staggered stance, one foot slightly further than the other.
- Your knees should be slightly bent
- If you get close to the attacker and there is an opening to poke the ball away with your toe, do so quickly!

Visual Cues to Tackle: opponent has their head down; just as the ball leaves the foot on the dribble; the ball gets stuck under the opponent; the opponent touches the ball too hard and loses control.



3) 2v2 to lines (20 minutes):

Create multiple fields that are 20yds x 15yds with 4 cones outlining the field (enough so all players are playing), break all of the players into teams of 2. Each team will defend the end line behind them. Players have to dribble across the end line to score. Play a tournament format where teams will play 2 minute games and then rotate to another field. Scoring goes as follows: 3 pts for the win, 1 pt for the tie, 0 for a loss and, if they have a shut-out, they get 2 bonus pts.

Coaching Points:

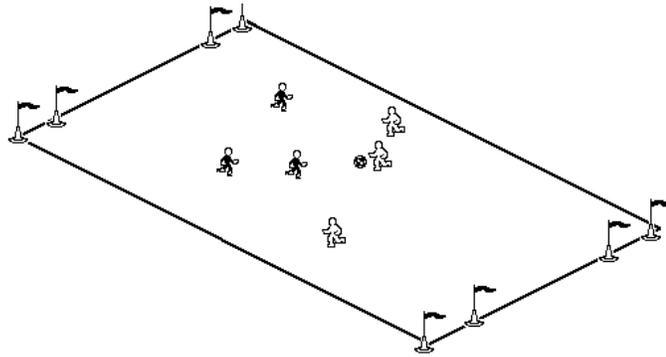
- Same as above
- Reading the game – Do the players recognize when they become the first defender and if, when and how to tackle

Mistakes to watch for:

- Players hanging back and not pressuring the ball when they become the 1st defender

4) 3v3 to 4 goals (15 minutes):

Create a few fields that are 30yds x 20yds with two goals at each end. Split all of the players in to teams of 3. Two teams will play on each field with each team defending a goal. Scoring will be normal: 1 point for a goal. Have the players call out when they are the first defender as they close down the ball.



Coaching Points:

- Same as above

5) 6v6 Game (15minutes):

Break the group in to 2 teams and play an unrestricted game. You will receive 1pt for a goal scored normally. While the game is going on, praise successful defending by the pressuring defender.

COOL- DOWN (10 minutes): Juggling in 2's and 3's only using their feet or head. Static stretching of the major muscle groups.



Defending - Pressure/Cover

by Mass Youth Staff Coach

OBJECTIVE: This session is designed to teach the defenders closest to the ball when, where and how to win the ball back for their team. In particular, we will discuss the roles and responsibilities of the pressuring defender (1st defender) and the covering defender (2nd defender).

1) Pressure-Cover Warm-up (5-7 minutes): 3 Players per ball in open space. Player A and Player B, about 8-10 yards apart, pass the ball back and forth. Player C is located about 10-15 yards away from Players A & B. After 3-4 passes between Players A & B, Player A passes the ball to Player C. While the ball is traveling, Player B approaches Player C to apply pressure to the ball; at the same time, Player A provides appropriate cover to Player B (positions herself behind and at an angle to Player B). Player C attempts to split Players A & B with a 1 touch pass. Repeat many times, changing the roles of the 3 players.

Coaching Points (1st Defender):

- Angle of approach – We want to direct the player one way on the field, take away option of advancing forward.
- Speed of approach – Approach fast...arrive slow
- Body Shape- knees bent, on the balls of their feet, one foot slightly angled in front of the other foot
- Decision to delay opponent or to tackle the opponent to win possession of the ball; if 1st defender does not have good cover, delaying the opponent is a good decision; if the 1st defender has good cover, then the decision to tackle with the toe-poke or block tackle is appropriate just as the ball comes off the foot of the dribbler

Coaching Points (2nd Defender):

- Angle and distance of cover; speed to cover – Stay connected to first defender
- Cover dangerous space between 1st defender and you; cannot allow a penetrating pass to split you and the 1st defender!
- Be positioned so that, if the 1st defender gets beat with the dribble, you can become the 1st defender immediately.
- Be ready...see the ball, keep feet moving

Mistakes to watch for (1st defender): *(these are common mistakes that we want to watch for and correct.)*

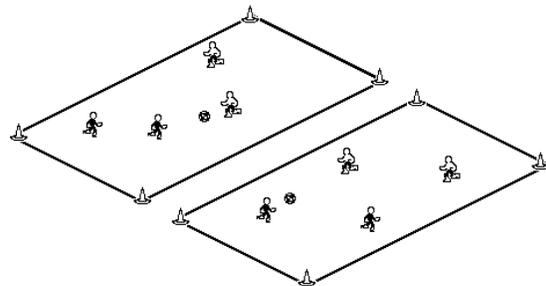
- Planting their feet once they get to the defender
- Sprinting straight at the attacker (diving in)
- Standing straight up

Mistakes to watch for (2nd defender):

- Running right behind the 1st defender
- Running next to the 1st defender and creating a flat shape

2) 2v2 to lines (20 minutes):

Create multiple fields that are 20yds x 15yds with 4 cones outlining the field (enough so all players are playing); organize all of the players into teams of 2. Each team will attack the end line opposite them and defend the end line behind them. Players must dribble over the opposite end line to score. Play a tournament format where teams play 2 minute games and then rotate to another field. Scoring goes as follows: 3 pts for the win, 1 pt for the tie, 0 for a loss and, if they have a shut-out, they get 2 bonus pts.





Coaching Points:

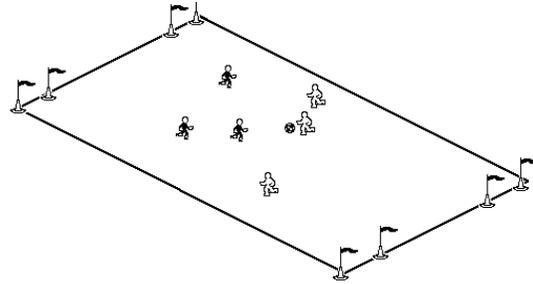
- Same as above

Mistakes to watch for:

Players hanging back and not pressuring the ball as a team when they become defenders

3) 3v3 Four Goal game (20 minutes):

In a grid 20x30 yards with four goals measuring 3 feet across in each corner, play 3v3. Each team attacks the 2 goals opposite them and defends the 2 goals behind them. Some questions to ask the players: “can you channel the ball into certain areas of the field to gain possession?” “Can you apply enough pressure on the ball to limit the first attacker's options and make the play predictable?” *Version 2:* If the players are scoring very quickly, change the game so that the attacking team has to score by dribbling through one of the goals; this will allow the defending team more time to get organized.



Coaching Points:

- 2nd defender must recognize their responsibility to cover the 1st defender as the ball is traveling to the opponent (1st attacker).

4) 6v6 Game (15minutes):

Unrestricted play. While the game is going on, praise successful defending and connection by the 1st and 2nd defenders.

COOL- DOWN (10 minutes): Juggling in 2's and 3's only using their feet or head. Static stretching of the major muscle groups.



Goalkeeping - Diving

by Mass Youth Staff Coach

OBJECTIVE: The objective of this training session is to teach goalkeepers the correct diving technique and to provide them with many opportunities to practice.

1) **Warm-up (20 minutes):** *(In the warm-up we are going to go over diving technique in detail. All of the activities will focus on the mechanics of diving properly).*

a. Basic Diving:

Each player is seated on the ground, with knees bent. Each player places a ball about 2 steps away to the right or left, at a 45 degree angle and in front of them. The keeper must roll down their side reaching out to make the save. Eyes on the ball, one hand on top of the ball and one hand behind the ball, with elbows slightly bent and opposite leg up and bent. As the keeper is rolling towards the ball, they must attempt to force their body in a forward angle, “attacking” the ball and make the save. Finally, the keeper must kick out, with the leg that is up in the air, into a sitting position.

Version 2: Two (2) players per ball. One player (keeper) is seated on the ground with knees bent. The other player (the server) is standing with the ball in their hands facing the keeper about 3-5 steps away. The server will roll the ball at a 45 degree angle, slightly in front of the keeper, alternating to the left side and to the right side. Using the technique described above, the keeper will attempt to make the save, kick out and throw the ball back to the server.

b. Standing Dive:

Each player is standing in ready position...on balls of feet, knees comfortably bent, arms and hands out in front, with elbows bent and palms up. Each player places a ball about 4-5 steps away to the right or left, at a 45 degree angle and in front of them. The keeper must take a large power step towards the ball and collapse in the direction of the ball, rolling down their side and reaching out to make the save. Eyes on the ball, one hand on top of the ball and one hand behind the ball, with elbows slightly bent and opposite leg up and bent. As the keeper is rolling towards the ball, they must attempt to force their body in a forward angle, “attacking” the ball and make the save. Finally, the keeper must kick out, with the leg that is up in the air and get to a standing position.

Version 2: Two (2) players per ball. One player (keeper) is standing in ready position...on balls of feet, knees comfortably bent, arms and hands out in front, with elbows bent and palms up. The other player (the server) is standing with the ball in their hands facing the keeper about 5 steps away. The server will roll the ball at a 45 degree angle, slightly in front of the keeper, alternating to the left side and to the right side. Using the technique described above, the keeper will attempt to make the save, kick out, stand up and throw the ball back to the server.

Coaching Points:

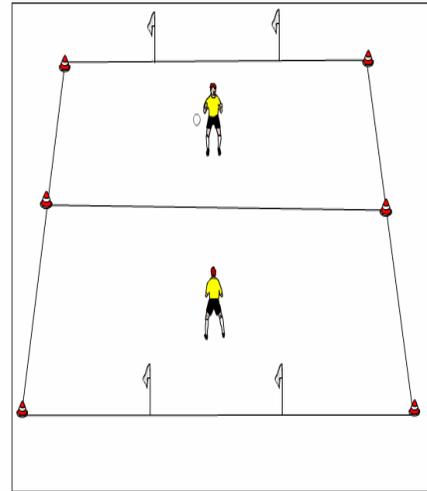
- Use Good footwork (balls of feet) to get in position for the *Dive*
- As the GK dives for the ball, they should step into the dive, always leading and attacking the ball with the hands
- Catch the ball in the “W” grip with one hand on top and one hand behind the ball.
- Land on their side (hip and shoulder), with their opposite knee driving across their body for extra boost and protection.

Mistakes to watch for: *(these are common mistakes that we want to watch for and correct.)*

- **Diving backwards**
- **Using hands to get up and letting go of the ball**
- **Turning on to stomach or back after making the save**
- **Weak power step, not driving towards the ball (resulting in catching the ball in front of their face)**

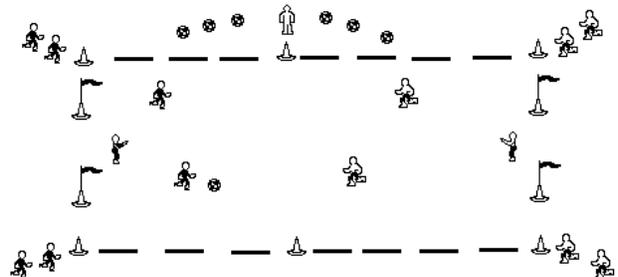


2) GK Tennis (20 minutes) - In a 15 x 30 yard grid, with goals centrally located on each endline. One goalkeeper positioned in each half, defending the goal behind them. Each goalkeeper tries to score in their opponent's goal, from their own half, by throwing the ball (ball MUST bounce on the opponent's side for goal to count).



3) Four (4) Corner Shooting (20 minutes)-

On a field 20 yards wide x 25 yards long, position two goals at each end. Split group into two teams (red and blue). Position half of the red team in a line behind one corner of the field and the other half of the red team in a line behind the other corner of the field, at the same end. Organize the blue team in the same manner at the other end of the field. Select a goalkeeper for each goal and rotate that player every 5 minutes. The assistant coach is positioned at the midfield line, outside the field, with all the soccer balls. When the assistant coach kicks a ball into the field, the first person in each of the four (4) corner lines enters the field to play. The game becomes a 2v2 + keepers activity. Play continues until the ball goes out of play or a goal is scored. When this happens, the players on the field quickly get back into their original lines, keepers stay on, and the assistant coach kicks the next ball in for the next 4 players. The assistant coach should play the ball toward one of the corner lines (risk/safety management). The head coach should be positioned behind one of the goals in an effort to help/coach the goalkeeper.



4) 6v6 Game (20 minutes):

On a 60yds x 40yd field 2 Teams play a game (5 players and a GK). You will score the game normally. You can rotate the keepers through this game.

COOL- DOWN (10 minutes): Juggling in 2's and 3's. Static stretching of the major muscle groups.



Goalkeeping (Punt, Half-volley)

by Mass Youth Staff Coach

OBJECTIVE: The objective of this training session is to help goalkeepers improve their kicking technique (the punt and the half-volley).

Punt:

Coaching Points: (A punt is usually the kick with the greatest distance; it has a high trajectory and hang time)

- Start with the ball in both hands, (starting with both hands will allow for more consistency in the drop). Take a short run up (about 2-3 steps) at a slight angle to the kicking direction, (this gets the hip more involved and generates more power.) The plant foot should point towards the target. Drop the ball and kick it upwards with the instep of the foot; follow through and land on the kicking foot. (Do not toss the ball upwards)
- The kicking foot should be straight, directly on line with the target, and should not swing around the body.

Half-volley or Drop-Kick:

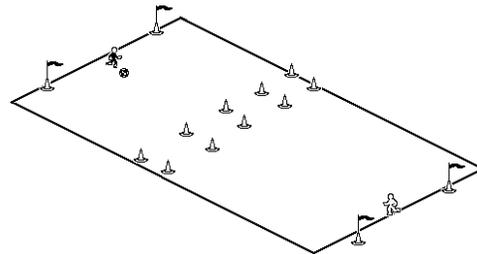
Coaching Points: (A half-volley or drop kick, where the ball hits the ground before being contacted by the foot, gives a lower trajectory ball and the ability to go further distance).

- The technique is very much the same as a punt, but the ball is dropped to the ground before it is kicked. The kick is timed so the instep of the foot strikes the ball just after it bounces on the ground.
- The drop kick has a distinctive "ba-boom" sound to it. The "ba" is the ball hitting the ground; the "boom" is the foot striking the ball a fraction of a second later.

1) **Warm-up (20 minutes):** In the warm-up we will have all of the players in pairs with 1 ball per pair. Have them punt and half-volley the ball back and forth to each other (about 10 yds apart). After the first 7 minutes, when their legs are warmed-up, increase the distance between them to 15-20 yds.

*** in activities #2 and #3 which follow, set up 4 or 5 fields so that all of the players are playing at the same time. Then, after 4-5 minutes, they can switch and play someone else. Create a tournament atmosphere***

2) **GK Tennis (30 minutes):** Set up an area 20 yds wide x 30 yds long with a large goal on each end. Place an alley-way made from cones which is a dividing line in the middle. Each GK tries to score in the opposite goal by throwing, punting, drop-kicking or striking the ball from the ground. The ball must still bounce in the other players ½ for the goal to count.

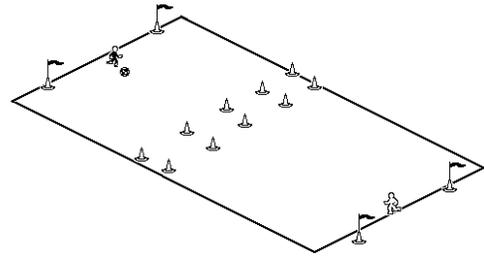


Coaching Points:

- Same as above
- Watch for small technical problems and fix during this activity. This will help with accuracy.



3) Goalkeeper Wars (30 minutes): In an area 36 yds long x 44yds wide with a regulation goal centered at each end. Set up an alley-way as in the last activity. Place many soccer balls either in each goal or next to each goal. Goalkeeper A competes against Goalkeeper B. Each Goalkeeper defends the goal behind them and tries to score on the goal opposite them without going in or past the central alley-way. They can score with the throw, kicking off the ground, punting the ball or half-volleying the ball. The first GK to score 10 goals wins.



Coaching Points:

- Same as above

4) 6v6 Game (20 minutes):

On a 60 yd x 40 yd field, 2 teams play a regular game (5 players and a GK). Coach the keeper on their kicking distribution technique.

COOL- DOWN (10 minutes): Juggling, (35 juggles) with the feet only and then stretch. Static stretching of the major muscle groups.



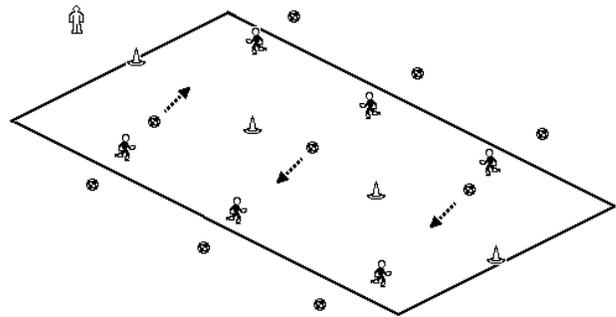
Shooting Session #1

by Laura Ray, Mass Youth Soccer Development Coach

Objectives: To improve the technique of shooting with the insides and instep of both feet. To foster the confidence to shoot!

1) Shooting Through the Cones (Warm-up - 15-20 minutes):

Set up a line of cones about 6 yards apart, representing goals for the players to shoot through. Position two players about 10-15 yards away from and on opposite sides of the line of cones. Players opposite each other proceed to kick (shoot) the ball through their cone goal, back and forth, working on correct shooting technique. It is important that the players work to perfect their preparation touch and that they strike a moving ball. The players should be using both feet to shoot. Scatter extra soccer balls around the playing area.



Coaching Points:

- Keep ankle of shooting foot locked with toe down
- Non-kicking foot is placed parallel to ball (not behind it or ahead of it) and far enough away that it is comfortable to hit ball and that both ball and non-kicking foot are underneath your hips
- Non-kicking foot should be pointing towards your target
- Your weight should be on the ball of your non-kicking foot
- Both knees bent
- Strike through the middle of the ball...if you made a cross in the back of the ball, hit where the two lines intersect
- Follow through to your target
- Land on your kicking foot
- Keep head down to see what you are kicking
- Lean over ball as you kick, do not stand upright
- Strike ball with laces so that ball strikes hard bone on top of foot
- Encourage players to strike through the ball
- Players may need to make a slightly angled approach towards ball in order to prevent them from kicking ground...this will result in hip of the same leg as the kicking foot being higher than non-kicking foot

2) Popcorn (15-20 minutes):

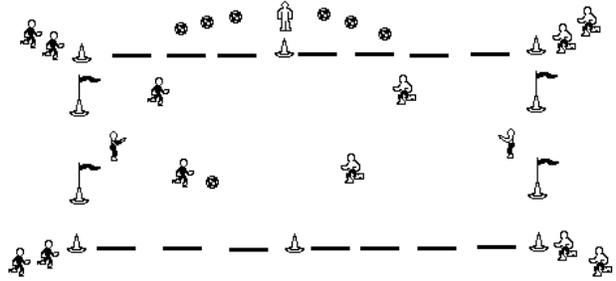
Set up a grid about 30 yds. X 20yds. With a goal on each end. Coach plays balls into 4-5 players who are all competing against each other to get the ball and score in either goal. First to five goals wins. Coach should manipulate service in order that all players are able to have shots and feel some success.

Coaching Points:

- Reinforce the coaching points listed in activity #1
- Gives players more opportunities for scoring chances
- Encourage a risky mentality to shoot

3) **Four (4) Corner Shooting (20 minutes)-**

On a field 20 yards wide x 25 yards long, position two goals at each end. Split group into two teams (red and blue). Position half of the red team in a line behind one corner of the field and the other half of the red team in a line behind the other corner of the field, at the same end. Organize the blue team in the same manner at the other end of the field. Select a goalkeeper for each goal and rotate that player every 5 minutes. The coach is positioned at the midfield line, outside the field, with all the soccer balls. When the coach kicks a ball into the field, the first person in each of the four (4) corner lines enters the field to play. The game becomes a 2v2 + keepers activity. Play continues until the ball goes out of play or a goal is scored. When this happens, the players on the field quickly get back into their original lines, keepers stay on, and the assistant coach kicks the next ball in for the next 4 players. The coach should play the ball toward one of the corner lines (risk/safety management).

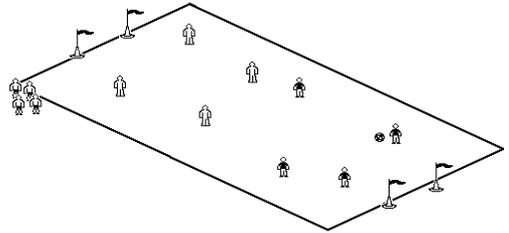


Coaching Points:

- Reinforce coaching points listed in activity #1
- Players looking to go to goal quickly

4) **4 vs 4 + 4 on deck (15-20 minutes):**

Two teams playing to one goal each. First team to two goals stays or if two minutes pass by, the longest team on gets off and new team comes on. Captains on each team keep score.



Coaching Points:

- Reinforce the coaching points listed in activity #1
- Help players to recognize when to use the inside of foot vs. the instep (laces)

5) **6v6 scrimmage (25-30 minutes):**

Depending upon numbers, space will change. Ideally, finish with the number you normally play with in games. Play a regular game with goalkeepers.

Coaching Points:

- Highlight the technique of shooting
- Reinforce positive decision making opportunities (when, how and where to shoot the ball, etc.).

6) **Cool-down (10 minutes):**

Individual juggling. Have players compete to see who gets the most in a 2 minute period.



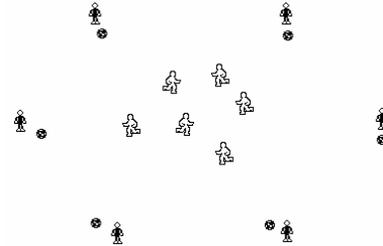
Heading / Volleying

By Mass Youth Staff Coach

OBJECTIVE: This session is designed to teach players the technical points of heading and volleying a ball.

1) Warm-up: Dutch Circle (15 minutes):

Half of the players (outsiders) create a circle with a diameter of about 25 yards. The outsiders are equipped with soccer balls in their hands. The other half of the players (insiders) are in the circle and do not have soccer balls. The outsiders must always be alert and on their toes ready to serve a lofted ball, at various heights, to an insider. The insiders move around to different outsiders and:



- head the ball to the hands of the outsider that served the ball to them
- head the ball to the feet of the outsider that served the ball to them
- head the ball over the head of the outsider that served the ball to them
- volley the ball with the inside of the foot to the hands of the outsider
- volley the ball with the laces of the foot to the hands of the outsider

Change insiders and outsiders every 2-3 minutes.

Coaching Points: (Heading)

- Keep eyes open and focused on the ball
- Mouth closed
- Surface of contact should be upper half of forehead
- Strike the ball, do not let the ball strike you
- Strike the ball on the upper half of the ball to drive it down; the middle of the ball to drive it level; the lower half of the ball to drive it up
- Players should tighten neck and torso, arch back and drive the head through the ball for maximum power
- Use arms for balance, protection and to create space

Mistakes to watch for: *(these are common mistakes that we want to watch for and correct.)*

- **Heading the ball with the top of head**
- **Closing eyes before they head the ball**
- **Not driving towards the ball (resulting in the ball hitting them)**

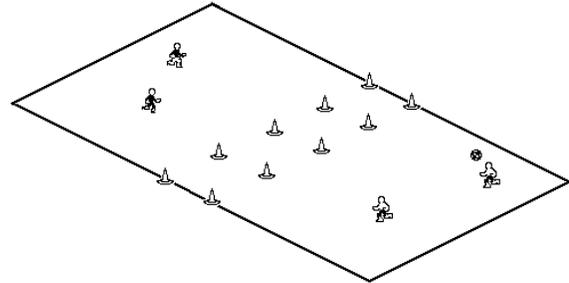
Coaching Points: (Volleying)

- Keep eyes open and focused on the ball
- Strike the ball, do not let the ball strike you
- Strike the ball on the upper half of the ball to drive it down; the middle of the ball to drive it level; the lower half of the ball to drive it up
- Surface of contact should be in the middle to upper half of the ball
- Players should lock ankle and turn toe up for inside of the foot volley; players should lock ankle and point toe down for instep (laces) volley
- Use arms for balance.



2) Tennis (20 minutes): Organize teams of 2, 3 or 4. Set up multiple tennis courts (size depends on the numbers playing). For a doubles game (2v2), set up a grid 30-35 yards long x 15 yards wide. Include a central 3 yard alleyway across the width of the court, made from cones, to represent the net.

Team A serves the ball from behind their end line with a volley or half-volley kick to **Team B**. The ball must land in **Team B's** half court to be **GOOD**. However, **Team B** can choose to play the ball before the bounce or after the bounce. Depending on age and ability of the players, the rules can allow 1-2 bounces on a side, with a 3-4 touch limit between teammates (this allows for juggling). Balls can be headed or volleyed to the other **Team's** side.



Points can only be scored by the team that served the ball. If a ball lands in the central alleyway, it is **NO GOOD** (like a tennis ball going into the net). Follow regular tennis rules or adjust accordingly.

3) Team Handball (20 minutes): Organize players into 2 teams of 4, 5 or 6. Set up a 35 yard x 50 yard rectangular field with goals centrally located at each end. The 2 teams play this game by tossing the ball (with their hands) to their teammates (similar to basketball). Players can only take a maximum of 3 steps with the ball; then they must pass the ball to a teammate. Goals can only be scored by heading or volleying the ball after it has been thrown by a teammate. If the ball drops on the ground, possession goes to the other team.

4) 6v6 Game (20minutes): 2 Teams play a regular soccer game. Award 1pt for a goal scored normally; 3points for a goal that is scored as a result of a volley; and 5pts if a goal is scored from a header.

COOL- DOWN (10 minutes): Juggling in 2's and 3's only using feet and head. Static stretching of the major muscle groups.



Shooting Session #2

by Laura Ray, Mass Youth Soccer Development Coach

Objectives: To improve the technique of shooting with the insides, instep, outsides and toe of both feet and to foster the confidence to be risky within shooting range and get shots off.

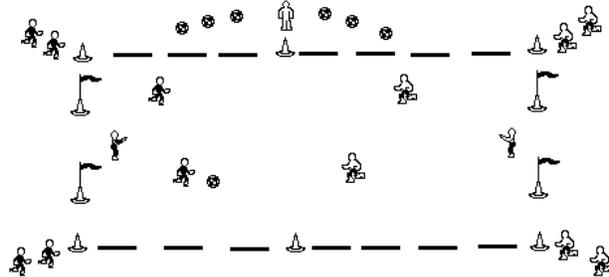
1) Numbered Shooting (15 minutes):

On a full size 8v8 field, create a grid in the middle of the field 40 yds wide by 20 yds long. Goalkeepers are assigned to both goals at either end of the field. Separate your players into two teams (red and blue). Number the players on each team 1-6. All players have a ball and dribble freely in the central grid. When coach calls out a number, the blue player dribbles toward one goal and shoots on goal, while the red player does the same on the opposite goal. Coach can limit touches, specify surface area (inside, outside, laces), require a move before they shoot, etc.

- Keep ankle of shooting foot locked with toe down when using the instep; toe up when using the inside of the foot, toe down and turned in when using the outside of the foot; and toe pointed straight when using the toe
- Non-kicking foot is placed comfortably close to ball
- Non-kicking foot should be pointing towards your target if using the inside of the foot or the instep
- Non-kicking foot may not be pointing towards target when using the outside of the foot or toe
- Your weight should be on the ball of your non-kicking foot
- Both knees bent
- Strike through the middle (equator) of the ball to direct it straight; strike the inside or outside of the ball to bend it; strike under the equator to lift the ball; strike slightly above the equator to keep the ball low
- Follow through to your target
- Land on your kicking foot
- Keep eyes on the ball at the moment of impact
- Lean over ball as you kick, do not stand upright
- Encourage players to strike through the ball
- Players may need to make a slightly angled approach towards ball in order to prevent them from kicking ground

2) Four (4) Corner Shooting (20 minutes)-

On a field 20 yards wide x 25 yards long, position two goals at each end. Split group into two teams (red and blue). Position half of the red team in a line behind one corner of the field and the other half of the red team in a line behind the other corner of the field, at the same end. Organize the blue team in the same manner at the other end of the field. Select a goalkeeper for each goal and rotate that player every 5 minutes. The coach is positioned at the midfield line, outside the field, with all the soccer balls. When the coach kicks a ball into the field, the first person in each of the four (4) corner lines enters the field to play. The game becomes a 2v2 + keepers activity. Play continues until the ball goes out of play or a goal is scored. When this happens, the players on the field quickly get back into their original lines, keepers stay on, and the assistant coach kicks the next ball in for the next 4 players. The coach should play the ball toward one of the corner lines (risk/safety management).



The game becomes a 2v2 + keepers activity. Play continues until the ball goes out of play or a goal is scored. When this happens, the players on the field quickly get back into their original lines, keepers stay on, and the assistant coach kicks the next ball in for the next 4 players. The coach should play the ball toward one of the corner lines (risk/safety management).



Coaching Points:

- Reinforce coaching points listed in Activity #1
- Want players to get a lot of shots off with all parts of the foot
- Look to attack goal quickly and not wait for defending team to set up

3) 3v3 or 4v4 plus team on deck (20 minutes):

On a small field, 25 yards x 40 yards, place two full size goals, with goalkeepers, at each end. Teams of three play games. If a team is scored against they must leave the field and are replaced by the team that was on deck. This teaches teams to go to goal with pace and to take chances quickly.

Coaching Points:

- Reinforce the coaching points listed in activity #1 and #2
- Highlights shooting opportunities over and over
- Don't have to be in and behind defender to get shot off
- Encourage players to see goal quickly, because if they take too much time to set up, their opportunity to get a shot off will be gone

5) 6v6 Scrimmage (25 minutes):

Depending upon numbers, space will change. Ideally, finish with the number you normally play with in games. Play a regular game with goalkeepers.

Coaching Points:

- Highlight the technique of shooting (inside, outside, instep)
- Reinforce positive decision making opportunities (recognizing opportunities of when, how and where to shoot the ball, etc.).

6) Cool-down (10 minutes):

Groups of 3. One player is the server and has the ball in their hands and the other two are ready to juggle. Server says 2 and 2 which means the server tosses the ball to the first player who has to juggle the ball two times before getting it to the next player who has to juggle the ball twice and get it back to the server (ball should not touch the ground). Server can change numbers of juggles to 1 and 1, 1 and 5, 3 and 4, 4 and 2, etc.



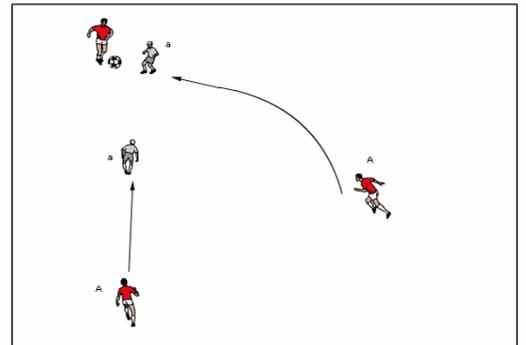
Zonal Defending

by Tom Goodman, M.Ed.
MYSA Assistant Director of Coaching

Objective/Explanation: To provide a training environment that will foster a flatter, zone-like defense, especially in the back 1/3. Zonal defending requires focus, discipline, athleticism and quality defensive technique and decision making. This requires functional training for the individual as well as specific units of players. In these activities, if possible, form teams that include the players that work together as a defensive unit, a midfield unit, etc. As coaches, we must give the defensive side of the game much more of our attention.

1) INTERPASSING IN 3's WITH DEFENSIVE APPROACH

(15 Minutes): Player #1 and Player #2 pass the ball back and forth over a 5-10 yard distance while Player #3 drifts 15-20 yards away from the other two players. After 4-5 passes, Player #1 passes the ball to Player #3. As the ball is traveling to Player #3, Player #2 provides immediate pressure to Player #3 and Player #1 immediately moves into a cover position behind Player #2. Player #3 can either try to dribble past Player #2 or player #3 can try to split the two players with a pass. The warm-up activity then continues with Player #2 and Player #3 passing while Player #1 drifts away, etc.

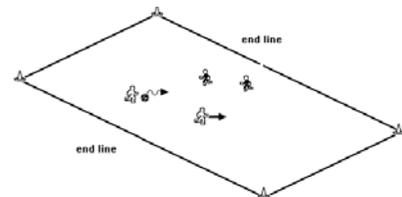


Coaching Points:

- The 1st defender needs to “approach fast, arrive slow”, bend run, have correct stance: be on their toes, with knees bent, one foot forward, one back. The 1st defender “affects” the ball...gets the head of the 1st attacker down by getting close to the 1st attacker, approximately arm’s length
- The 2nd defender needs to be at approximately a 30 degree backward angle to the 1st defender on the side that the first defender is showing the 1st attacker; cannot be too far back or too close to 1st defender. If the first defender is tighter to the ball, the 2nd defender provides closer cover. If the 1st defender is looser to the ball, the 2nd defender is more detached from the 1st defender.
- The 2nd defender communicates where to steer the ball; tells 1st defender which way to push the attacker.

2) 2 v 2 TO END LINES (20 Minutes):

15yd x 20yd grid. (Grid is wider than it is long) This is a 2v2 game. A point is awarded when a team dribbles over the opposite 20 yard end line.



Coaching Points:

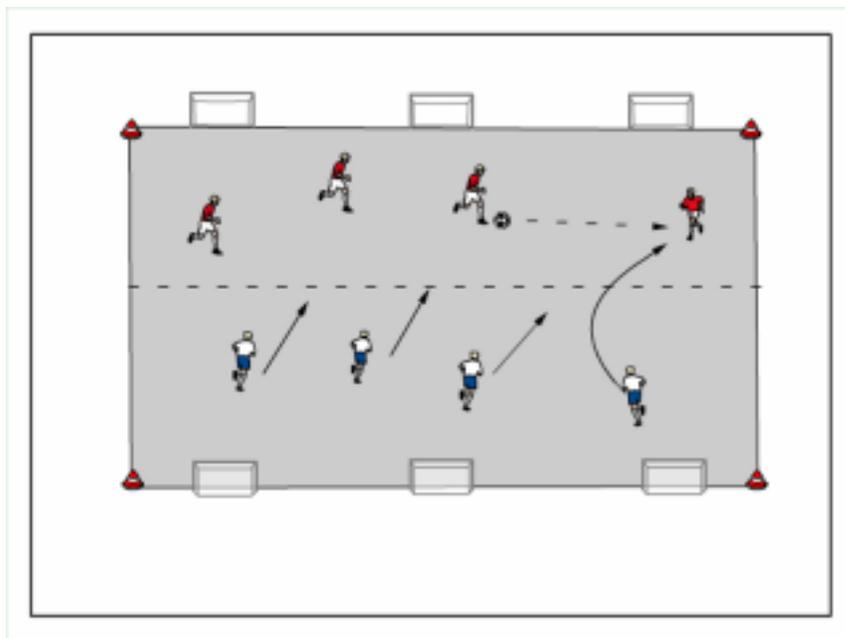
- Reinforce 1st and 2nd defender responsibilities as the 2v2 game proceeds. It is crucial that Pressure and Cover, the relationship and connection between the 1st and 2nd defenders, is given plenty of time and repetition.
- Defensive decisions to pressure or cover must be anticipated and made as the ball is traveling (as the attacking players are playing the ball).
- Knowing when to pressure or cover is crucial to winning the ball back. Verbal and visual communication between the 1st and 2nd defenders is imperative!



3) 4 v 4 SIX GOAL GAME (20 minutes): 30yd x 45yd grid. (Field is wider than it is long) The midfield line is the restraining line (offsides line). Simply a 4v4 game. Each team of 4 attempts to score in one of the 3 goals opposite them. Work with one of the teams to help them maintain the flat shape of the defending action.

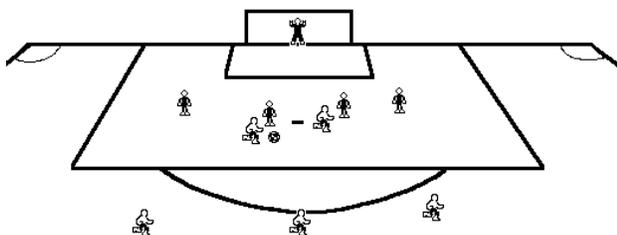
Coaching Points:

- There must always be pressure on the ball. There may be one or two 2nd defenders depending on where the ball and supporting attack players are located.
- 3rd defender play/positioning is now crucial to the defensive success. The 3rd defender must provide balance to the defensive action by being in a position that is not too deep (somewhat flat in relation to the 2nd defender(s)) and not too detached. The 3rd defender works on squeezing space centrally.
- Changing roles quickly as the ball moves is vital to the success of the flat defense. It takes discipline, fitness and tactical speed.



4) 5 v 4 + GKPR (20 minutes): 1/2 field to one goal and 2 counter goals or targets. Defend the goal with the purpose to counter attack. Keeper takes on sweeper role behind the flat back four (4).

Coaching Points: reinforce coaching points made throughout the training session. The coaching points made in these more realistic game-like environments will be more beneficial to the players and will transfer to the game.



5) Match...7v7, 8v8 or 9v9 (30 minutes):

Coaching Points: reinforce coaching points made throughout the training session. The coaching points made in these more realistic game-like environments will be more beneficial to the players and will transfer to the game.

6) Cool-down (5-10 minutes):

Individual juggling; challenge players to see who can juggle the most in a 2 minute period.

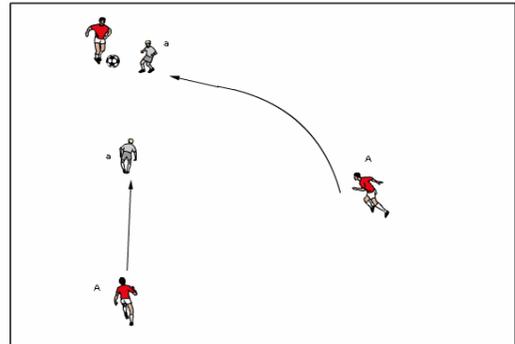


Defending (Zonal)

by Arthur Dimitrakopoulos, MYSA Staff Coach

OBJECTIVE: Defending individually and as a group. Players must know the technical, tactical, physical and mental components of defending as individuals, in small units and as a team. This session can be used for players from U12 and older. The older and/or better ability of players the more demands we place on them.

1) Warm-up (15-20 minutes including dynamic stretching): In three's, pass the ball back and forth one or two touches from about 7-10 yards apart. When any of the three players stops the ball with the bottom of their foot (or at the coach's command), the partners respond by 1st player making a bending run and closing down the player on the ball as the 1st defender would and the other player reacts as the 2nd defender and covers the space behind 1st defender. After arriving, the defender backs off, and the exercise continues.

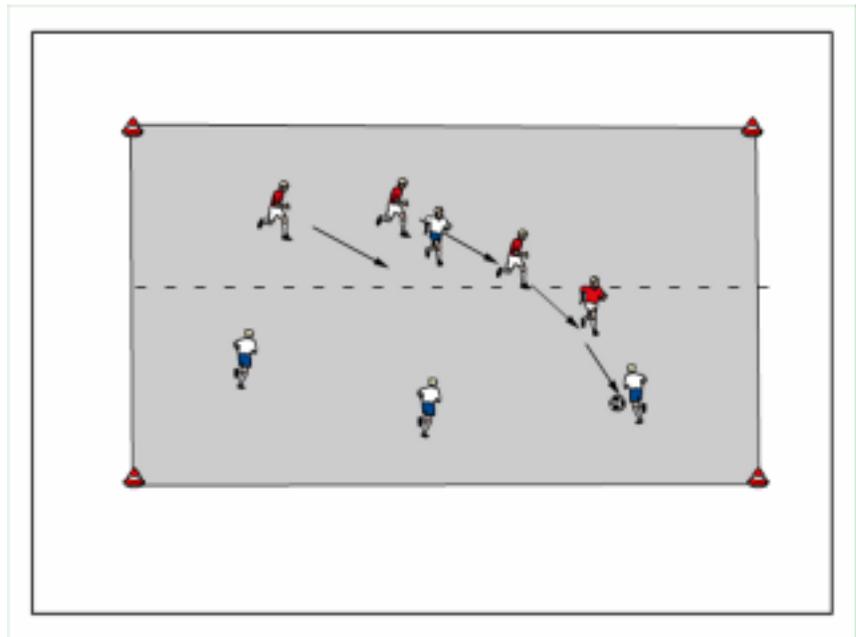


Coaching Points:

- The 1st defender needs to “approach fast, arrive slow”, bend run, have correct stance: be on their toes, with knees bent, one foot forward, one back. The 1st defender “affects” the ball...gets the head of the 1st attacker down by getting close to the 1st attacker, approximately arm's length
- The 2nd defender needs to be at approximately a 30 degree backward angle to the 1st defender on the side that the first defender is showing the ball towards; cannot be too far back or too close to 1st defender
- The 2nd defender tells 1st defender which way to push attacker
- Communication/decision; who's the 1st or 2nd defender and why

2) 4 v 4 to Lines (15-20 minutes):

Field is divided in half by discs; size of the field depends on players' age, ability and training objectives. Offsides begin at midfield. One team defends and attacks the long side of an end line. Teams score by dribbling ball under control over the end line.



Coaching Points:

- Deny penetration with a dribble
- Immediate chase/pressure – The moment possession is lost the nearest player(s) try to regain possession or apply pressure on the ball
- Delay – The pressuring defender(s) forcing the attacking team to take time organizing its attack so defenders have time to form a collective defending action behind the ball
- Cover – While the ball is being pressured all other players should be recovering into defensive positions. The positions taken should support the pressuring defender in the event he is beaten
- Balance – As the team concentrates their defense in the area of the ball, defenders away from the ball (opposite side of field) must position themselves to cover vital spaces (central areas) in order to prevent attackers from making penetrating runs into these spaces in which to receive the ball

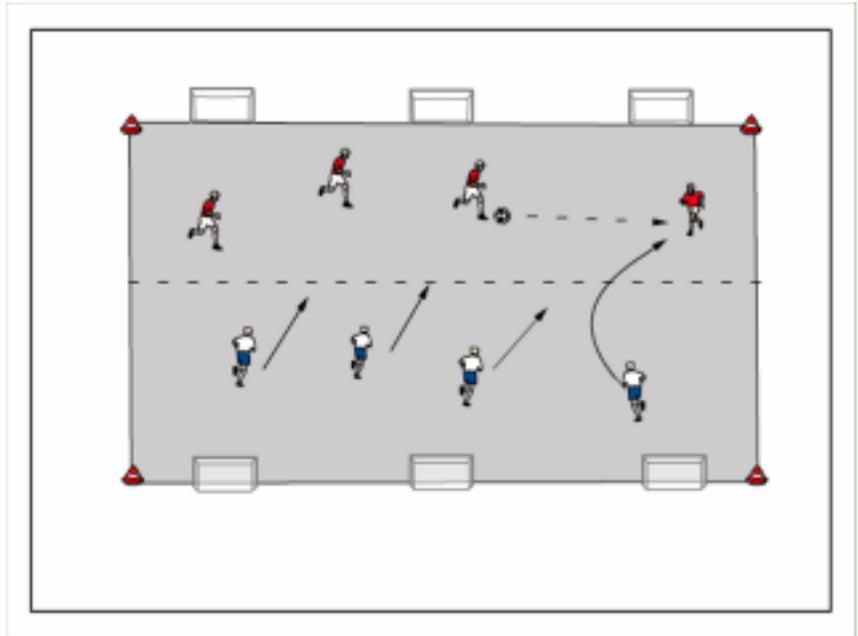


3) 4 v 4 to Six Goals (15-20 minutes):

Same as game #1 but now each team defends and attacks three goals.

Coaching Points:

- Same as above and also; sliding together or moving as a block. When and how much space to squeeze; any pass by attacking team side ways (square) we squeeze or close down a little space; any pass or dribble backwards by the attacking team, the defending team pushes up and closes a lot more space. *Caution:* How much space to squeeze will depend on how much pressure is applied to the 1st attacker (player with the ball). If not enough pressure is applied, defending team can be beaten with a long ball over the heads or a through ball.



4) THE GAME - Game to two Goals with GKPR's (25-30 minutes):

Play – 7 v 7 or 8 v 8 or 11 v 11 including Goalkeepers. Use a system of play that has 3 or 4 backs. Shown here is a 4-4-2 system.

Coaching Points:

- Communication – Visual and verbal. Players must communicate their attentions and responsibilities clearly and precisely through verbal and visual cues
- Defending relative to match situation - Time, score, etc. How much time is left in the game and what is the score? Do we defend more cautiously to preserve the win or just keep playing the same way?



Reminder: Goalkeeper plays a very important role in zonal defending. He or she must come off their line and act as a sweeper as soon as the defenders push up and squeeze space. Be ready to clean up any balls played over or through the defenders.

COOL- DOWN (10 minutes): Juggling in 2's and 3's. Static stretching of the major muscle groups..



Penetration Session (dribbling, passing & shooting)

by Laura Ray, Mass Youth Soccer Development Coach

Objectives: To help players recognize when to penetrate by dribbling, passing and/or shooting.

1) Gates (15 to 20 minutes):

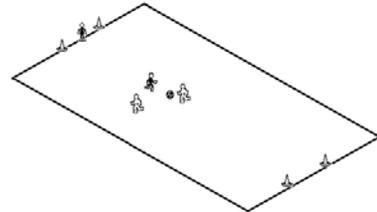
Randomly place many pairs of cones making small goals (1yd) in a large space (30 x 20 yds) and have players dribble their balls through the goals for a point. Players try to accumulate as many points as possible. Have players count up their total points in the time you provide them. After doing once, ask them to improve their score by 2 and play the game again. Challenge each player individually (can ask for right foot only, left foot only). *Version 2:* Can now ask players to partner up and pass through as many gates as they can. *Version 3:* Add defenders.

Coaching Points:

- Reinforce dribbling technique – all parts of foot / keep ball close / on toes / push vs. kick
- Reinforce passing technique – inside of the foot - ankle locked / toe up-heel down / hit middle part of inside of foot / follow through-land on kicking foot / plant foot next to ball and facing where you want the ball to go // outside of the foot – ankle locked / front part on the outside part of foot (not toe and not middle of outside)
- Reinforce shooting technique – ankle of shooting foot locked with toe pointed down (instep)/ plant foot next to the ball / land on kicking foot / head down / lean over ball as you kick / strike through the middle of the ball (encourage players to always keep ball low when using the laces for this activity)

2) 2v1+1 to goal (15-20 minutes):

In a 12x17 yard grid add two 3 yard goals on each 12-yard side. The attacking team looks to combine (over-lap, take-over or wall pass) or attack on the dribble or shoot (knee height or below). The defending team must have one player in the goal and one on the field. The goalkeeper must stay in the goal until the attacking team loses the ball, then the player that was in the goal can come out to attack (while the team that just lost possession must send one player back to play in goal).

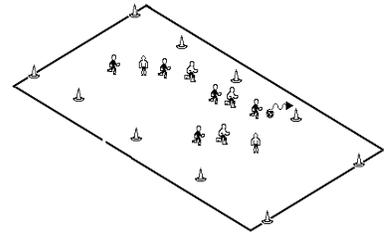


Coaching Points:

- Reinforce the coaching points listed in activity #1 and #2
- Visual cues should determine how the attacking players penetrate into the space behind the opponent...dribble, pass or shoot
- To combine, make defender commit to person with the ball; selection of appropriate combination (wall-pass, take-over, run-around or double pass) is based on the visual cues
- Explode into space on the dribble if defender doesn't commit
- Encourage finding the goal as quickly as possible (whether attacking on the dribble, combining with teammate, or getting a quick shot off)

3) 4v4 to 6v6 to end zones (15 minutes):

Set up a 30 yd x 40 yd field with endzones behind the 40 yd lines. Teams comprised of 4-6 players depending on numbers and space. The attacking team may dribble into the endzone or combine with a wall pass, take-over or over-lap to get into the end zone (marked with discs). Add a “plus” player who always plays for the attacking team if they can’t keep possession long enough to create a combination or opportunity to score on the dribble. Also, coach can give more points to encourage more dribbling if necessary or more points for passing if necessary. *Variation 2:* Coach can limit touches-3 touch, 2 touch, 1 touch.



Coaching Points:

- Reinforce the coaching points listed in activity #1 and #2

4) 6v6 to 8v8 Scrimmage (25-30 minutes):

Depending upon numbers, space will change. Ideally, finish with the number you normally play with in games. Play a regular game with goalkeepers.

Coaching Points:

- Stress that the first look is always to penetrate
- Should the player with the ball penetrate on the dribble, with a pass or a shot?
- Positively reinforce decisions to penetrate...especially to shoot!

5) Cool-down (10 minutes):

Groups of 5 Relay Heading Challenge. One player stands on the line with the ball in their hands (server); the other 4 players positioned directly across from them (about 3-5 yards away), one behind the other. The server tosses the ball to the first person in line. The first person in line heads the ball back to the server, then goes down on one knee. The server then tries to head it back to the second person in line, who heads it back, goes down on one knee, etc. Give the server multiple chances to get the ball all the way down the line. Switch up players to ensure everyone gets a chance to be the server. Finish cool-down with static stretching of major muscle groups.



Possession

(In larger groups/open spaces)

by Arthur Dimitrakopoulos, MYSA Staff Coach

OBJECTIVE: Possession with a purpose. Soccer is a multi-directional game and players must know how and where to possess the ball and recognize when opportunities open up for attacking. The session can be used for players from U12 and older. The older and/or better ability of players the more demands we place on them.

Warm-up (15-20 minutes including stretching): Split players evenly into three colors. Open space. Start with half the players with a ball and the other half without a ball. The ball and player do not stop moving. If you have a ball, find someone without a ball to pass to (colors do not matter, passes can go to any color). Make it challenging by placing conditions on the players: **1.** Perform a move after receiving a pass. **2.** Take a long first touch into space and away from traffic. **3.** Sprint 2-3 steps in any direction with the ball after receiving a pass. **4.** Turn with the ball in the opposite direction from where the ball came from.

Coaching Points:

- Don't be in a hurry to pass it, make sure the pass is on
- Communication: Verbal, visual, always thinking
- Direction of the pass - non-kicking foot: knee slightly bent with foot next to the ball and toe pointing at target
- Passing foot: ankle locked (stiff) with heel to the ground and toe to the sky, strike the upper middle part of the ball with the inside of foot for short to medium long passes. For longer passes use laces with toe pointing to the ground
- Which foot and what surface of your foot are you receiving the ball with and which way are you turning? And why?
- Receiving foot: cushion the impact of the ball and re-direct it; do not stop it

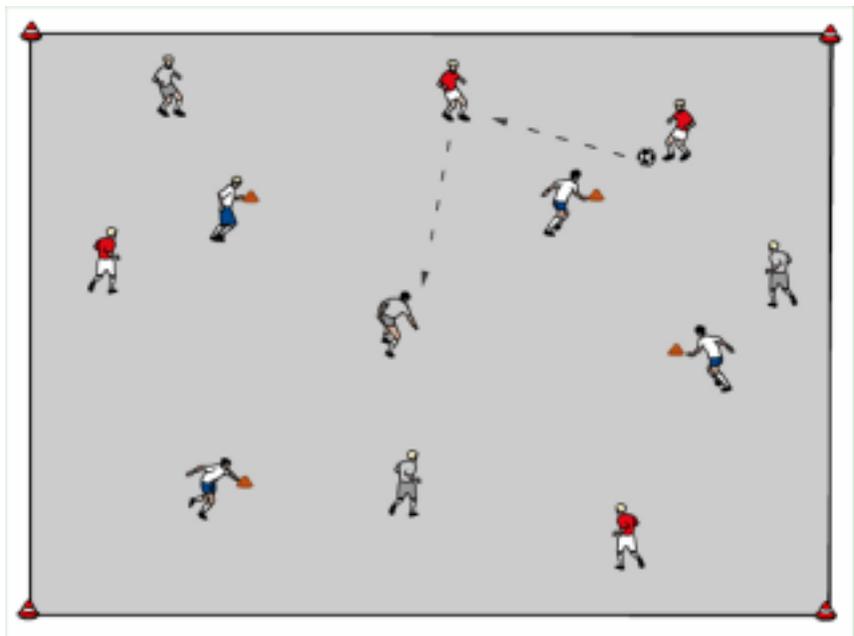
GAME #1 - 4 v 4 v 4 (15-20 minutes):

40 x 40 yard grid. Split team in 3 colors. Two colors keep the ball away from the other color. Defending team must (all players) pick-up and hold a disk before they CAN start defending. When defending team wins the ball they drop discs and the new defending team (the team that lost possession) pick up the discs and start defending. This causes defending team to communicate and players in possession time to organize. Each player on the two teams in possession has a maximum of three touches on the ball.

Variations: (3v3v3, 5v5v5, 6v6v6)

Coaching Points:

- Stress on the quality of the first touch (which surface of which foot, which direction and why) and the quality of the pass.
- Stress communication and organization.





GAME #2: 4 v 4 v 4 (15-20 minutes):

Same as the previous game but now the field is divided into four quarters. Defending team does not have to hold discs. Players have unlimited touches on the ball BUT have 3 PASS limit in each quarter or the ball goes the defending team.

Variations: (3v3v3, 5v5v5, 6v6v6)

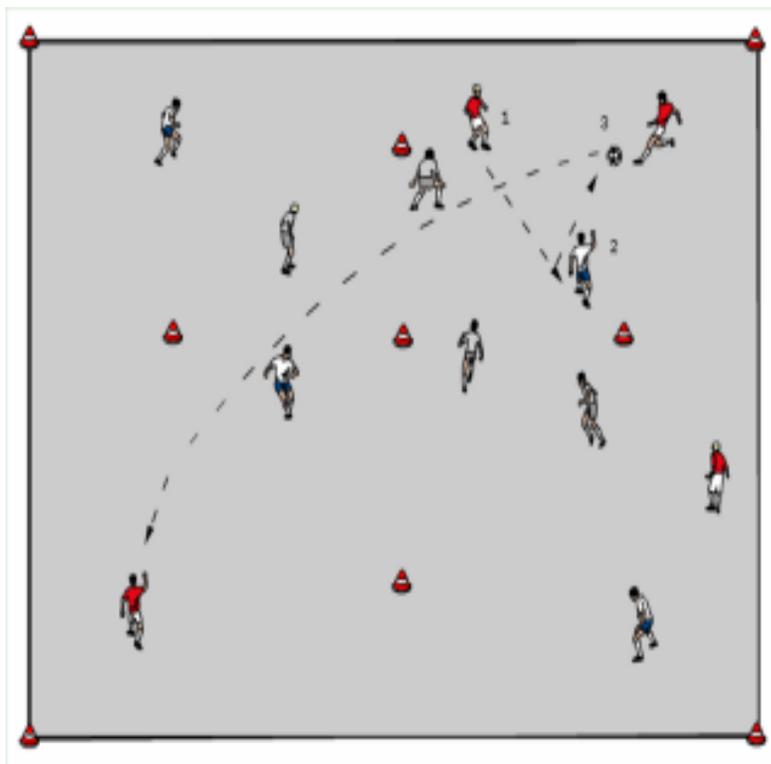
Coaching Points:

- All of the above points, plus speed of play, stretching the field north-south and east-west.
- Are the supporting players offering options close and far from the ball?

GAME # 3: 4 v 4 v 4 (15-20 minutes):

Same as the previous game but now we play with no restrictions.

Variations: (3v3v3, 5v5v5, 6v6v6)

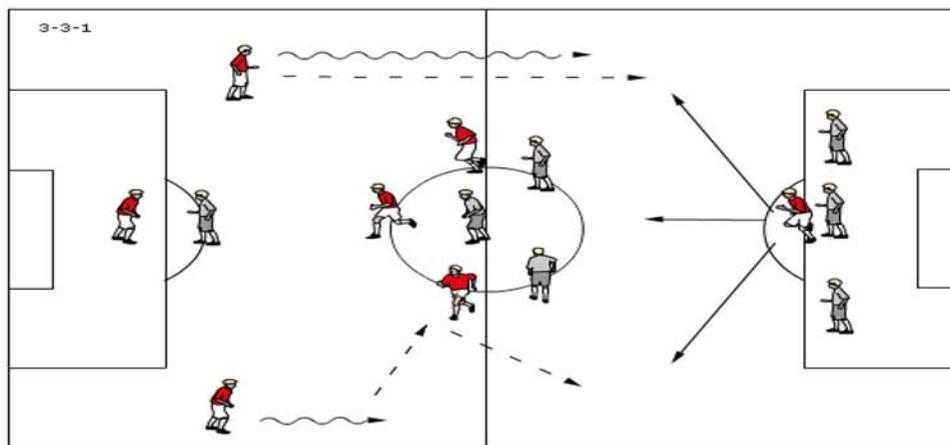


THE GAME: Game to two goals with GKs (25-30 minutes):

Play - 6 v 6 or 8 v 8 or 11 v 11 with GKPR's. We always try to finish with a free scrimmage as close to the numbers per team that we play in our league games. A is 3-3-1 formation is shown below.

Coaching Points:

- Are players recognizing when to keep the ball and when to attack?
- Are they switching the point of attack to unbalance defending team and create scoring opportunities?



COOL- DOWN (10 minutes): in 3's, one and two touch point passing. A passes to B, B back to A, then A passes C, C back to A. A is the point person. After 2 minutes, change the point person. Include static stretching of the large muscle groups.

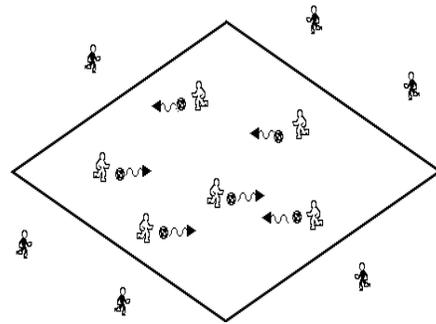


Possession

by Tom Goodman, M.Ed
MYSA Assistant Director of Coaching

Objective/Purpose: Possession is the ability to keep the ball individually and collectively in small groups and as a team. The technical aspects of passing and receiving and the tactical aspects of movement and shape are key to our player's success. The possession play of younger players tends to be slow, thus the numbers must be small so that the players can achieve success through multiple repetitions in a less cluttered playing environment. As players get older, play speeds up and they can handle activities with larger numbers.

1) **Inside-Outside (15-20minutes):** One (1) soccer ball per two (2) players. Separate players into two (2) groups. One group of players, without soccer balls, forms a 30 yd x 30 yd grid. These players are the outside players (Outsiders). The other group of players, equipped with balls at their feet, position themselves inside the circle. The players inside the circle (Insiders) dribble about the grid freely looking for an opportunity to pass the ball to a player on the perimeter of the circle (Outsiders). The Outsiders must one (1) or two (2) touch the ball back to the Insider. The Insider then controls the ball and looks for another Outsider to pass to. After approximately two (2) minutes, the Insiders become Outsiders and vice versa.



Variation: The Outsiders start with the ball in their hands. The Insiders move around freely inside the circle without a ball. The Insiders call for a ball from one of the Outsiders. The Outsider serves a ball (on the ground or in the air) to the Insider, who must one (1) or two (2) touch the ball back to the Outsider (server).

Coaching Points:

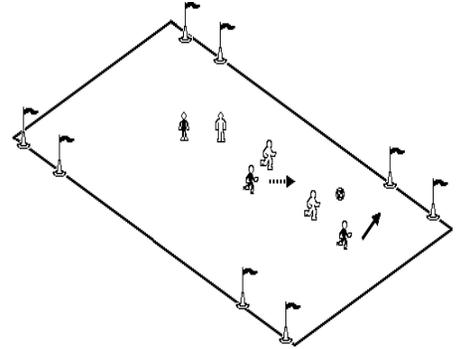
Technical... Proper receiving technique: good body balance, eyes on ball, body in-line with the path of the ball, movement to ball, appropriate touch on ball (cushion or propel). Proper passing technique: good body balance, placement of non-kicking foot, foot surface, ball surface, eyes on ball when striking, appropriate pace (weight). Tactical...Surveying the area, intelligent movement, looking for target early, anticipation, keeping good body shape, head up, preparing to receive the ball, preparing to pass the ball.

2) **3v3 or 4v4 Gate Game (20 minutes):** One ball. In an open area set up 10 gates (2 cones about 3 yards apart) at many different angles about 10-15 yards apart all over the field space. Organize players into 2 teams. Play keep-away in the field space. Points are awarded each time a team can pass the ball through any gate to a teammate and keep possession. The game is continuous constantly looking for another gate to attack. When the defending team wins possession of the ball they are on the attack. Play games to 5 points or for a certain time period (i.e. 5-10 minutes). **Variation 1:** Add more players to each team. As you add more players to the group, increase the playing space, add more gates and position the gates farther apart. **Variation 2:** Add a second ball if not enough success.

Coaching Points: Fun, passing and dribbling, changing direction, simple decision making (which gate to go through next), timing (when and how hard should I pass the ball to my teammate), anticipation (can I pass my ball through that gate before it is defended).



4) 3v3 or 4v4 To Four Small Goals (20 minutes) - In a grid 30yds x 35yds with small goals near each corner. Teams of three or four attack two goals and defend two goals. The goals are set up along the 35yd lines for extra width in the attack. Each team attacks the two goals opposite them and defends the two goals behind them. The goals are three feet wide and are placed near each corner. With three players, the attacking team should create a triangular shape. With four players, the attacking team should create a rectangular (diamond) shape.



Coaching points: Reinforce the roles & responsibilities of the 1st attacker (ball), 2nd attacker (support) and 3rd attacker (length or width) within the game. Especially, their responsibilities in keeping possession for their team (combination play) and penetrating into dangerous space behind the defense.

5) 6v6 to 8v8 Game (25 minutes) - Play the larger game. If playing 6v6, the field size should be approximately 45 x 60 yards. If playing 8v8, the field size should be approximately 55 x 80 yards. Encourage your goalkeeper to communicate to the team regarding keeping possession for the team. Emphasize the coaching considerations made throughout the training session. ***Stay on topic.***

6) Cool Down (10 minutes) – Controlled juggling (thigh-thigh-foot-foot). Statically stretch the large muscle groups.



Penetration Session #2 (dribbling, passing, and/or shooting)

by Laura Ray, Mass Youth Soccer Development Coach

Objectives: To help players recognize when to penetrate by dribbling, passing and/or shooting.

1) Colors Warm-Up (15 to 20 minutes):

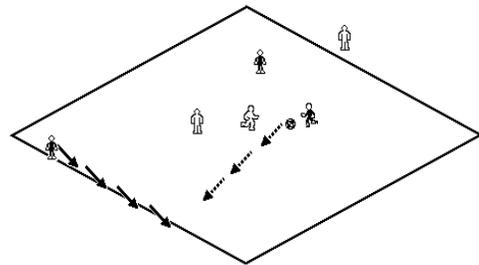
Half of the players in red pennies, half in blue. Teams playing together in a 40 x 30 yard grid passing in the sequence: blue-blue-red-red-blue-blue-red-red etc. etc. The ball can never stop moving, the players can never stop moving, and the ball cannot leave the grid. Coach can limit touch, mandate which foot to pass with or which part of foot to pass with. When players can do first sequence adequately and without frequent errors, change the sequence to blue-blue-blue-red-red-red-blue-blue-blue etc. etc. Stress communication and technical passing points throughout.

Coaching Points:

- Reinforce dribbling technique – all parts of foot / keep ball close / on toes / push vs. kick
- Reinforce passing technique – inside of the foot - ankle locked / toe up-heel down / hit middle part of inside of foot / follow through-land on kicking foot / plant foot next to ball and facing where you want the ball to go // outside of the foot – ankle locked / front part on the outside part of foot
- Reinforce shooting technique – ankle of shooting foot locked with toe pointed down / plant foot next to the ball / land on kicking foot / head down / lean over ball as you kick / strike through the middle of the ball (encourage players to always keep ball low when using the laces for this activity)

2) 2v2+2 (15 to 20 minutes):

In a 20x20 yard grid, two teams look to play to a target player on opposite sides of the grid. If they play to the target and receive the ball back, they look to switch directions and play to the other target player. If they just play to one target it counts as 1 point. If they play to two consecutive targets without losing possession it counts as 3 points. Target players must constantly move along their line to show for the ball. Every three minutes matches and then rotate the players.

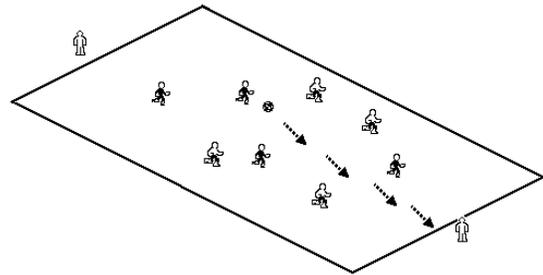


Coaching Points:

- Reinforce the coaching points listed in activity #1
- Get player with the ball to penetrate on the dribble or the pass to the target player on the outside as quickly as possible by checking to ball, checking over shoulder, opening hips up to the field, making sure both players do not check into the same space
- To combine, make defender commit to person with the ball
- Explode into space on the dribble if defender doesn't commit

3) **4v4 + 2 Targets (15-20 minutes):**

In a 50x40 yard grid, 4 red versus 4 yellow with Targets on opposite end lines. In order to get a point, team must find the Target, look to get the ball back (either the same player who played the ball to the Target or another player moving off the ball) and then dribble across end line. *Version 2:* Team must look to find a Target, get the ball back and attack the opposite end and try to get the ball to the other target. Two points if a player finds the Target in one long penetrating pass and one point if a player finds the Target through shorter combinations. *Version 3:* If a player finds the Target, someone other than the original passer must get the ball back and maintain possession of it. Important: Want players to capitalize on finding target and maintaining possession.



Coaching Points:

- Reinforce the coaching points listed in activity #1 and #2 and #3
- Encourage finding the end line/target as quickly as possible (whether attacking on the dribble or combining with teammate)

4) **6v6 to 8v8 Scrimmage (25-30 minutes):**

Depending upon numbers, space will change. Ideally, finish with the number you normally play with in games. Play a regular game with goalkeepers.

Coaching Points:

- Stress first look is always to penetrate
- The decision becomes...can the player with the ball penetrate on the dribble, with a pass or a shot?
- Reinforce positive decision making opportunities (seeing space to dribble for self, finding the best penetrating pass forward, or taking a shot for self, etc.).

5) **Cool-down (10 minutes):**

Groups of 5 heading challenge. One player in the middle, four players circle around them. Player in the middle tosses ball to player on the outside who heads in back to player in the middle. Player in the middle then heads to next player on the outside, who then heads it back to player in the middle and so on. Give player in the middle multiple chances to get the ball all the way around the circle, and then switch up players to ensure everyone gets a chance to be the middle player. Finish cool-down with static stretching of major muscle groups.



Attacking Shape

by Tom Goodman, MYSA Director of Training & Evaluation

Objectives: To help our players to understand the importance of individual, group and team shape when their team is in possession of the ball. A players shape and how it is coordinated with teammates in the area around the ball, as well as teammates away from the ball, is crucial to the attacking success of the team.

1) Interpassing in 4's or 5's (10-15 minutes): Players are in color-code groups of 4 (4 blue, 4 red, etc.). Each group has one ball. Each group passes and moves in free space, playing through the other groups. The purpose of this warm-up activity is to clean up the mechanics of passing and receiving, increase the players' technical speed and develop basic individual and small group shape.

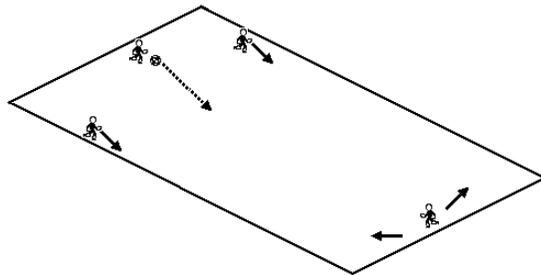
Coaching Points:

- Survey the playing area at all times so that you can anticipate what to do next with and without the ball.
- Keep body open to as much of the field as possible based on where you are on the field.
- Take first touch toward a passing option.
- Strike ball with proper weight and proper surface.

2) 4 v 0 or 5 v 0 Pattern Play (15 minutes) In a 30yd x 40yd grid, one of the 4 or 5 player groups moves the ball from one end of the grid to the other. In this activity, the point is to move the ball effectively and quickly, while the players maintain their positions and a "kite-type" shape. The idea is to have 2 wide players supporting the player with the ball and one high player for a long pass option. The players in the area around the ball make 4-5 passes before looking long to the high option. Once the ball is played to the high option, the 2 wide players move to support the ball at the other end of the grid.

Coaching Points:

- Develop & keep individual and group shape
- Develop rhythm of play
- Increase speed of play
- Recognize visual cues such as body shape of teammates, supporting positions, high option "ON"



3) (4 v 0) + (4 v 0) (15 minutes): Two groups of 4, with 1 ball per group, play through each other in the same 30yd x 40yd grid. Each group simply focuses on their ball, their individual & small group shape and their speed of play. Neither group attempts to disrupt the other.

Coaching Points:

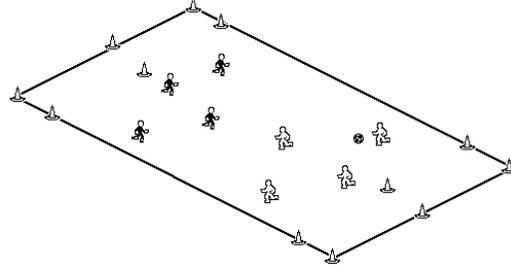
- Develop & keep individual and group shape
- Develop rhythm of play in traffic
- Increase speed of play in traffic
- Recognize visual cues such as body shape of teammates, supporting positions and high option with the added pressure of more players on the field



4) 4v4 or 5v5 to Zones (15 minutes): In the same 30yd x 40yd grid, add 30yd x 5yd end zones at each end. Play a 4v4 or 5v5 game to end zones. Each team defends one end zone and attacks the other end zone. If a team successfully plays a ball into the end zone opposite them to a teammate, they receive one point (the player must arrive in the end zone as the ball arrives...NO attacking player is allowed to “hang out” in the end zone). The defending team can only defend in front of their end zone...they cannot enter the end zone that they are defending.

Coaching Points:

Constantly survey the playing area
Develop & keep individual and group shape under the pressures of a game
Develop rhythm of play based on what the game presents...increase speed of play at the right time



5) 6v6 to 8v8 Game (25 minutes) - Play the larger game. If playing 6v6, the field size should be approximately 45 x 60 yards. If playing 8v8, the field size should be approximately 55 x 80 yards. Encourage your goalkeeper to communicate to the team regarding team shape. Emphasize the coaching considerations made throughout the training session. *Stay on topic.*

6) Cool Down (10 minutes) – Controlled juggling (thigh-thigh-foot-foot). Statically stretch the large muscle groups.



Combination Play (2 players combining)

by Laura Ray, Mass Youth Soccer Development Coach

Objectives: To help players to recognize when to combine with teammates and what combination is appropriate (wall-pass, overlap and take-over) considering the changing conditions of the game.

Coaching Points:

Wall pass:

- First attacker runs right at the defender with the ball
- The second attacker sets up level with or slightly ahead of the defender, turned sideways, shoulders pointed to the goals
- When the first attacker is close to-but still out of tackling range of-the defender, he/she must read cues from the defender
- If the defender is jockeying between the two attackers and obviously playing the pass, the first attacker must simply dribble past the defender with speed
- If the defender is attending more to the first attacker, then the first attacker should pass the ball to the wall player's (2nd attacker) front foot
- The 2nd attacker plays the ball with one touch into the space behind the defender and into the running path of the first attacker
- The 1st attacker sprints to receive the ball preferably in the natural flow of her run.

Overlap:

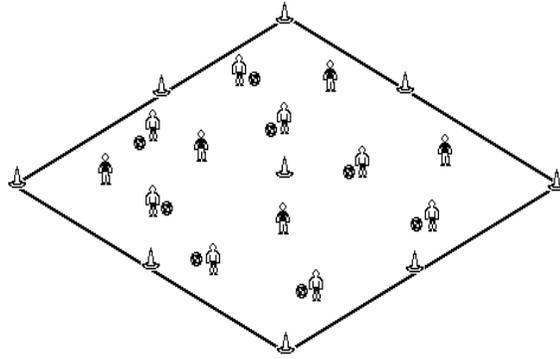
- The 1st attacker runs right at the defender (option 1) or the first attacker plays the ball to the second attacker who dribbles in a direction away from the overlapping space (option 2)
- If the defender shifts over to pick up the 2nd attacker in option 1, the 1st attacker can dribble by the defender. If not, the second attacker's run must be around either shoulder of the first attacker at full speed. After drawing the defender toward the ball (and away from the space intended for the overlapping run), the first attacker may play the ball into the running path of the second attacker
- In option 2, the second attacker dribbles to create overlapping space and the first attacker then becomes the player who overlaps. The ball is played into the running path of the first attacker

Takeover:

- The 2nd attacker runs directly at the 1st attacker from the opposite direction
- The 1st attacker protects the ball from the defender by keeping it on the foot furthest from the defender so that his body is in between the defender and the ball
- If the takeover is on (if the defender does not step into path of second attacker), the first attacker leaves the ball for the second attacker and the second attacker takes the ball using the same foot as the first attacker (right foot to right foot, left to left!)
- Depending on your preference as a coach you may have the first or the second attacker dictate this exchange with simple communication
- If the defender slows down to "pick-up" the 2nd attacker, 1st attacker can call his or her name and continue to dribble.

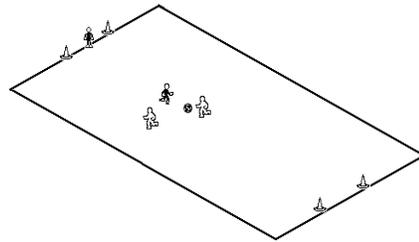
1) Combination Square (15 to 20 minutes):

Make a grid about 30yds x 30yds and break it into quarters. Place 4 or 5 players in vests and have them roam around the entire grid in order to give support to the other players. Players in vests do not have soccer balls, while all other players do. Players with soccer balls look to dribble around the grid and try to connect with the vested players to perform wall-passes. However, in order for this to happen the player on the ball must pass to a vested player in a different quarter than him and the pass back from the vested player must go into a quarter that neither he nor the player who passed the ball is in. The player initiating the wall pass needs to play a firm pass, sprint to an open space in a different quarter, receive the return pass, and look for another player to combine with. The vested player must show themselves to others constantly in order to give support and look to play balls to the front foot of the runner.



2) 2v1+1 to goal (15-20 minutes):

In a 12x17 yard grid add two 3 yard goals on each 12-yard side. If the attacking team combines before they score, they are awarded 2 points. If they don't combine and score, it is worth 1 point. The defending team must have one player in the goal and one on the field. The goalkeeper must stay in the goal until the attacking team loses the ball. (14 minutes)

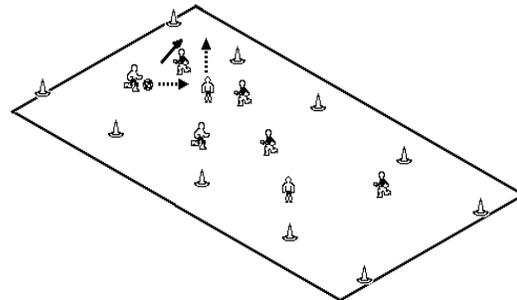


Coaching Points:

- Reinforce the coaching points listed in activity #1
- Help players recognize when to combine and when to fake the combination to beat the defender
- Assist players in seeing that, when they combine, their ultimate goal is to get their pass in and behind the defender (vs. in front of them).

3) 4v4 to end zones (15 minutes to 20 minutes):

In a field space approximately 30 to 35 yards long by 40 to 50 yards wide, teams comprised of 4 players depending on numbers and space (can increase or decrease from 3v3 to 6v6). Teams receive 5 points if they combine with a teammate before successfully entering the opponent's end zone; they receive only one point if they get in without a combination. Add a "plus" player who always plays for the attacking team, **IF** they can't keep possession long enough to create a combination or opportunity to score.

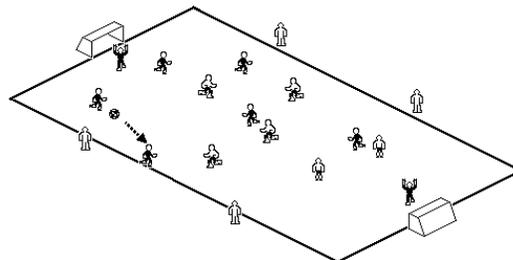


Coaching Points:

- Reinforce the coaching points listed in activity #1 and #2

4) 6v6 plus 4 to Goals (15-20 minutes):

In a field approximately 55 yards long by 40 yards wide, play 6v6 to goals, with goalkeepers, and position 2 neutral players on each sideline (neutral players can move up and down the sidelines). Play a regular game...the 4 neutral players always play with the attacking team (team in possession of the ball). This activity will stimulate combination play.



Coaching Points:

- Reinforce the coaching points listed in activity #1 and #2

5) 8v8 Scrimmage (25-30 minutes):

In a field approximately 75 yards long by 50 yards wide, play a regular game with goalkeepers. Depending upon number of players that you have at training, field size may change. Ideally, finish with the number you normally play with in games.

Coaching Points:

- Reinforce positive decision making opportunities (decision to combine or not, what type of combination, how effective at the time and place on the field, etc.).

6) Cool-down (5-10 minutes):

Individual juggling; challenge the players to see who can juggle the most in a 2 minute period.



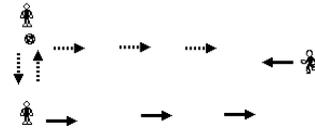
Combination Play (3 or more players combining)

by Laura Ray, Mass Youth Soccer Development Coach

Objectives: To help players to recognize combination play with two to three players, as well as movement off the ball from the 3rd and 4th players.

1) Short-short-long (15 to 20 minutes):

Players pass the ball within their group. Two of the players position themselves about 5-10 yards apart and pass the ball back and forth to each other (short passes), while the third player (long player) drifts about 20-25 yards away. After about 4-5 short passes, the long player calls for the ball. The ball is played into the long player. The player that played the ball into the long player stays home, while the other player joins the long player.



They begin to (short) pass to each other until the new “long” player calls for the ball. The activity continues in this manner for 2-3 minutes to develop a smooth rhythm in the passing sequence. Players consistently keep themselves and the ball moving. (Develop a triangle shape)

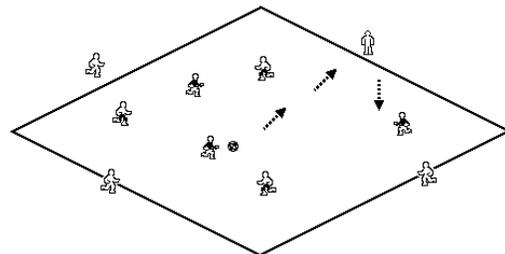
Groups of 4: Same setup as above, but three players make short passes to each other, while one player drifts away. When the ball is played long, the passer stays home and the other two players join the “long” player. (Develop a ‘kite’ type shape)

Coaching Points:

- Intelligent movement off the ball
- Head up, preparing body to receive the ball (ball across body to see all options)
- Surveying the area, looking for target early, anticipation
- Passing accuracy and pace
- Keeping appropriate individual and group shape
- Playing in the direction you are facing

2) 3v3 plus 4 Neutrals (15-20 minutes):

In a grid 35yds x 25yds, three players are in Red and three players are in Yellow on the inside of the grid, with the four neutral players positioned on the four sides (free movement up and down the sidelines). Red team tries to keep possession and can use neutral players on the outside. To get points, the team in possession must find neutral players on outside and neutral player must find that player back or another one on their team to get a point. First team to 10 points wins. Yellow does the same when they have possession of the ball.



Version 2: Neutral player tries to play it back to another player on the team (besides the one who passed it to them) to get a point. Neutral player on outside should not force the ball into a third player, important to keep possession, so can play it back to the person who passed it to them (they just do not get a point, but do maintain possession). **Note:** Must find one Target player to get a point, then to get the next point, must find another target player.

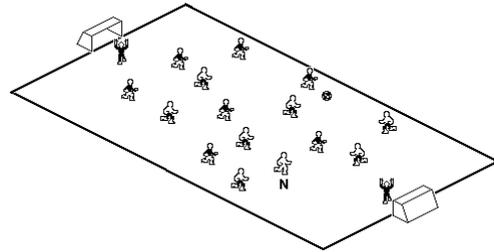


Coaching Points:

- Reinforce the coaching points listed in activity #1
- Looking for timing of runs into receive ball from neutral players
- Communication (asking for ball)
- Inside player receiving ball across body to see all options if possible
- Players reading each other to see who is making the run in to get ball
- Movement of the other two players off the ball

3) 7v7 plus Neutral to Goals with Goalkeepers (15-20 minutes):

In a field approximately 60 yards long by 50 yards wide play 7v7 to big goals, with goalkeepers, and position one neutral player on the field. Play a regular game...the one neutral player always plays with the attacking team (team in possession of the ball). This activity will stimulate combination play and movement off the ball.



Sample Combinations to look for:

1 – (Wall Pass with 3 players) Center midfielder passes to a forward; center midfielder then holds their run. Forward then plays it to an outside midfielder making the overlapping run down the flank.

2 – (Up-Back-Through) A central forward, with back to goal, checks on a slight angle toward the center midfielder. The center midfielder passes to the forward; the forward one touches the ball back to the center midfielder; the center midfielder plays a one touch through ball into the space created by the central forward to a third player.

Coaching Points:

- Reinforce the coaching points listed in activity #1 and #2

4) 8v8 Scrimmage (25-30 minutes):

Depending upon numbers, space will change and numbers may change. Ideally, finish with the number you normally play with in games. Play a regular game with goalkeepers.

Coaching Points:

- Reinforce positive decision making opportunities (decision to combine or not, look for opportunities to play up-back-through & wall pass with 3 players, and when to keep possession vs. long penetrating pass, etc.).

5) Cool-down (5-10 minutes):

Groups of 3: One player is the server and has the ball in their hands and the other two are ready to juggle. Server says 2 and 2 which means the server tosses the ball to the first player who has to juggle the ball two times before getting it to the next player who has to juggle the ball twice and get it back to the server (ball should not touch the ground). Server can change numbers of juggles to 1 and 1, 1 and 5, 3 and 4, 4 and 2, etc.



Attacking Shape ***(Small Groups / Team)***

by Tom Goodman, M.Ed.
MYSA Director of Training and Evaluation

Objective/Purpose: This session will help players to recognize how small group shape and team shape positively impacts the quality of the team's play.

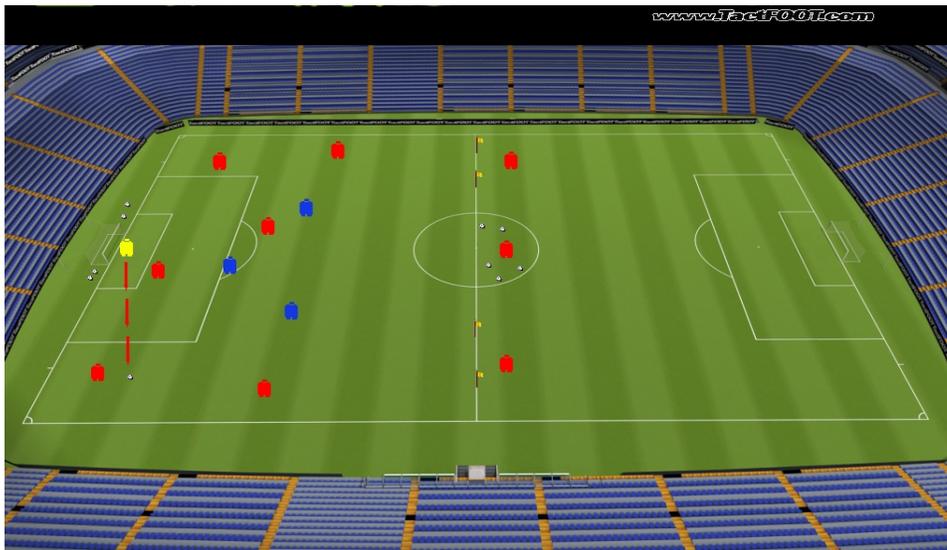
1) Inter-passing in 6+1 goalkeeper (30-40 minutes): On one half of the regulation soccer field, organize one group of players into a formation (3-3 or 4-2) in front of their goal and ask them to pass and move from the goal to the midfield. Make sure the goalkeeper is in the goal so that he/she can be involved in the play. Position extra players as targets past the half line. Begin to develop patterns of play and rhythm of play.

Sample Pattern... Keeper plays ball wide to the outside back; the outside back combines with the central midfielder for a wall pass and by-passing the outside midfielder (overlap); the outside back changes the point of attack to the opposite outside midfielder; outside midfielder plays the ball to one of the targets. When the ball reaches the target player, the goalkeeper, who is focused on play throughout the activity yells, "RECOVER!" alerting all field players to recover defensively with appropriate recovery runs. At this point, one of the target players at midfield serves a long ball into the goalkeeper or penalty area and the pattern play begins again. Complete many repetitions of the same pattern. (Present other patterns of play to the team.)

Version 2: When the coach yells, "PRESSURE!" during the patterned play, the field players must play the ball back one layer (i.e. midfield to backs) and change the point of attack before they can move the ball forward again.

Version 3: Add 3 opponents to the mix to add live pressure. Once the opponents are added, eliminate verbal commands by the coach. The group playing out of the back must now play to **2 counter-attack goals** placed in wide positions at midfield. If they score, have an extra player serve a ball deep into the defensive area of the field to begin play again. If the opponents win the ball, they must attempt to dribble it over the touch line for 1 point or score a goal for 3 points. The attacking team gets 1 point for scoring on one of the 2 counter-attack goals. (See diagram below)

Version 4: Add more opponents to the mix.





Coaching Points:

Clean up technique of passing and receiving. Intelligent movement; head up; preparing to receive the ball, 1st touch to be positive (move forward), if possible, surveying the area, looking for target early; anticipation; passing accuracy and pace; correct positioning relative to their assigned position on the field (right midfielder, central back, etc.); timing, angle and distance of support; keeping appropriate individual and group shape; playing in the direction that you are facing; communication by supporting players (“dribble”, “wide”, “square”, “play it back”, etc.).

2) **7v7 or 8v8 Match (25-30 minutes):** Field size appropriate to age and numbers. (80 yards x 55 yards for an 8v8). Play the game with goalkeepers.

Coaching Points:

Maintain the integrity of group and team attacking shape while playing under the pressure of the Game. Coach their attacking shape as it relates to the thirds or halves of the field. Teach the goalkeeper to coach the team shape from his/her vantage point.

Cool-Down...3-Player Juggling (10 minutes) A can only juggle with his feet, B can only juggle with her thighs and C can only juggle with his head. Each player in the group has a max of 5 consecutive juggles. A, B and C must try to juggle as many times as possible as a group. If they drop the ball, they can start again. After a few minutes, change the juggling surfaces within each group.

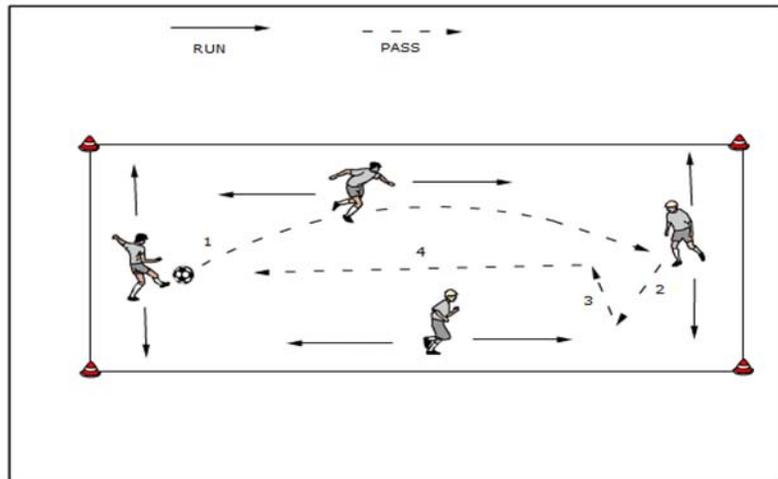


Speed of Play

by Tom Goodman, M.Ed.
MYSA Director of Training and Evaluation

Objective/Purpose: This session will help players to recognize their own shape and the shape of the team as it relates to speed of play (playing the game faster). This takes into account field awareness and vision, as well as physical speed, technical speed and tactical speed.

- 1) **Inter-passing in 4's (15-20 minutes):** Players pass the ball within their group. Three of the players position themselves about 10-15 yards apart, forming a triangle shape (one central player and two outside players). They pass the ball back and forth to each other (short passes), while the fourth player (long player) positions himself/herself centrally about 25-30 yards away. After 4-5 short passes, the long player calls for the ball. The ball is played into the long player. The two outside players move quickly to support the long player, forming the triangle shape at the other end of the grid. The deepest central player stays home. The same passing sequence continues at the opposite end of the grid. The activity continues in this manner for 3-4 minutes to develop a smooth rhythm in the passing sequence. Players consistently keep themselves and the ball moving. **Version 2:** Only 2-3 passes prior to the long pass.



Coaching Points:

Clean up technique of passing and receiving. Intelligent movement, head up, preparing to receive the ball, surveying the area, looking for their target early, anticipation, passing accuracy and pace, keeping appropriate individual and group shape, playing in the direction that you are facing.

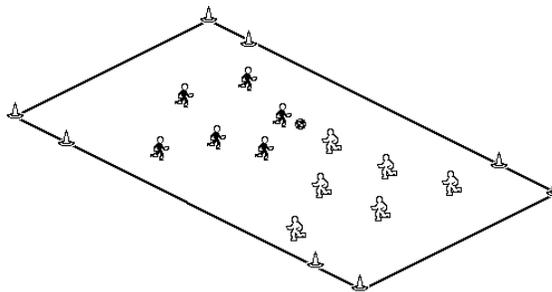
- 2) **4v0 and 4v0 (15-20 minutes):** Same activity as in #1 above, but with two groups of 4 playing on the same field and playing through each other (red and yellow groups). Each group has its own ball and only concentrates on moving up and down the grid possessing their ball **only**. No defending. **Variation:** Add 1 or 2 bandits (in blue) to try to steal the balls.

Coaching Points:

Reinforce coaching points above as they play in traffic. When bandits are added, players must make better and **faster decisions** to eliminate pressure and successfully possess the ball. Proper individual and group shape is crucial to this success.



3) 6v6 Zone Game (20-25 minutes): Play a 6v6 game on a field 40 yards wide x 60 yards long. Create zones with cones at each end approximately 10 yards deep and the full width of the field. Each team defends the zone behind them and attacks the zone opposite them. A team *cannot enter* the zone it is defending. A team *can enter* the zone it is attacking. A point is awarded to a team that successfully dribbles the ball into the zone or makes a well-timed pass into the zone as a teammate arrives to receive it.



Version 2: Describe a scenario and put time limits on the game to speed up play...i.e. It is a tie game with 2 minutes remaining. The red team must win the game to advance into the play-offs.

Coaching Points:

Maintain the integrity of individual/group/team attacking shape while playing under the pressure of even numbers. Talk about the tactical speed of the attacking players...speed of the 1st attacker to find forward options, if they are on; speed of the 2nd attackers to provide supporting options to the 1st attacker; overall speed of play of the group. Reinforce coaching points made throughout the session.

4) 6v6, 7v7 or 8v8 Match (25-30 minutes): Field size appropriate to age and numbers. Play the game with goalkeepers. As in Version 2 of Activity 3 above, describe a scenario that will put the pressure of time on one of the teams...i.e. With 5 minutes remaining in the game, the red team is winning by a goal; the yellow team needs a draw to advance into the championship round of the tournament.

Coaching Points:

Maintain the integrity of individual/group/team attacking shape while playing under the pressure of the Game. Coach their attacking shape as it relates to the thirds or halves of the field. Teach the goalkeeper to coach the team shape from his/her vantage point.

Cool-Down...3-Player Juggling (10 minutes) A can only juggle with his feet, B can only juggle with her thighs and C can only juggle with his head. Each player in the group has a max of 5 consecutive juggles. A, B and C must try to juggle as many times as possible as a group. If they drop the ball, they can start again. After a few minutes, change the juggling surfaces within each group.



Speed of Play

by Arthur Dimitrakopoulos, MYSA Staff Coach

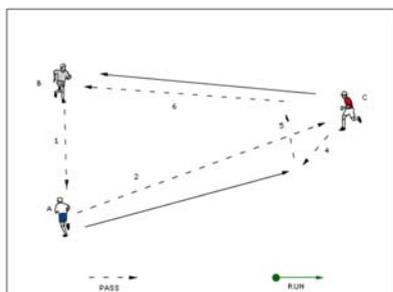
OBJECTIVE: To improve and increase speed of execution and speed of thought. Players must think ahead (anticipate) to decide what to do with ball and therefore play quicker. Players without the ball must always stay connected to the game. The session can be used for players from U12 and older. The older and/or better ability players the more demands we place on them. This is a 90 minute session.

Warm-Up. (15-20 minutes including stretching):

Groups of three players. B passes short to A, who passes long to C and follows pass and executes a 1-2 pass with C who passes long to B and follows pass and repeats process. After a few minutes of successful combinations have them execute an overlap instead of 1-2 pass. After a few more minutes, have them execute a take-over.

Coaching Points:

- Quality of pass; proper weight, proper direction
- The quality of the support runs, angle, distance
- Speed of play. Gradually increase speed as performance improves
- Communication; verbal, visual, always thinking



GAME #1 - 4 v 4 + 4 (15-20 minutes): In a 30 x 40 yard grid, two teams play 4 vs. 4 inside the grid with the support of the 4 players (bumpers) outside the grid. Field size depends on players' age, ability and training objectives. Outside players have one or two touches on the ball or two seconds. Five pass = transition: When the team in possession completes five consecutive passes, they remain in the middle while the other two teams switch roles (play is continuous). *Variations:* (5 v 5 + 5, 6 v 6 + 6)

Coaching Points:

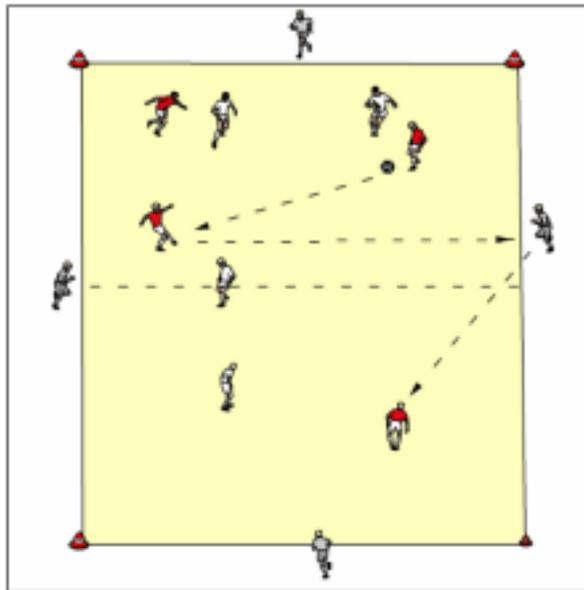
- Stress speed of play and organization.
- Don't take the same space as your teammate
- Quality of the 1st touch
- Communication; verbal, visual, always thinking
- Keep ball moving, always

GAME #2 - 4 v 4 + 4 (15-20 minutes):

Same as game #1 but now outside players must play a long ball if they take two touches. With one touch they can play short or long. The team in possession must complete at least three consecutive passes before playing to a neutral player.

Coaching Points:

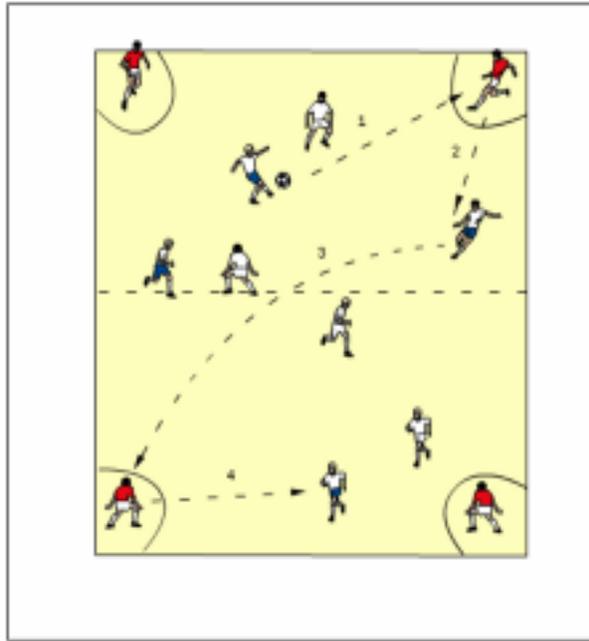
- Outside players must move along the line and offer supporting angles
- Outside players must see the whole field and not just in front of them
- Team in possession must execute quickly using 1-2 pass, overlap and take-over





GAME #3 - 4 v 4 + 4 (15-20 minutes):

The neutral team occupies the four corners (which are 5x5 yard grids made of cones). Ball must be played into a grid to a neutral player and back to the team that passed it in. Every time a team regains possession they must play a short corner first (that is determined by the ball being in that half of the field). After completing a short corner, the attacking team must complete a long corner by passing from the far half of the field to either of the other two corners on the other side of the mid-line. This completes the sequence. **Two goal option:** Award a goal for a complete sequence. After two goals the winning team stays in the middle while the other two team switch roles (play is continuous).

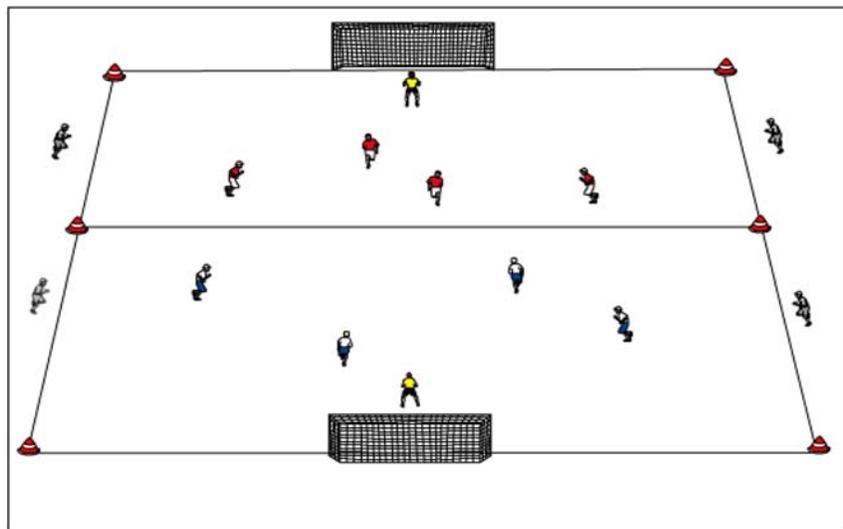


Coaching Points:

- Organization, communication
- Quick transition from defense to attack
- Must transition from one half of the field to the other
- Must offer several passing options to corner players
- Corner players must recognize better option

THE GAME - Game to two Goals with GKs (25-30 minutes):

4v4+4+GKs: Two teams play 4v4 in the field while the third team plays as neutrals or bumpers outside of the field. A win is 3 points a tie 1 point and loss 0 points. Each team keeps score. Play 5 minute games or to 2 goals. Winning team stays and losing team switches with bumpers. One team plays maximum 2 games in a row. Regular rules. Bumpers have 2 touches or 2 seconds and always play for the team that gave them the ball. At the end of the designated time, the winning team goes automatically to the final and the other 2 teams play for the other spot. Semi-final and final are 5 minutes. In case of a tie in the semi-final, the team with most shots on goal is the winner. Use penalty kicks to break a tie in the championship game.



COOL- DOWN

(10 minutes): A low intensity activity to help players unwind mentally and physically, including static stretching of the large muscle groups.



Defending - Pressure/Cover

by Mass Youth Staff Coach

OBJECTIVE: This session is designed to teach the defenders closest to the ball when, where and how to win the ball back for their team. In particular, we will discuss the roles and responsibilities of the pressuring defender (1st defender) and the covering defender (2nd defender).

1) Pressure-Cover Warm-up (5-7 minutes): 3 Players per ball in open space. Player A and Player B, about 8-10 yards apart, pass the ball back and forth. Player C is located about 10-15 yards away from Players A & B. After 3-4 passes between Players A & B, Player A passes the ball to Player C. While the ball is traveling, Player B approaches Player C to apply pressure to the ball; at the same time, Player A provides appropriate cover to Player B (positions herself behind and at an angle to Player B). Player C attempts to split Players A & B with a 1 touch pass. Repeat many times, changing the roles of the 3 players.

Coaching Points (1st Defender):

- Angle of approach – We want to direct the player one way on the field, take away option of advancing forward.
- Speed of approach – Approach fast...arrive slow
- Body Shape- knees bent, on the balls of their feet, one foot slightly angled in front of the other foot
- Decision to delay opponent or to tackle the opponent to win possession of the ball; if 1st defender does not have good cover, delaying the opponent is a good decision; if the 1st defender has good cover, then the decision to tackle with the toe-poke or block tackle is appropriate just as the ball comes off the foot of the dribbler

Coaching Points (2nd Defender):

- Angle and distance of cover; speed to cover – Stay connected to first defender
- Cover dangerous space between 1st defender and you; cannot allow a penetrating pass to split you and the 1st defender!
- Be positioned so that, if the 1st defender gets beat with the dribble, you can become the 1st defender immediately.
- Be ready...see the ball, keep feet moving

Mistakes to watch for (1st defender): *(these are common mistakes that we want to watch for and correct.)*

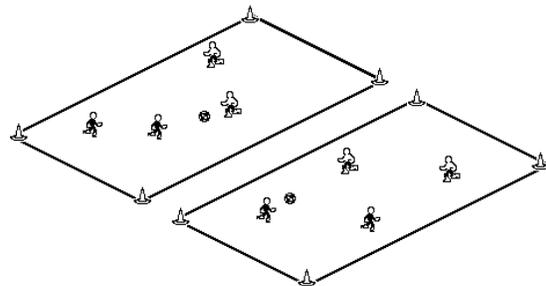
- Planting their feet once they get to the defender
- Sprinting straight at the attacker (diving in)
- Standing straight up

Mistakes to watch for (2nd defender):

- Running right behind the 1st defender
- Running next to the 1st defender and creating a flat shape

2) 2v2 to lines (20 minutes):

Create multiple fields that are 20yds x 15yds with 4 cones outlining the field (enough so all players are playing); organize all of the players into teams of 2. Each team will attack the end line opposite them and defend the end line behind them. Players must dribble over the opposite end line to score. Play a tournament format where teams play 2 minute games and then rotate to another field. Scoring goes as follows: 3 pts for the win, 1 pt for the tie, 0 for a loss and, if they have a shut-out, they get 2 bonus pts.





Coaching Points:

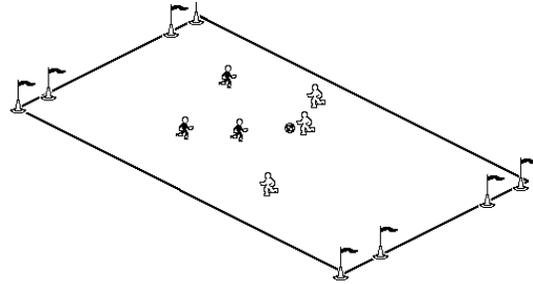
- Same as above

Mistakes to watch for:

Players hanging back and not pressuring the ball as a team when they become defenders

3) 3v3 Four Goal game (20 minutes):

In a grid 20x30 yards with four goals measuring 3 feet across in each corner, play 3v3. Each team attacks the 2 goals opposite them and defends the 2 goals behind them. Some questions to ask the players: “can you channel the ball into certain areas of the field to gain possession?” “Can you apply enough pressure on the ball to limit the first attacker's options and make the play predictable?” *Version 2:* If the players are scoring very quickly, change the game so that the attacking team has to score by dribbling through one of the goals; this will allow the defending team more time to get organized.



Coaching Points:

- 2nd defender must recognize their responsibility to cover the 1st defender as the ball is traveling to the opponent (1st attacker).

4) 6v6 Game (15minutes):

Unrestricted play. While the game is going on, praise successful defending and connection by the 1st and 2nd defenders.

COOL- DOWN (10 minutes): Juggling in 2's and 3's only using their feet or head. Static stretching of the major muscle groups.



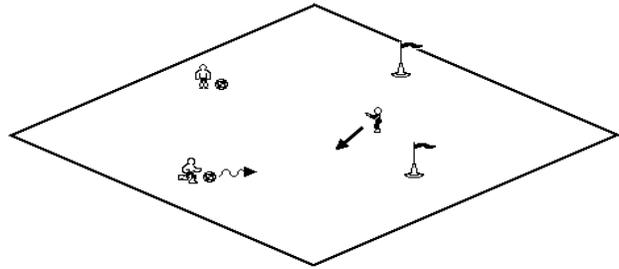
Goalkeeping - Breakaways

By Krista Fulton, Mass Youth Soccer Olympic Development Coach

Objectives: To teach the goalkeeper proper technique and decision making when confronting attacking players in 1 v1 situations where the attacker is in control of the ball.

1) Crouch Warm Up 1 (10-12 minutes):

Create groups of three with at least 2 balls per group. One player is the working goalkeeper and the other two are servers. The servers stand 5 yards away facing the goalkeeper, one on the goalkeeper's left side, the other on the right side. The first server dribbles toward the goalkeeper simulating a breakaway. The goalkeeper starts in a crouch position and goes to the ground to make the save. The goalkeeper returns to the crouch position and the second server repeats the breakaway from the other side. Repeat the exercise – you can either go for time or number of repetitions. Rotate players through as the working goalkeeper.



Coaching Points:

- Crouch position – arms down with hands almost touching the ground, palms facing forward, bend knees and shoulders, head and upper body forward
- The goalkeeper should explode down to the ball with their hands and upper body so that they go in strong. *Common mistake: Goalkeeper will reach with their hands to the ball only and will not go in strong for the challenge.*
- The hands should be in a W shape, extended away from the body with the elbows slightly bent, and the nose behind the thumbs to protect the head and face. The nose and face should be 6-10 inches away from the hands. *Common mistake: The goalkeeper will raise their head above their hands exposing it to the feet of the attacker.*
- The goalkeeper should go down to the ground sideways to create a barrier behind the ball. *Common mistake: The goalkeeper goes down on their stomach.*

2) Partner Warm Up (10-12 minutes):

Two goalkeepers stand facing each other at a distance of 20 yards. The goalkeeper with the ball is the attacker and dribbles on a breakaway toward the other goalkeeper who starts their approach from the ready position and approaches the attacker at a controlled speed. As the space closes down between the attacker and goalkeeper, the goalkeeper crouches down towards the ground before going down to make the save. Goalkeepers return to their starting positions and repeat. Switch roles after 10 breakaways.

Coaching Points:

- Reinforce coaching points from Activity #1.
- Stay low – don't stand up! The goalkeeper should get lower to the ground the closer they get to the attacker. *Common mistake: The goalkeeper stands up as they get closer to the attacker allowing space to play directly under the goalkeeper.*
- Approach the attacker at a controlled speed. *Common mistake: The goalkeeper runs at the attacker at top speed when the attacker is in control of the ball.*



3) **1v1 Grid Challenge (12-15 minutes):**

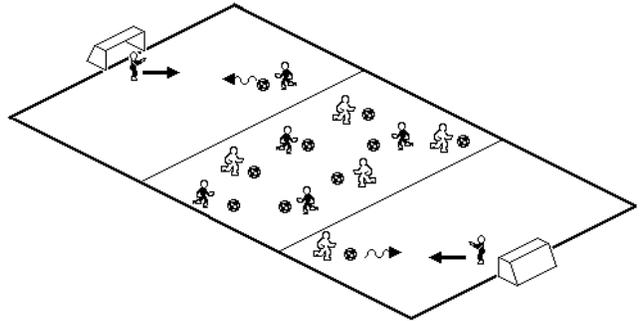
Attacking line sets up at one end of the grid (10x12 yds) and the goalkeeping line at the opposite end. The attacker starts with the ball and must dribble over the opposite endline with possession to score a point. Players can switch between goalkeeping and attacking line. You can make this exercise a challenge – either individual or team – by keeping track of goals scored. The individual or team with the lowest number of goals scored against wins.

Coaching points:

- Coach should position themselves behind the goalkeeper.
- Reinforce coaching points from Activities 1 & 2.
- The goalkeeper should try to force the attacker to go around the goalkeeper. The goalkeeper can then try to win the ball on the push around. *Common mistake: The goalkeeper dives forward on their stomach to try to win the ball at the attacker's feet.*
- The goalkeeper should get off the goal line to engage the attacker as far away from goal as possible. *Common mistakes: The goalkeeper waits for the attacker on the goal line or the goalkeeper approaches the attacker too quickly and the attacker pushes the ball around the goalkeeper.*

4) **Game Situation Breakaways (20-25 minutes):**

Version 1: Divide a regulation size field into three equal size areas horizontally (thirds of the field). Position goals at each end of the vertical field with goalkeepers. Create two teams of 5-6 field players (a blue team and a red team). Number the players 1 through 5. Every player has a ball dribbling freely in the middle third. The blue team will shoot at one of the goals and the red team will shoot at the other. Number 1 dribbles out of the middle third going to goal on a break-away. Then number 2 goes, etc. Players dribble out of the middle in consecutive order and repeat many times. *Version 2:* Designate a couple of players (in yellow) as recovering defenders (bandits) to chase down the attacking players from behind when they enter the shooting zone.



Coaching Points:

- Make sure that the goalkeeper is fully recovered before the next player goes to goal
- Give the goalkeeper breaks by alternating other players in the goal
- Coach should position themselves behind the goalkeeper.
- Reinforce coaching points from the previous activities.

5) **8v8 scrimmage (25-30 minutes)**

Depending on numbers, space may change and numbers will change. Ideally, finish with the number you normally play with in games. Play a regular game with goalkeepers.

6) **Cool-down (5-10 minutes)**

Juggling in groups of 2 or 3. Static stretching of the major muscle groups.



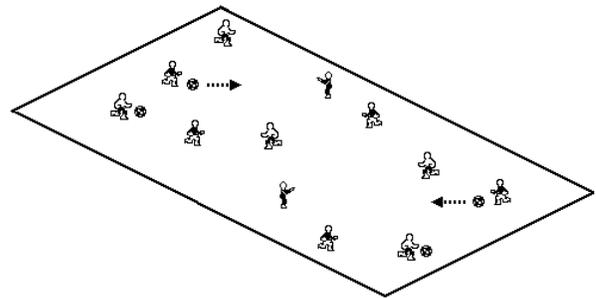
Goalkeeping

Handling Long-Range Shots

By Anthony Latronica
USSF National Goalkeeping Instructor

Objectives: To improve the goalkeeper's ability to handle long range shots...recognizing when, where and how the shot is being taken (anticipation), getting into appropriate position and making the save.

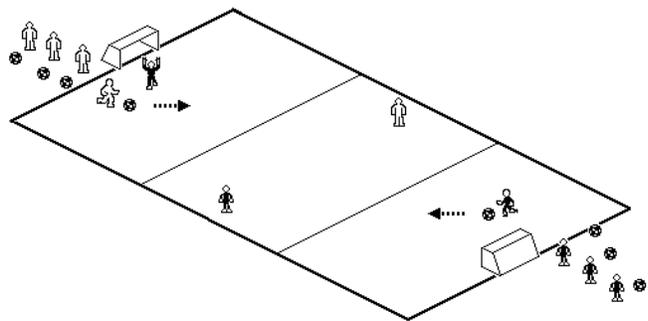
1) Goalkeeper Technical Box (15-20 minutes): Divide the field players into two groups (a red group and a yellow group). Each group has 1-2 soccer balls. Position the two groups with the goalkeepers on half of the field passing and moving freely throughout the space. Field players must pass to any goalkeeper when the opportunity arises. The goalkeepers must use their feet during this phase. Version 2: All balls played to keepers must be on the ground; keepers field the ball with their hands; then they distribute to any field player by rolling the ball to them. Version 3: balls must be played over distance in the air to the keeper; keepers catch the ball with their hands; then they distribute to any field player by rolling the ball to them.



Coaching Points:

Make sure foot skills (receiving and passing), catching technique and distribution by the keeper are clean. Keeper must begin communication to the field players in this activity by calling for the ball and talking to field players when distributing it.

2) Pass-Deflect-Shoot (15-20 minutes): Position goals at each end of a half field opposite each other. Goalkeepers in each goal. Field players are split into two groups, each with a soccer ball and positioned in a line on the right side of each goal. Two target players are positioned diagonally opposite each line. Both groups perform the following sequence at the same time: the first player in line passes a ball to the target player facing them. The target player lays the ball off centrally for the passer to shoot. After the shot, the shooter becomes the next target player, while the original target player goes to the end of the shooting line. Play is continuous for a designated time. Version 2: the target player lays ball off toward the flank. Version 3: move the lines to the left side of each goal.



Coaching Points:

Coach should be in a good coaching position behind the goalkeeper
Proper starting positions, footwork and angles
Cut down angle of the shooter and get set as the shooter prepares to shoot
Focus on clean handling (saving) of the ball versus shot stopping (deflection, parrying)



3) 6v6 on a Half Field (15-20 minutes): Play 6v6 on a half field. Award 3 points for any shots taken from outside the penalty area that are on goal. Award 5 points for any shots taken from outside the penalty area that score. Award 1 point for goals scored from inside the penalty.

Coaching points:

Coach should be positioned behind the goalkeeper emphasizing the coaching points made throughout the session to this point.

4) 11v11 Game on the Full Field (30 minutes): Play a game! Throughout the run of play, the coach will award each team 5-8 corner kicks and 5-8 free kicks from 20-30 yards out.

Coaching points:

Coach should be positioned behind the goalkeeper emphasizing the coaching points made throughout the session to this point.

5) Cool-down (5-10 minutes):

Individual juggling with restrictions: feet only, feet and thigh only, 3 small juggles then 1 big touch above head, unrestricted. Static stretching of the major muscle groups.



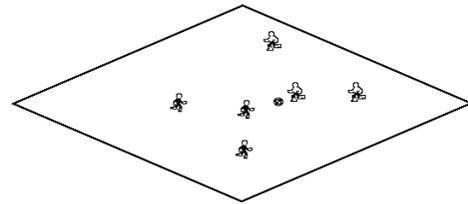
Defending (Pressure, Cover & Balance)

by Laura Ray, Mass Youth Soccer Development Coach

OBJECTIVE: To teach the roles of the players who pressure, cover and balance defensively in relation to the ball and the 1st attacker and other attackers around and off the ball. Approach, angle, timing, steering of 1st attacker and the ball will be looked at in regards to the 1st defender. Aligning themselves in a covering position off the 1st defender will be looked at in regards to the 2nd defender(s). Lastly, ensuring balance and proper positioning from the 3rd defender(s) will be looked at.

1) 3v3 to lines (20 minutes):

Create multiple fields that are 30yds x 20yds with 4 cones outlining the field (enough so all players are playing), break all of the players in to teams of 3. Each team will defend the end line behind them. Players have to dribble across the end line to score.



Coaching Points (1st Defender):

- Angle of approach – Direct the player one way on the field, take away option of advancing forward
- Should begin to notice where their ‘help’ is behind them in order to know which direction to force them
- Speed of approach – Approach fast arrive slow
- Body Shape- knees bent, on the balls of their feet
- Front foot tackle vs back foot tackle if the ball gets away from 1st attacker
- PRESSURE/DELAY

Coaching Points (2nd Defender):

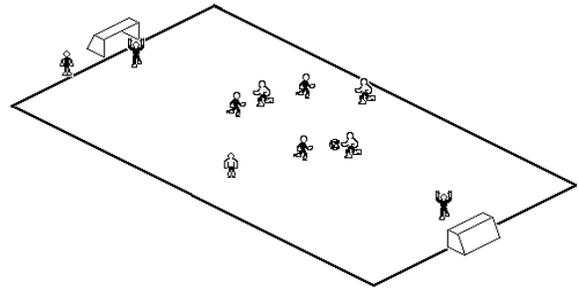
- Position themselves ‘off’ the 1st defender in a position to cut off penetrating passing, dribbling and shooting options for the 1st attacker (30 to 45 degrees)
- Can compress the space between them if the 1st defender has ‘tight’ pressure on the 1st attacker
- Cannot compress the space as tightly if the 1st defender does not have ‘tight’ pressure on the 1st attacker
- Can track players immediately off the ball
- Can be more than one 2nd defender
- COVER

Coaching Points (3rd defender):

- Track attackers making runs away from the ball
- Provide balance away from the ball, so that a weak side pass will not become a huge advantage to the offensive team
- Tighten up the space in the center of the field to cut off passing, dribbling, shooting lanes for attackers
- Can compress the space if there is tight pressure and cover around the ball
- BALANCE

2) 4 v 4 (-1) + Goalkeepers (20 minutes):

Two teams are playing 4 v 4 to two goals on each end line and a goalkeeper in each goal. The attacking team is playing with four players, but the defending team must drop one player back behind their own endline while under attack. This prevents the defending team from playing man to man and must solve the problem with zonal play. When the defense wins the ball they must first play the ball back to their teammate on the end line while the other team removes a player from the field.

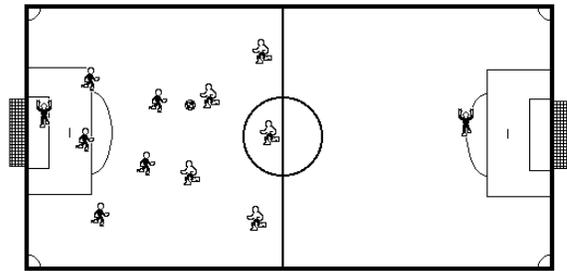


Coaching Points:

- Reinforce the coaching points listed in #1

3) 6v6 to two big goals (20 minutes):

On a field 40 yards wide by 60 yards long with a goal at each end, create two teams of 6 (5 players and a GK). Play a regular game highlighting pressure, cover and balance. Version 2: If the players are scoring quickly, adjust so teams can only score if all of their team are in the attacking ½ of their field. This will allow the defending team time to get more organized and adjustments of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd defenders.



Coaching Points:

- Reinforce the coaching points listed in #1

4) 8v8 Game (25 minutes):

Depending upon numbers, space will change and numbers will change. Ideally, finish with the number you normally play with in games. Play a regular game with goalkeepers.

Coaching Points:

- Reinforce the coaching points listed in #1
- Reinforce positive decision making opportunities (recognizing when and how to pressure the ball, communication of 1st, 2nd and 3rd defenders, etc.).

5) **Cool-down (10 minutes):** Juggling in 2's and 3's, using all body parts. Static stretching of the major muscle groups.



U12 FINISHING (From combination play)

By: Mario Prata, MYSA Development Coach

OBJECTIVE: To help players recognize opportunities to finish from combination play. To help players develop the ability and the risky & aggressive attitude & instinct to score.

Possible combinations:

- The double- pass
- The overlap/run-around
- The wall-pass
- The take-over

Some general points:

- The players' ability to recognize the verbal and visual cues of teammates is crucial to success
- The correct timing of runs and passes is crucial to success
- Appropriate angles and distance of support is crucial to success

1) Shooting Warm – Up (15 minutes):

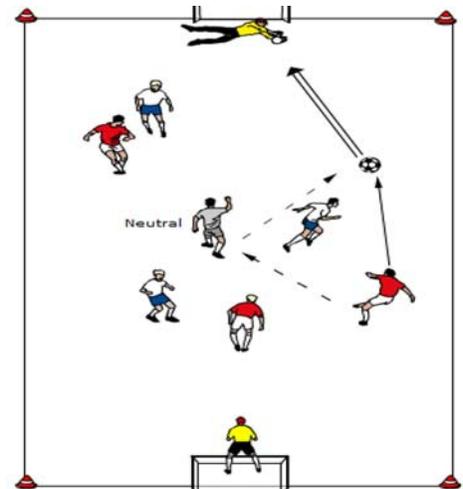
Set up two goals about 40 yards apart and the width of the penalty area, with GK's in each goal. (2 field players per ball) Pairs of field players passing and moving throughout the area experimenting with different combinations, finishing with a reasonable shot to the keeper (to warm the keeper up). Version 2: Pairs now try to score (after using different combinations).

Coaching Points:

- Stress passing and receiving techniques...use of the inside and outside of the foot, and the toe when passing
- Reinforce combination play coaching points
- Coach non-verbal cues...angle and timing of runs with and without the ball
- Coach verbal cues...i.e., "Hold!"

2) 3v3+1 to goal. (10 minutes):

On a field 30 yds wide X 35 yds long place two regulation size goals centrally on each end line. Play a game awarding 2 points for any goals scored from a combination play. Award 1 point for goals scored otherwise.



Coaching Points:

- Work on passing and receiving techniques; proper pace and accuracy of the pass; proper 1st touch.
- Work on technical speed.
- Perfect communication.
- Talk about visual cues.
- Constantly survey the playing area
- Reinforce the combination play coaching points.
- Talk about taking opportunities to score.
- Be alert and ready to tap in any ball or rebound.
- Reinforce following up all shots.
- Talk about placement versus power.
- Develop rhythm of play based on what the game presents...increase speed of play at the right time

3) 4vs4+4 on deck+2GK'S (15 minutes):

Two teams play soccer , on a field 30 yds wide X 45 yds long with regulation size goals centrally positioned on each end line. One team is on-deck waiting outside the field. First team to score two goals remains on the field, losing team is replaced by the on- deck team; or if two minutes pass by, and neither team has scored 2 goals or the game is tied, the team that has been on the field longest is replaced by the on-deck team. Captains on each team keep score.

Coaching Points:

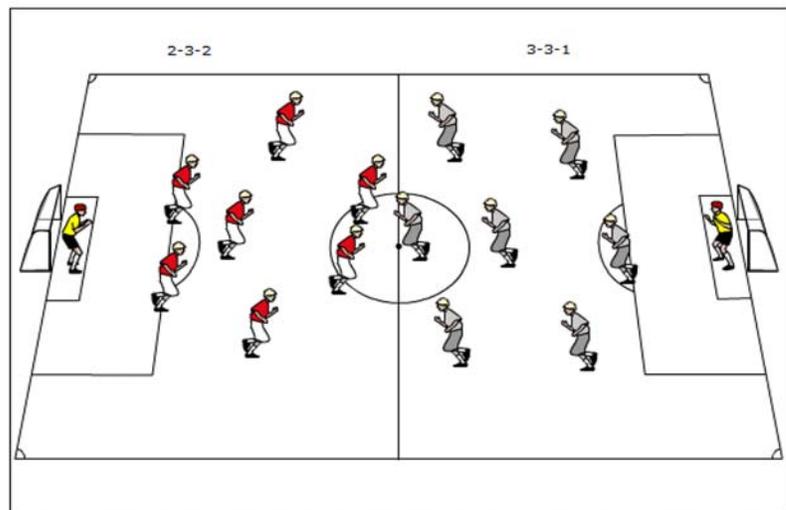
- Reinforce the coaching points previously covered. Be sure to connect the dots...when making coaching points in these small sided games talk about how all attacking players are connected.

4) Game to two goals with GKs (30 minutes):

Play – 8V8 or 11v11 with GKPR's. We always try to finish with a scrimmage, with playing numbers as close to the numbers that we play with in our league games.

Coaching Points:

- Reinforce coaching points made throughout the training session.



5) Cool-down (5-10 minutes):

Individual juggling; challenge players to see who can juggle the most in a 2 minute period.



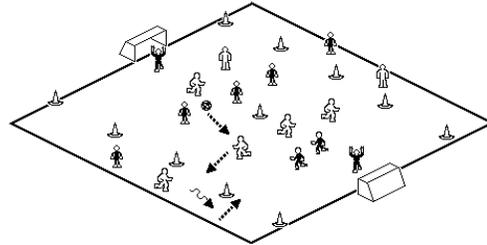
Finishing (From flank play)

by Laura Ray, Mass Youth Soccer Development Coach

OBJECTIVE: The objective of this training session is to create opportunities to receive the ball in wide areas and to deliver crosses with a purpose for forwards and other midfielders attacking/finishing on goal. Can look at other options for wide midfielders such as: driving endline and laying ball back away from keeper, early crosses in and behind defenders, attacking towards goal to get a shot off themselves or commit defenders in order to lay ball off to another attacking player.

1) 3v2 + 3v2 with Free Flank Players to big goals with GK's (20 minutes):

Field space is 50 yards wide by 50 yards long. Goals are placed on opposite endlines. Use some cones to mark a visible midfield line across the field creating 2 halves. Create outside lanes the length of the field on both sides (5 yards wide). Position 3 blue attackers & 2 red defenders in one half and 3 red attackers & 2 blue defenders in the other half. Players are restricted to their half field. Each team will have a designated wide player in each lane, so that when the two defenders win the ball,



they can either play the ball out wide to their free flank player to get a cross off in the attacking half of the field or play it to one of the three forwards who can either play it out wide (recommended, but not forced) or get a shot off. If a goal is scored or if the ball goes out of bounds, the coach will designate one of the keepers to start play with a new ball. *Note: Can play 2v1's in each half if down players.* Version 2: Remove restriction of staying in half of the field. Allow the flank players to compete with each other.

Coaching Points:

Technical Coaching Points:

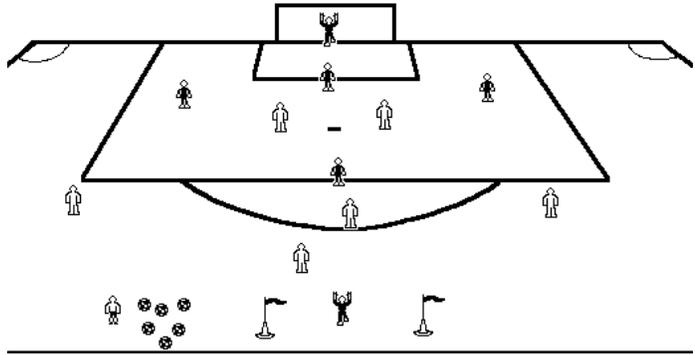
- Crosser should make a positive touch forward and at an angle to the goal before hitting the ball
- They should get their hips turned to face the target
- Can cross the ball: driven to near post on the ground or in the air / lofted to far post / driven back away from the keeper towards the 6 yd box and the penalty mark (or to a trailing attacker just at the top of the penalty area)
- Finishing technique of attackers – coming across face of the goal to see the ball and the goal
- Using proper surface as the ball is coming to them and/or they are going to meet with ball

Tactical Coaching Points:

- Wide player giving width to the field
- Type of cross should be determined by where the goalkeeper is and runs into the box
- Timing of runs by attackers to get to the crosses
- Stress crosser should choose a target to play the ball to versus just hitting the ball in front of the goal
- Attackers reading the cues of the server – did the server dribble endline, so there will be a cross that goes back towards the 6 yd box to the top of the penalty area? / did the server take an early touch inside and will be looking to play an early cross in and behind the defense – to the near post or to the far post?
- When the restrictions are off – can the players combine with the wide player to get them into the attack and/or to get space out wide to deliver a cross?

2) 6v4 + GKprs to Two Big Goals (30 minutes):

Field space is 50 yards wide by 60 yards long. Place one goal on each endline. Create the 6-player team with your forwards and midfielders and your 4-player team with midfielders and backs. The 6-player team will attack the goal on the normal endline and the 4-player team will attack the goals on the other endline. The coach will serve balls in from behind the 6-player team to different areas of the field. Any time a team scores or the ball goes out of bounds the coach will serve another ball in to the attacking team. You can have the players run through 2 or 3 attacking patterns to see some different options.



Possible Patterns:

1. The center mid takes a touch forward and then plays a ball wide to the outside mid, the outside mid then takes a few touches aggressively attacking the outside back does a quick feint and then breaks to attack the end line. After passing the defender, they serve a ball centrally using the penalty mark as the target location. Well timed runs by attacking players are crucial to successful finishing...they must arrive as the crossed ball reaches the destination and finish with an appropriate body surface (foot, head, etc.).
2. The center mid plays a ball immediately wide, the wide midfielder takes a few touches toward the defender and plays in a low driven ball to the near post, the 2 forwards are making runs with the first towards the near post in front of the goalkeeper and the second right in the center of the 6 yard box. The attacking midfielder should be entering near the top of the penalty box in case of a rebound and the opposite outside mid should be entering the penalty box from the back side.
3. As the center mid takes a touch forward and plays the ball to the closest forward who is checking to the ball, they then play it to the outside midfielder who crosses it in to a forward prepared to finish on goal. Can vary the cross and drive it low, mid height or lofted for a forward or opposite outside mid to finish.

Coaching Points:

- Reinforce coaching points listed in #1
- Show them the options, then let the players see if they can try them based on the flow of play and where & how pressure is being applied (i.e.: where the defenders and the goalkeeper are positioned, etc.)
- Cues for the different options will be: where the GK and defenders are in relation to the ball, the goal they are defending and the movement of the attacking players
- Encourage your players to find other options as well to get the ball out wide and to get a cross off; combination play on the flank, etc.
- Encourage them to find new run patterns into the box to finish off crosses

3) 8v8 Scrimmage (30 minutes):

Depending upon numbers, space will change. Ideally, finish with the number you normally play with in games. Play a regular game with goalkeepers.

Coaching Points:

- Reinforce positive decision making opportunities (technique of crossing, decisions of where and when to cross, placement of service, timing of runs, technique in finishing off of cross, etc.).

4) **Cool-down (10 minutes):** Juggling in pairs of 2, no player can take more than 2 touches before they pass it to their teammate. Static stretching of the major muscle groups.



Goalkeeping - Handling Crosses

By Paul Blodgett,
Paul Blodgett Goalkeeper Training School, LLC

Objectives: To teach the proper technique in handling crosses, to learn one's range off his/her line and to control the box under pressure.

1.) Technical Warm-up # 1 (5 Minutes): Create a small, tight grid (10 X 10 yd grid depending on the number of keepers); each keeper has a ball. Version 1: Have keepers start moving around within the grid bouncing the ball with two hands and catching it. Their movements should be multi-directional (forward, backward, side-to-side, diagonal), their footwork should vary accordingly and they should vary the speed, as well. The coach yells “**Up**” and the keepers toss the ball in the air and go up and catch it using proper technique for balls above the head and yelling “**KEEPER**” **before** they go up to catch the ball. Once they catch the ball, repeat the process. Version 2: Keepers now choose a partner. Have the keepers repeat the bouncing and footwork movements. Coach yells “**Up**” and now the keepers must toss the ball in the air to their partners who yell “**KEEPER**” and catch the ball above their heads, once again using proper technique. Have the keepers stop and stretch throughout the warm-up.

Coaching Points: Be sure that the keepers are changing direction and speed utilizing different footwork throughout, as well as, bouncing the ball firmly. Be sure the keepers do the following: Catch the ball above their heads; catch the ball in front of their heads (not behind it); watch the ball into their hands; keeping the ball above their heads for a second after they catch it; yelling “**KEEPER**” not “Keep”; driving knee/leg upwards; alternating knee/leg. You want the grid to be tight so that the keepers are aware of bodies around them when going up for the ball.

2.) Technical Warm-up # 2 - Shuffle Step – Jump Catch (5 minutes):

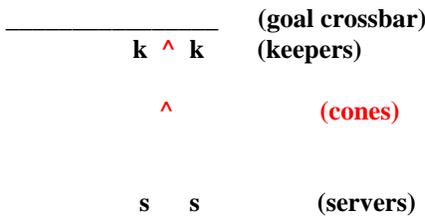
s	s	(servers)
_____		(goal crossbar)
^	^	(cones)
k	k	(keepers)

Have 2 servers behind the goal each with a ball in their hands; set up 2 cones in front of the goal, 4 yds apart on the goal line; 2 keepers will start out facing the goal. Cones mark the area where the servers and keepers line up for the exercise. Keepers shuffle across the goal mouth to the opposite cone, when they get there, the servers toss the ball up and over the crossbar; keepers jump up using a two-foot take off, catch the ball and throw it back over the goal to their server **BEFORE** they come back down to the ground (called a jump-catch); keepers then reverse direction across the goal mouth and repeat. Do for 30 seconds and then servers and keeper reverse roles.

Coaching Points: Keepers are in a good stance as they shuffle across the goal mouth, with their hands in a neutral position. Keepers must jump with a two foot take off. Be sure that they catch the ball in front of their head's – this is also necessary to help them develop the technique of catching and tossing the ball back over the goal while they are in the air. Servers need to jog easily in place while the other keepers are working. Also, the quality of tosses over the goal is essential for proper execution. Communication: Keepers yell “**KEEPER**” when going up for the ball.



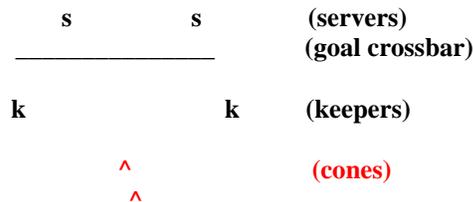
3.) Technical Warm-up #3 (5 minutes):



Cones placed in center of goal, 1 on the line and one placed in front of it 2 yds. off the line. Keepers start on either side of the cone on the goal-line; servers stand about 6 yds. away from the outside cone and are facing the keepers. Keepers start in good stance with their hands in a neutral position. Servers jog in place with balls in their hands. Keepers start moving forward to the 2nd cone using quick up and down footwork, but progressing forward slowly, heads down facing the ground. When they get to the 2nd cone, this is the time when the servers do an underhand toss of the ball into the air to the keeper coming at them. Keepers then look up, find the ball and catch it above their heads yelling “KEEPER” as they go up. The keepers perform a one-footed take off with the leg facing outwards as the one they drive upward for height and protection. Then the Keepers switch sides and repeat. Do 4 reps each side and then switch servers and keepers.

Coaching Points: Be sure keeper’s heads stay down when moving forward to the second cone; this will force them to have to find the ball quickly and to adjust their footwork to drive the proper leg upward. Servers can toss the ball straight on or on angle towards the outside of the goal. Keeper’s feet need to stay active and moving while judging the flight of ball and they must yell “KEEPER” early. Server’s tosses need to be of quality. Keepers must catch the ball in front and above their heads and proper take off leg used. **Variation:** Keepers push on each other, shoulder to shoulder, while performing forward movement and then break off to collect ball. **Variation:** Keepers cross over and receive ball from opposite server.

4.) Technical – Liverpool Drill (10 minutes):

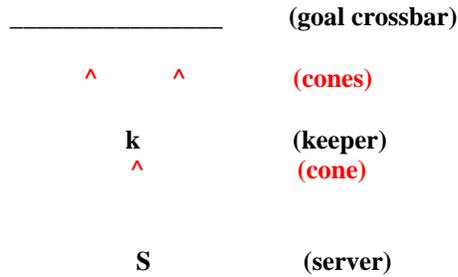


Servers stand behind the goal with balls in their hands. Keepers stand on opposite posts facing each other. Two cones are placed in the center of the goal, one 5 yds off the line, the other 6 yds off the line. Keepers start drill by looking at each other and nodding that they are ready to go (silent communication). One keeper slowly jogs out and goes between the cones, the other keeper jogs out slowly and goes around the farthest cone. **AS** the keepers get to the cones, the servers toss the ball underhand just over the cross bar and the keepers attack the ball, yell “KEEPER”, catch it above their heads and toss it back over the bar before they come back down (jump catch). Keepers must utilize a one-footed take off with the outside leg driving upward. After tossing the ball back over the crossbar, the keepers go directly to the post, face each other, nod and repeat in opposite direction.

Coaching Points: Keepers who are working must start with eye contact and a nod. When the keepers get to the cones, be sure their foot movement stays active so that they can explode to the ball and drive the proper leg upward for the catch. The tendency in collecting crosses is for keepers to step forward too soon and then get beat with the ball going over their heads. This drill will help them produce the footwork needed to keep the ball in front of them when they go up for the ball. Server’s tosses must be of quality. Keepers working must yell keeper as soon as they get to the cones. (Another problem is that keepers yell “KEEPER” too late and do not give their defenders enough time to react. The call **MUST** be loud, clear and early and always “KEEPER”.)



5.) Technical – Footwork for catches over the keepers head (5 minutes):



Set up cones in a triangle with the 2 cones 2 yds. off the line and the third cone 8 yds. off the line. Keeper starts on the front cone in a good keeper stance; server has ball in his/her hands. Server slaps the ball, at which time the keeper turns by dropping the back foot and then does a cross-over footwork run back to either cone, curls around the cone and comes forward to collect a ball tossed by the server. Return the ball to the server and then repeat to the other side.

Coaching Points: This is not a game related drill because it is predictable, however, it is essential so that the keepers learn to turn and run properly on balls over their head. Be sure that the first step is not directly backwards. The body turns as the proper foot drops backwards and then the keeper runs backwards on a diagonal using a cross over step with his/her hips turned and their eyes on the ball. The curl run at the end is necessary so that the keeper will be coming forward when collecting the ball. Yelling “KEPPER” is essential as is collecting the ball in front and above the head. Be sure the keeper is driving the outside leg upwards.

6.) Crossing and Shooting with Field players (15 minutes):

2 Flank Servers have soccer balls in wide positions on both sides of the field. One Central Shooter has soccer balls and is positioned centrally at the top of the penalty area. The two flank servers will drive or float balls into the area. The central shooter will try to score. One keeper works at a time. Keeper lines up initially according to the side from which the service is coming. One Server (it doesn't matter which one) starts by serving a driven or floating ball into the area. Keeper collects the cross after yelling keeper, distributes the ball back to the server. The keeper must then get in place to save a shot from the central shooter. Keeper makes the save, distributes the ball back to the shooter. Finally, the keeper sets up to receive a cross from the opposite server. Repeat 2-3 times. Servers and shooters must be patient and allow time for the keeper to get ready for each cross or shot!

Coaching Points: Be sure that the keepers are in a good starting position in the goal on the initial cross. Keepers must collect crosses using good technique, including proper catching, footwork, proper leg up and communication (on both crosses and distribution). On crosses, keepers must react to inswingers, outswingers and balls over their head.

7.) Game Situation – 7v7 Channel Game (15 Minutes):

Set up a 50 by 60 yard field with regulation goals. Along the two flanks, create a 5 yd wide channel the length of the side lines. Divide teams for a 7v7 scrimmage which includes keepers (5v5 on the field and one additional player per team in each channel). Be sure that all players are wearing appropriate colors. Then play. Restrictions: To start, the keeper must distribute the ball into the channel to start the attack; then play with no restrictions. **Points:** 2 points for a goal scored from a cross. 1 point for a regular goal.

Coaching Points: Ball can be played into and out of the channel at anytime. Be sure keeper is properly communicating on all crosses (early and loudly). Observe the keepers footwork and positioning on all crosses. Also, observe if the keeper is driving up the proper leg when collecting a cross to maximize the height advantage, as well as, for protection.



8.) Full Field Scrimmage, 8v8 (25 Minutes): Full field match, field size: 80 yds x 55 yds. Coach may apply any restrictions that he or she sees fit. Coach should award 4 – 6 corner kicks per side during the match.

Coaching Points: Be sure to observe the play of the keepers throughout, especially their positioning, footwork, technical handling of crosses, communication and leadership abilities. *The coach should spend time behind each goal to observe and correct the keepers during the match conditions.*

Cool Down (5 minutes): Have keepers cool down by tossing one hand catches back and forth while moving their feet in place slowly. One hand catches may be low or high.

METHODOLOGY / THEORY OF COACHING

WHAT IS PLAYER DEVELOPMENT?

The concept of player development is essential to the long-term growth and improvement of the player. Player development demands that “the player is central” to all decisions made regarding practices and games. The coach who believes in player development will ensure that the following objectives are met:

- Games and activities that are age appropriate. The child wants to participate in because they are fun and enjoyable.
- Players being exposed to playing all positions.
- Every player has a ball for practice.
- Activities designed to maximize the number of touches on the ball by each player.
- Rules and field size modified for players according to their age group and abilities.
- Equipment modified for players according to their age group and abilities.
- Activities designed to promote decision-making. (Not just doing drills).
- De-emphasize winning/losing. We do not need to keep standings, statistics, etc.
- The game is already in each child; we as coaches need to create an environment to unlock the game within each child to reach his or her full soccer potential.



ROLE OF THE COACH

Coaches take on many roles when leading a team. However, youth coaches need to understand their role within the overall player development process. Inexperienced coaches often identify with coaches of older aged teams where the priority and objectives for that age group may be different. Coaches who understand the player development process and the differences that exist between age and ability characteristics are more likely to positively influence and effect the development of the player.

The role of the youth coach based upon principles of player development is:

As a Facilitator

- Set up the conditions and environment for learning.
- Players need to receive positive feedback from the coach.
- Coaches must be enthusiastic about what they are doing.
- Practices should be conducted in the "spirit" of enjoyment and learning.
- Activities need to be geared towards the players achieving success, with success measured by EUN.



As a Positive Role Model

- Demonstrate respect for team members, opponents, referees, parents, spectators, and opposing coaches.
- To have a responsibility to the game itself.

As one who understands who they are coaching

- Children are not defined by chronological age only.
- Each child matures and develops at his/her own pace.
- Treat each child as an individual.
- Recognize that their needs are different and they participate for different reasons. Some may be there because their older brother and sister play and it's expected in the family. Some may play because a parent is a frustrated athlete and wants to live through his/her child. Some may play because all their friends do, and they want to be with them. Others may play because they actually enjoy the sport.

COMPONENTS OF COACHING SOCCER

Technique (receiving, dribbling, passing, shooting, heading,)

- Technique is the most important component, because it is the introduction of the player to the ball. And, the game will always boil down to individual ball mastery.
- Activities should be with the ball, should be FUN and game-like. Learning takes place through self-discovery.

Psychology

- The development of a positive attitude about all aspects of the game.

Tactics (player's decisions)

- Activities should promote decision-making.

Fitness

- Appropriately organized activities and small-sided games will provide players with the necessary physical requirements to meet the demands of their game. There is no need have players do any unnecessary running without a ball in recreational practices.

"TRUTHS" ABOUT CHILDREN AND

SPORTS

The four underlying concepts provide a number of truths about children and sports that have been identified in other research.



to self-knowledge.

- Fun is pivotal; if it's not "fun," young people will not play a sport.
- Skill development is a crucial aspect of fun. It is more important than winning, even among the best athletes.
- Intrinsic rewards (self-knowledge that grows out of self-competition) are more important in creating lifetime athletes than are extrinsic rewards (victory or attention from others).
 - The most rewarding challenges of sports are those that lead

PRINCIPLES OF YOUTH COACHING

- All activities should be age appropriate.
- Give clear, concise brief instructions and correct information.
- There should be a flow of simple to complex activities that is appropriate for the ability of the players and the topic of the practice.
- Maintain a safe and appropriate practice area.
- All activities should promote decision-making.
- All practices should finish with a small-sided scrimmage.



AGE GROUP CHARACTERISTICS

Before we are able to effectively coach the children that have been entrusted to our care, we need to understand the characteristics of whom we are developing. It is imperative that you understand that when you are dealing with children, that you take the time to comprehend where they are currently in their own development. To understand the following information better, it is recommended that you attend a National Youth or State Youth Course in your area.

U6

From a physical perspective (psychomotor), children in this age group perform activities at full speed. Then they need frequent rests and then they go again. Movements such as running, hopping, skipping and maintaining balance are not fully developed at this age.

From a mental perspective (cognitive), they have a short attention span, can only perform one task at a time and only if its given with basic instructions. They don't have a clear understanding of the team concept and tactics are useless. Everything revolves around themselves and the ball.

From a social (psychosocial) standpoint the children need to feel secure in practice and in games. The coach needs to be sensitive in selecting activities that allow social interaction with the other players in their group. They are easily bruised psychologically. Elimination games are highly discouraged. They will also tend to exaggerate their accomplishments-let them.

U8

This is the stage where players begin to understand the concept of passing to a teammate.

From a physical standpoint they still lack a sense of pace and tend to exert themselves hard and then drop. They are now starting to develop some physical confidence in themselves and they are still into running, climbing, rolling and jumping.

From a mental perspective they feel if they tried hard then they performed well (regardless of the activity's outcome). They are beginning to show a limited ability to tend to more than one task at a time.

From a social perspective they have a great need for approval from adults and like to show off individual skills. Negative comments carry great weight. Their playmates start to emerge and they will start to move towards small groups. They want everyone to like them at this age. You should be positive with everything that you do.

U10

Children at this age are typically in grades 4 and 5 and may have been playing soccer for half of their life.

From a physical standpoint they gain a lot of strength, endurance and power during this period. Some children will grow faster than others and can approach 5 feet and weigh upwards of 80 lbs. or more. Be aware of the differences and how you match them up with each other during activities.

From a mental perspective they have the ability to remember and follow complex instructions, which enables them to solve higher-level problems. They will begin to think in advance and anticipate actions or ball movements.

From a social perspective players will begin to initiate play on their own and are becoming more serious about their soccer. Peer group belonging and pressure generated by peers becomes more significant. The need to belong becomes important.

U12

Children at this age are on the edge of childhood and adolescence. It can present a multitude of problems, but also an abundance of potential.

From a physical standpoint strength and power become a major factor in their performance. Their muscles mature and they realize how much more they can do on the field. Their coordination significantly improves and it shows up in the execution of child's technical ability. From a mental perspective the educators refer to the U12 as the fertile period for learning. They can sequence thoughts and perform complex tasks. A coach can expect his players to understand the game and use teammates to solve problems. They are usually eager to learn.

From a social perspective whether a child enters puberty early or late is significant. Girls tend to form cliques while boys take a more broad approach to team relationships. The manner in which they feel about themselves can determine how they relate to their teammates. Sometimes popularity influences self-esteem.

ORGANIZING A PRACTICE AND **SAMPLE LESSON PLANS**

In order to be able to give your players the best you have, you must prepare properly before arriving at practice. If you turn up at practice and “wing” your session, then the players will soon realize that you are cheating them out of a terrific learning experience. Some coaches believe that all they have to do is turn up, roll a ball out, pick sides and the game will teach them all they need to know-not exactly.

It is well documented that in a 90 minute game the ball is in play, on average roughly 2/3 of the time or about 60 minutes. Since there are two teams then each will have the ball about 30 minutes. And, with 11 players on the respective teams, each player will handle the ball between 2-3 minutes. That’s 2-3 minutes in a 90-minute match! So if you think the game will teach them all they need to know, then you are in for a big letdown. The game will highlight what skills the players must grasp, but it is up to you to construct practice sessions that give them repetitions, choices, maximum touches on the ball all in a challenging environment that improve those skills. And, then plug it back into the game to see if your coaching is having an effect.

In order to run an efficient practice, you must be organized and observant. Arrive at your practice before the players do, so you can layout the cones, have the bibs ready and go over in your mind your practice. One activity should flow into the next one with a minimal amount stopping and reorganizing. Observe what the players are doing. How they are working? Are they having fun? Are they getting maximum touches on the ball? Don’t stay in one activity too long (especially for the younger ages), but yet long enough so they understand what you are asking of them. Do not have elimination games where players have to sit out if they don’t perform something well (for example, their ball gets kicked out of the area). You will always end up with the lesser skilled players leaving the activity early, thus drastically cutting down on their opportunities to improve. Allow the players to continue to play and to find their own level within your format.

The following are four individual, age specific, lesson plans. They are designed so that you see the organization of the age-appropriate activities, the key points associated with each, and the instructions that go along with them. There are also other games, exercises and activities that we have added at the end of the lesson plans in order to give you additional help. However, we feel that it is very important for you to understand more than simply regurgitating what you see here. We want you to seek out coaching education classes, seminars, and other resources that allow you to comprehend the art of coaching. We want you to construct your own lesson plans, understand what the children of your age group are capable of, grasp age appropriate activities, and then deliver to your players a quality soccer experience.

Coaches’ Activities Checklist

- Activities Fun/ Age Appropriate
- Organized/ Clear Objectives
- Involvement (All Players Active)
- Creativity/ Decision Making
- Spaces Appropriate size for ability and number of players
- Coaches Feedback Appropriate- Clear/ Brief/ Concise/ Positive

PRACTICE PLANS

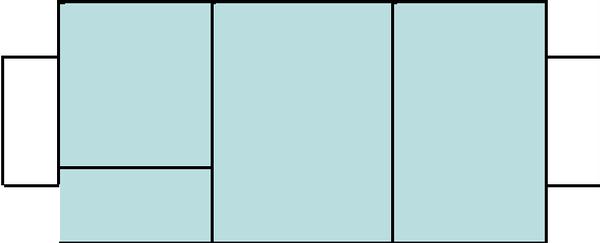
U.6 Practice Plan

Warm-Up Activities / Games		Organization	
 <p>10x15 yard grid marked with cones</p>		<p>Each player with a ball dribbling anywhere in the grid, keep control of the ball and avoid hitting the other players and balls</p> <p>Body Part Dribble – players must stop the ball with the body part the coach calls out, e.g. knee, elbow, ear, etc... and then dribble again in the opposite direction</p> <p>Ballnastics – players roll ball around feet with feet together and legs straight, roll ball as a figure 8 around feet with feet apart, etc...</p> <p>Tag – all players are “it” and attempt to tag the others while maintaining control of their ball, players receive a point for each tag; tag the player’s back and then the stomach = shielding</p> <p>Red Light Green Light – players move across grid or towards moving coach dribbling the ball on coaches’ green light command and stop the ball on coaches’ red light command</p>	
<th>Main Activities / Games</th> <td rowspan="2"> <p>Dribbling Gates – all players with a ball; players must dribble through the gates to score a point; How many points can each player score?</p> <p>a) In a limited amount of time e.g. 1 minute</p> <p>b) Before the coach scores a certain number of points</p> <p>c) Score going backwards through the gate</p> <p>d) Score with different body parts (how many different ways?)</p> <p>Red Rover– (remove gates) all players on one side of the field with a ball; coach stands in the middle of the field, on coaches’ command players attempt to dribble across field to the other side without the coach tagging them; players tagged join coach for the next round</p> <p>Progress to “crab” position and kick the ball out of the area</p> </td>		Main Activities / Games	<p>Dribbling Gates – all players with a ball; players must dribble through the gates to score a point; How many points can each player score?</p> <p>a) In a limited amount of time e.g. 1 minute</p> <p>b) Before the coach scores a certain number of points</p> <p>c) Score going backwards through the gate</p> <p>d) Score with different body parts (how many different ways?)</p> <p>Red Rover– (remove gates) all players on one side of the field with a ball; coach stands in the middle of the field, on coaches’ command players attempt to dribble across field to the other side without the coach tagging them; players tagged join coach for the next round</p> <p>Progress to “crab” position and kick the ball out of the area</p>
 <p>same grid; add 2 yard gates made with cones</p>			
<th>Game</th> <td rowspan="2"> <p>3v3 or 4v4 Game to lines – play across the field; to score player must dribble across the line in control of the ball</p> <p>3v3 or 4v4 Game to small goals – play normally on the field; place small goals (or use cones) on each goal line</p> </td>		Game	<p>3v3 or 4v4 Game to lines – play across the field; to score player must dribble across the line in control of the ball</p> <p>3v3 or 4v4 Game to small goals – play normally on the field; place small goals (or use cones) on each goal line</p>
 <p>20x30 yard field marked with cones; small goals</p>			

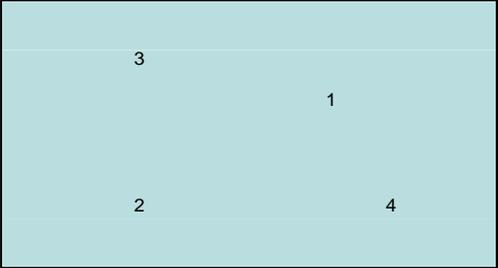
U.8 Practice Plan

Warm-Up Activities / Games	Organization
<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 100%; height: 150px; background-color: #e0f2f1; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">10x15 yard grid marked with cones</p>	<p>Hospital Tag (without ball then with ball) – all players are it and attempt to tag the others; first time a player is tagged he must hold that spot with a hand, the second time he must hold that spot with the other hand, third time he must go to the ‘hospital’ and see the doctor (coach), coach has player do an exercise e.g. number of ball touches and then he is back in the game</p> <p>Ballnastics – (see U.6 Practice Plan)</p> <p>Tunnel Tag – all players with a ball except one who is it and tries to tag the other players; if tagged the player is frozen and holds ball on his head with feet apart; other players may unfreeze them by playing the ball between the frozen player’s legs</p> <p>Math Dribble – all players with a ball dribbling anywhere in the grid; coach calls out a math problem (1+1), players solve it and form the appropriate sized group (2)</p>
<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 100%; height: 150px; background-color: #e0f2f1; margin-bottom: 5px; position: relative;"> <div style="position: absolute; bottom: 10px; right: 10px; font-weight: bold;">Coach</div> </div> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">20x15 yard field with small goals</p>	<p>Goal on the Move – players are in pairs (from math dribble) with a ball; 2 coaches form a goal by holding a bib between them, the ‘goal’ moves about the area; players pass the ball through the moving goal to their partner to score; How many goals can each pair score?</p> <p>Passing through Gates – form gates (see U.6 Practice Plan) pairs pass the ball through gates to score; How many points can each pair score?</p> <p>a) In a limited amount of time b) Score with different body parts</p> <p>Number Game – divide players into two teams, each player is given a number 1 to 4; coach has all of the balls on the side of the field; coach passes a ball to one of the sides and calls a number, the corresponding player from each team plays 1v1 to the small goals; Coach can also call out 2 numbers to play 2v2 or call out two separate numbers, one for each team to play 2v1</p>
<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 100%; height: 150px; background-color: #e0f2f1; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">25x35 yard field marked with cones; small goals</p>	<p>4v4 Game to 4 small goals – play across the field; each team defends two small goals (marked with cones) and scores on the opposite two small goals (marked with cones)</p> <p>4v4 Game to 2 goals – play normally on the field; place small goals (or use cones) on each goal line</p>

U.10 Practice Plan

Warm-Up Activities / Games	Organization
<div style="text-align: center; margin-bottom: 10px;">  </div> <p style="text-align: center;">1 5x20 yard area marked with cones</p>	<p>Island Tag – players in pairs making “islands”; coach breaks apart 1 pair; 1 player is ‘it’ & chases the other trying to tag him; if player is tagged the roles are reversed; the player being chased is safe on an “island”, but only 2 are allowed on an “island”, so the player on the other end must leave & is now being chased; Progress to 2 chasers and 2 being chased, from standing to lying position</p> <p>Ballnastics – (see U.6 Practice Plan)</p> <p>Switch-Out-Reverse– all players with ball dribbling anywhere in area; coach calls “switch”, players leave ball & find another & dribble again; coach calls “out” players must dribble out of area as fast as possible; coach calls “reverse”, players reverse ball & dribble in opposite direction</p> <p>Knock Out– all players, but 1 with ball dribbling anywhere in area; on coaches’ command the 1 tries to kick the others balls out of the area; if ball is kicked out, the player joins in kicking out balls</p>
<div style="text-align: center; margin-bottom: 10px;">  </div> <p style="text-align: center;">3 -1 5x20 yard areas, add goals for final progression</p>	<p>Freeze Tag –3 teams of 3 to 4 players; 1 team is “it” each player with a ball and tries to hit the players on the other two teams with a ball to freeze them; frozen players stand with legs apart and can be unfrozen if a player crawls through his legs; start with hands (throw) and progress to feet (pass or shoot); team that is it, can pass the ball(s) between them</p> <p>3 Zone Game – teams on the end try to pass the ball through the center area to the opposite side with out the center team winning the ball; if center team wins the ball, they change places with the end team; team scores a point each time they pass a ball through the center area</p> <p>Progress to center team playing with a player in each end area to make a 3v1; same rules as above</p> <p>Progress to taking the game to goals with the center area being a neutral free area where the opponent can not take the ball away; this area is used to “regroup” before the next attack</p>
<div style="text-align: center; margin-bottom: 10px;">  </div> <p style="text-align: center;">25x35 yard field with goals</p>	<p>5v5 Game with Goalkeepers – smaller numbers equals more touches of the ball for all the players</p> <p>6v6 or 7v7 with Goalkeepers</p>

U.12 Practice Plan

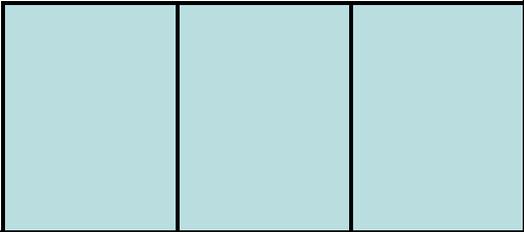
Warm-Up Activities / Games	Organization
<div style="text-align: center; margin-bottom: 10px;">  </div> <p style="text-align: center;">15x20 yard grid marked with cones</p>	<p>Tail Tag – all players wear a “tail” (bib) out of the back of their shorts; one player or all players is/are it and try to pull the other’s tail out ; without a ball then with a ball</p> <p>Static Stretching – players need to get in the habit of stretching before and after practice</p> <p>Sequence Passing – players in groups of 4 with a ball; players number themselves 1 to 4; ball starts with number 1, 1 passes to 2, 2 to 3 etc.; all players continue to move, no one stands still; after a pass is made the player must move into a space as not to interfere with the next pass; once the players get into a passing rhythm, add a second ball and challenge them to catch the first ball</p>
Main Activities / Games	<p>Triangle Tag– 3 players form a triangle placing arms on each others shoulders, 4th player is outside; group designates 1 player to be target; 4th player tries to tag the target, while the other 2 players move the triangle to protect & prevent target from being tagged; players change roles</p> <p>Keeper’s Nest– 1 player (keeper) guards, but can’t touch the ball; other 3 players try to get the ball away from the keeper without being tagged & frozen by the keeper; keeper tries to freeze all 3 players; once a player is frozen, he can remain frozen until all are frozen or the ball is stolen</p> <p>Keeper’s Nest 3v1 – 3 cones form a triangle; 3 players on outside possess the ball; triangle creates 3 goals; 1 player (keeper) is in middle & tries to prevent the ball from penetrating the triangle from a pass; the 3 players try to pass the ball between them and move the keeper out of position so the ball may be played through two sides; if keeper intercepts the ball, player who played the ball last becomes new keeper</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Very good for teaching passing and support</p>
<div style="text-align: center; margin-bottom: 10px;">  </div> <p style="text-align: center;">25x35 yard field</p>	<p>4v4 Games</p> <p>To Lines – play across the field; to score player must dribble across the line in control of the ball; Dribbling Game</p> <p style="text-align: center;">or</p> <p>To 4 small goals – play across the field; each team defends two small goals (marked with cones) and scores on the opposite two small goals (marked with cones) Passing Game</p> <p style="text-align: center;">or</p> <p>To 2 normal goals with GKs – Shooting Game</p> <p>6v6, 7v7 or 8v8 – depends on the number of players on your team; increase the size of the field to fit the numbers</p>

Age Appropriate Activities

U.6 Age Appropriate Activities

		Organization
 <p>10x15 yard grid marked with cones</p>		<p>Pirates</p> <p>All players, except one (Pirate) with a ball; all players dribble away from the pirate keeping control and protecting their ball; Pirate tries to tackle (dispossess) the ball away from a player; the dispossessed player then becomes the Pirate; also, if the player with the ball dribbles outside of the grid, he relinquishes his ball to the pirate; game continues</p> <p>Progress to adding additional Pirates – 2 pirates, 3 pirates, 4 pirates</p>
	<p>Vary distance between “starting line” and cone depending on ability level and the activity</p>	<p>Relays</p> <p>Form 2 even teams; create various types of relay races:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •1st player dribbles ball down around cone or flag and dribbles back; gives the ball to the 2nd player, who does the same etc... •Run holding ball on head to cone or flag and back •Run backwards to cone or flag and return running forward •Add more cones to make a slalom course; players must dribble ball around the slalom course around cone or flag and back through slalom course •Invent your own races.
 <p>10x15 yard grid marked with cones</p>		<p>Colors or Cartoons</p> <p>All players with a ball in the grid; Have players pick their favorite colors or cartoons; coach gives each side of the grid a color or a cartoon name; players dribble anywhere in the area; coach calls out the name for one of the sides; the players try to get to that side as fast as they can with ball under control.</p> <p>Progress to making teams of two, three or four; each team tries to get to the correct side before the other team</p>

U.8 Age Appropriate Activities

Organization	
 <p>10x15 yard grid marked with cones</p>	<p><i>Pac Man</i></p> <p>One player with a ball, all others with out run freely within the grid; player with the ball, “Pac Man”, dribbles the ball and attempts to hit the other players below the waist by passing the ball at them; players without the ball try to avoid getting hit with the ball; once a player is hit, he gets his ball and becomes the second “Pac Man”; game continues until all players have been hit and have their ball</p>
 <p>10x15 yard grid marked with cones</p>	<p><i>Snake in the Grass</i></p> <p>All players with a ball except one, the “Snake”; the players with the ball on the coaches’ command attempt to dribble the ball across the grid past the “snake” to safety on the far side of the grid; the “snake” tries to kick the ball away from the players and outside of the grid; repeat the procedure from the other side; when a player’s ball is kicked out of the area, he becomes a “snake” as well: continue game until all are caught.</p> <p>Can also play game with “snake” in sitting position playing as a crab.</p>
 <p>3 – 7x10 yard grids side by side</p>	<p><i>Jungle Ball</i></p> <p>Players start at one end of an area with a ball; they go one at a time attempting to get through the area ‘guarded’ by an “Animal” to the next area which has a different “Animal”; the “Animals” which ‘guard’ the areas must stand and move like the animal they represent e.g. crab, snake, monkey; “Animals” try to kick the ball of dribbling player outside of grid; Add a goal at the end of the third area for players to shoot; rotate players so all have an opportunity to dribble and be an animal.</p>

U.10 Age Appropriate Activities

Organization	
 <p>2x15 yard grid marked with cones</p>	<p>Bowling</p> <p>Partners start 1 yard away from each other; each one passes the ball through the goal to his partner; after each goal the player takes one step back; if a player misses the goal, then the pair must start over; who is the first pair to score goals from outside the 15 yard end lines? Players must use both feet.</p> <p>Progress to the most goals scored in 30 seconds, 1 minute, change partners.</p>
 <p>20x25 yard field marked with cones</p>	<p>Team Knock Out</p> <p>Form 2 teams; Team _____ is on the field each with a ball; Team _____ stands anywhere along the sidelines without a ball; on the coaches' command, Team _____ runs on to the field and attempts to kick all the balls off of the field; the coach starts the clock on his signal and stops it when the last ball is kicked off the field; Team _____ members, who have had their ball kicked off the field should help their teammates by getting into positions, so that they may receive a pass; which team can keep their balls on the field the longest?</p>
 <p>Coach</p> <p>10x15 yard field marked with cones, with small goals</p>	<p>Get Out of Here</p> <p>Form 2 teams; each team stands in a queue on either side of the coach; the coach plays a ball out on to the field the first two players from each team immediately enter the field and play 2v2; when the ball goes out of the field, the coach calls "Get Out of Here" – both teams leave the field and go to the back of their team's queue; the coach plays a new ball out onto the field and two new players from each team enter the field and play 2v2; if a goal is scored, the pair who scored stays on the field and two new opponents enter the field when the coach plays out a new ball and they play 2v2; the game is continuous.</p>



CHAPTER 4

"FOOL PROOF" PRACTICE DAYS: JUST ADD WATER

The Ten Ready Made Practice Sessions

produced by Jason Vittrup, Director of Coaching, A.Y.S.A.

A. READY-MADE PRACTICES

Ten "Can't Missers"

The following pages contain 10 "ready-made" practices. Each encompasses an entire session's worth of activities, going from exercises to games. The coach may discover that he does not possess the time to engage in every activity during a practice.

The rationale behind providing the "ready-made" practices was based upon the following conclusions concerning U-6 and U-8 coaches. Many coaches: (a) reluctantly accepted a coaching position; (b) did not take the time to design practices despite having this manual; (c) had difficulties enjoying the coaching experience; (d) had players who were negatively affected as a result; (e) did not return for a second year of coaching.

If these conclusions are true for only 10% of U-6 and U-8 coaches, then it might be helpful to provide "ready-made" practices. These predesigned practices might enable those coaches to run higher quality practices, to enjoy the coaching experience, might allow greater enjoyment for the players, and cause both to

return for a second year of soccer.

Although not every exercise and game in the manual is used, every exercise and game utilized in the "ready-made" section comes from this manual.

Realize that some of the dialogue that accompanies the diagrams in the "Ready-Made" practices has been abbreviated to fit the practice into a two page format. The activities, particularly those used in the first 25% of practice time, are explained in greater length in the section on exercises.

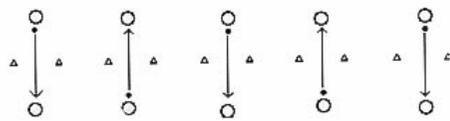
Feel free to take advantage of the "Ready-Made" practices. The bottom line is for both coach, and players, to enjoy the game.

"Ready Made" Chart			
Practice	Topic	Exercises	Games
1	Striking & Receiving	Back & Forth Beat the End Man	Hit the Moving Target Game Triangle Goal Game Scrimmage
2	Dribbling	Can You Do This? Dribble in the Square Skill Relays	End Zone Game Beat the End Man Game Scrimmage
3	1 vs. 1	Bring It Home 1 vs. 1 to Goal	Triangle Goal Game Line Soccer Game Scrimmage
4	Striking&Receiving	Inside-Out Shoot-out	Targetman Game Knock Down the Cones Game Scrimmage
5	Dribbling	Passing Ships Alligator	Targetman Game Four Corners Game Scrimmage
6	1 vs. 1	Lat. & Vert. Gates Thru the Arches	Hit the Moving Target Game 3-6-9-12 O'Clock Game Scrimmage
7	Striking	Clean Your Yard! The Holy Grail	Pass Thru Game Beat the End Man Game Scrimmage
8	Dribbling	Cone & Back Easter Egg Hunt	End-Zone Game 3 vs. 3 + 1 Game Scrimmage
9	1 vs. 1 2 vs. 2	Farm Animals Escape Scram!	Four Corners Game Pass Thru Game

			Scrimmage
10	Dribbling	Dribble in the Square Shark & Minnows	Line Soccer Game Knock Down the Cones Game Scrimmage

READY-MADE PRACTICE #1

Stage 1a: Exercise: Back and Forth



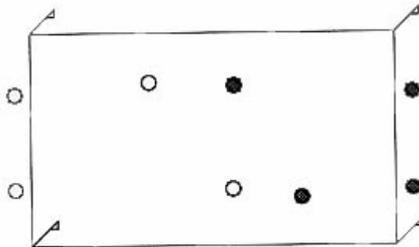
Working on striking (passing, shooting, etc.) and receiving, "Back and Forth" simply provides each player with a number of repetitions.

Players are instructed to visualize the cones as being small goals. Each should stop the ball before striking it back to a partner.

Upon receiving the ball, a good surface to teach is that of the inside, making sure to keep the foot about an inch above the ground, toe slightly up, heel slightly down. Outside is another lesson, making sure to turn the toe inside towards the plant foot.

The striking motion may consist of inside, laces, or outside foot.

Stage 1b: Exercise: Beat the End Men

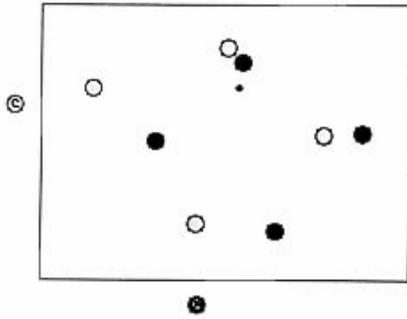


Two players from each team guard an endline. These are "end-men." Two players from each team are also inside the grid playing 2 vs. 2.

To score, a player on the inside must play a ball past the opposing end-men. This ball can be no higher than the knees. End-men may move up and down the line to defend the endline, but cannot come inside the grid. End-men may pass to teammates inside the grid.

Rotate end-men every two to three minutes.

Stage II: Game : Hit the Moving Target Game

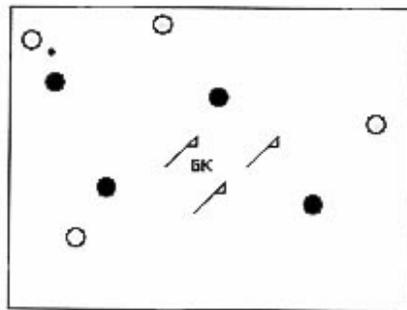


Hit the Moving Target Game

- Notice that the coaches (© and 0) are outside the field of play
- There are two teams, and a coach wearing the same colors as one team
- Teams score by playing a pass to the coach wearing their color
- Coaches should move around the perimeter of the field; do not stay stationary ; make the players find you

-If two coaches are not available, a player can be used as a moving target

Stage III : Game : Triangle-Goal Game



Triangle-Goal Game

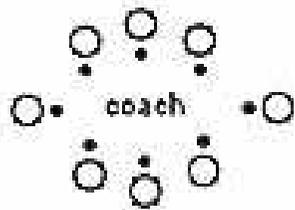
- two teams attack a three-sided goal -GK defends all three sides
- if ball goes through, it is alive on the other side
- if GK saves. throw it to open space

Stage IV: Game : Scrimmage

Use small-sided goals. Goals scored above knee height do not count. Make the game a fair one by dividing the best players onto different teams.

READY-MADE PRACTICE #2

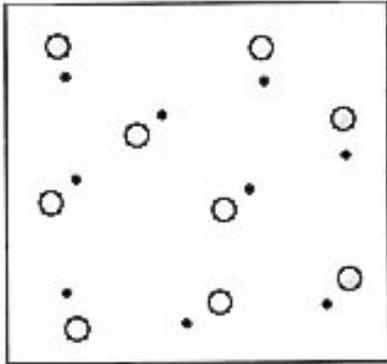
Stage 1a : Exercise: Can You Do This?



Notice the players have come around the coach, and each with a ball in hand. The coach demonstrates a particular skill - such as dribbling with the outside of the foot, toe pointed in - and asks, "Can you do this?" One at a time, the players hand the ball to the coach, who tosses it out about 20 yards. The players run to the ball, and bring it back using the skill requested. Balls are tossed in different directions, scattering them, so that space is available upon return. One skill might be to toss the ball high so that it bounces, and the players must run through it with a body part. Another might be that the first touch is back towards the coach. Another could be a variety of foot surfaces on the dribble.

Allow the players to be creative by asking, 'Who can show us another way of bringing it back?'

Stage 1b : Exercise : Dribble in the Square



As the players dribble inside the grid, the coach can have them play:

Go for a Drive: When coach says 'red light,' players stop. Yellow light (most common) means dribble under control. Green light means accelerate. Coach can add turns, moves, etc.

Follow the Leader: Leader runs, follower dribbles. Dribbler must keep ball at feet while chasing partner. If dribbler can tag partner, dribbler gets a point. After 30 seconds, switch.

Bodypart Stop: While players dribble, the coach calls out a part of the body to stop the ball, beginning with the easiest first: cleats (bottom of foot), knee, elbow, head, chest, etc.

Color Dribble: Parents, coaches, or players (outside of the grid) are given different colored shirts. Players dribble inside grid; when a color is called, dribble to that color.

Tunnel Dribble: Tunnels (2 people holding hands) move around inside or outside the square. When the command "tunnel" is given, players dribble through as many tunnels as possible.

Speed Dribble and Slow Down: The command 'speed dribble,' means accelerate, while maintaining ball control (3-5 seconds). When they hear command 'slow down,' decelerate.

Stage 1c: Exercises : Skill Relays

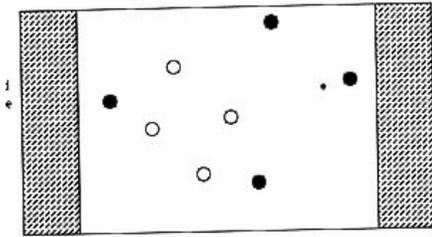


"Relays" work on dribbling skills. Two teams compete. Far end leaves when teammate arrives.

First round might be ping-pong (between legs with inside of both feet); second round, roll with bottom of foot while facing sideways; third round, outside of feet only (toe turned inside); fourth round, every step must be a touch; fifth round, roll it

while moving backwards?

Stage II : Game : End Zone Game



End Zone Game

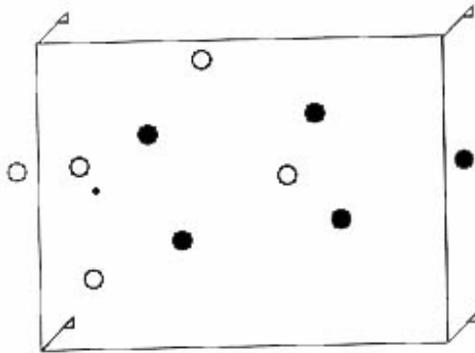
teams attack different ends

goal scored when ball is passed to teammate who rushes into the "end zone" to control the pass

or, goal could be awarded by dribbling into end zone

or, goal could be awarded by stopping ball dead in end zone

Stage III : Game : Beat the End-Man Game



Beat the End-Man Game

In this example, one end-man guards the end line for each team; this could be an adult, the coaches, or additional players. Also, more than one end-man could be used.

Goals are scored when the attacking team passes the ball over the end line past the end-man

Teams attack one end line and defend one end line

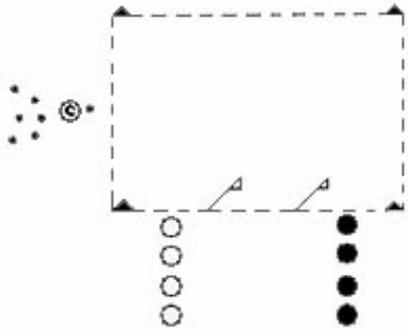
The coach can add two end-men per end to make the game more challenging

Stage IV: Game : Scrimmage:

Small-sided goals; score below knee height; even teams.

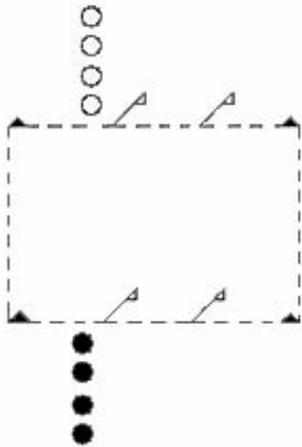
READY-MADE PRACTICE #3

Stage 1a : Exercise : Bring It Home



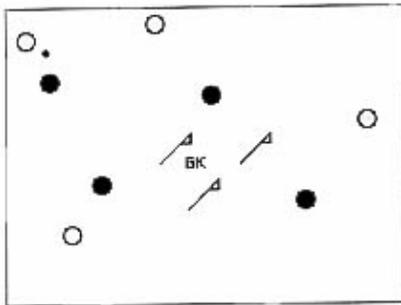
Behind the poles of each goal is a line of players. When the coach plays the ball into the square, the first two race to get the ball. Whoever wins possession tries to score on the small goal.

Stage 1b : Exercise : 1 vs. 1 to Goal



Behind the poles of each goal is a line of players. When the coach plays the ball into the square, the first two race to get the ball. Whoever wins possession tries to score on the opponent's small goal.

Stage II: Game: The Triangle Goal Game



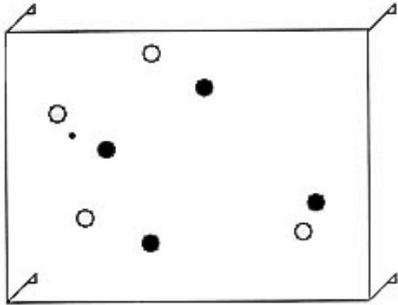
Triangle-Goal Game

two teams attack a three-sided goal -GK defends all three sides

if ball goes through, it is alive on the other side

if GK saves. throw it to open space

Stage III : Game : Line Soccer



Line Soccer

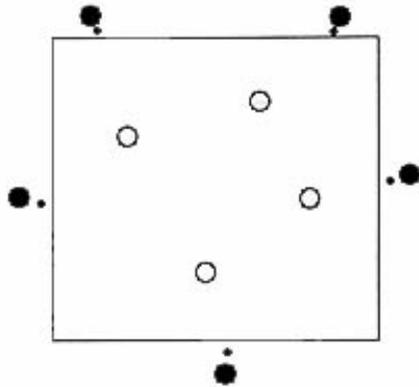
light shirts attack one direction, dark shirts the other -teams score by stopping the ball on the end line

Stage IV: Game: Scrimmage

Use small-sided goals. Goals scored above knee height do not count. Make the game a fair one by dividing the best players onto different teams.

READY-MADE PRACTICE #4

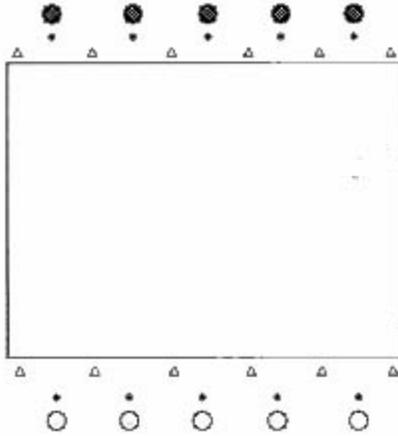
Stage 1a : Exercise : Inside-Out



Working on passing & receiving skills, contains "servers" (outside) and "receivers" (inside).
"Receivers" deal with a ball being served. Receivers cannot receive a pass from the same

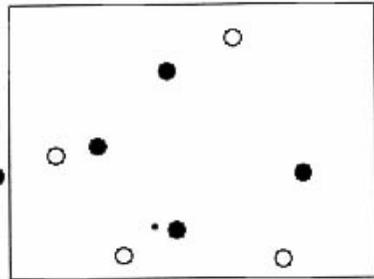
player two times in a row. They must "touch and move," going from server to server, in no pattern.
The types of serves can be varied. Receivers can either use "one-touch," where they give the ball back on the first touch, or "two-touch," controlled then back. Distances can be varied.

Stage Ib: Shoot-out



The objective here is to knock down the opponent's cones before they knock down yours. Blocking is not allowed. Down time should be next to none, as players grab available balls and strike them back quickly. Coaches praise good form and offer demonstrations for assimilation.

Stage II : Game : Targetman Game



Targetman Game

both teams try to work ball into teammate on the end, the "target"

target can and should move laterally to get open

target cannot move vertically onto the field

target can be changed periodically, or with whoever plays pass into him

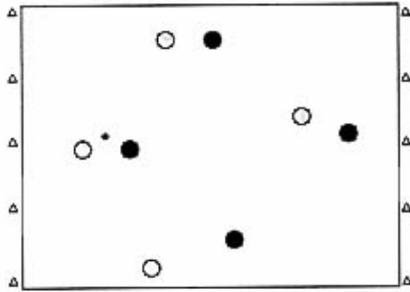
teaches players to play to "feet" downfield

Stage III: Game: Knock Down the Cones (Or Hit the Soccer Balls) Game

Knock-Down-the-Cones-Game

object of game is to knock over all of the opponents cones with the ball idea is to attack the cones that are least defended

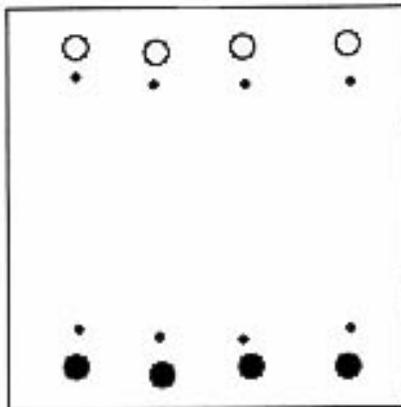
Stage IV: Game : Scrimmage



Use small-sided goals. Goals scored above knee height do not count. Make the game a fair one by dividing the best players onto different teams.

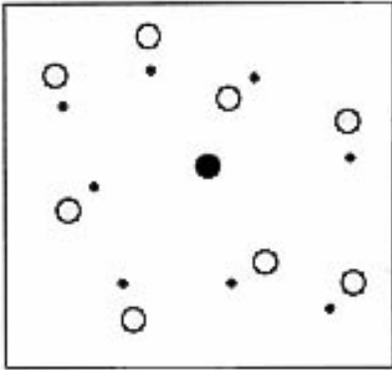
READY-MADE PRACTICE #5

Stage 1a: Exercise: Passing Ships



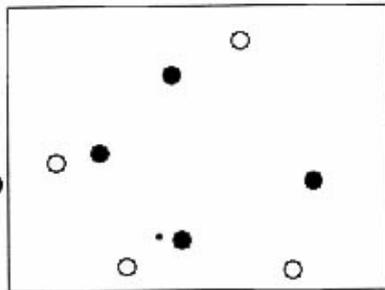
The object is, once the coach gives the signal to start, for each player to stop the ball on the other team's starting line. The team that can do this first is the winner.

Stage 1b: Exercise: Alligator



The idea is for each player to keep his ball inside the grid, while moving away from the 'alligator.' The alligator, or the one defender, tries to send any ball out of the square possible. The last person to remain in the square with the ball is the winner.

Stage II: Game: Targetman Game



Targetman Game

both teams try to work ball into teammate on the end, the "target"

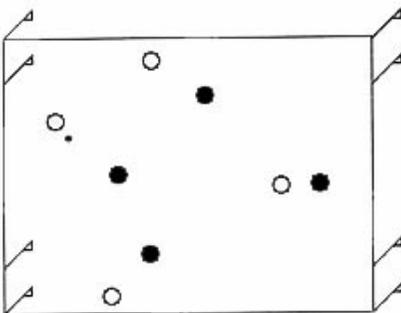
target can and should move laterally to get open

target cannot move vertically onto the field

target can be changed periodically, or with whoever plays pass into him

teaches players to play to "feet" downfield

Stage III: Game: The Four Corner Game



Four Corner Game

Two teams

Each team attacks one direction

A goal can be scored through the flags in either corner, i.e. each team can score on 2 goals

If one goal is well defended, it means that the other goal is probably available

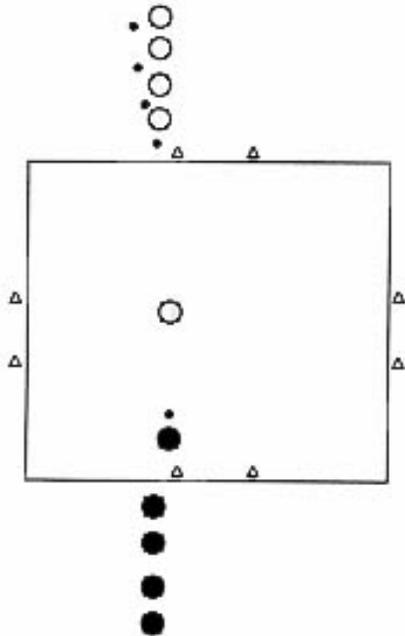
This game fosters the decision about where, when, and why to attack

Stage IV: Game : Scrimmage

Use small-sided goals. Goals scored above knee height do not count. Make the game a fair one by dividing the best players onto different teams.

READY-MADE PRACTICE #6

Stage 1a: Exercise: Lateral & Vertical Gates



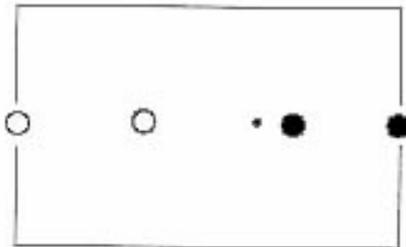
Notice there are four 'gates.' Notice also that only one line of players has a ball. A point is

scored only by dribbling thru the cones - the gates. Dribble through, no shots.

A player steps out, plays a ball to a player from the other line. This exercise can then progress through three stages: (1) receive the ball and try to dribble thru one of the two lateral gates; (2) try to dribble through the lateral gates [1 point] or the vertical gates [3 points] on far end; (3) try to dribble through only the far end vertical gate. At any time, if defense steals ball, defense dribbles thru gate.

Serves may be varied - air balls, rolls, bounces, etc.

Stage 1b: Exercise: Thru the Arches

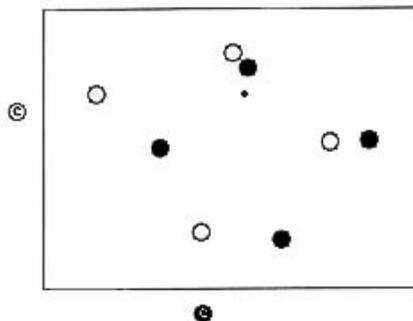


The players on the end of the grid have their legs spread open, and serve as goals. The players in the middle play 1 vs. 1 and try to score by pushing the ball thru the "arches" on the other end.

"Thru the arches" can also incorporate 2 vs. 2.

Stage II : Game : Hit the Moving Target Game

Hit the Moving Target Game



Notice that the coaches (© and ®) are outside the field of play

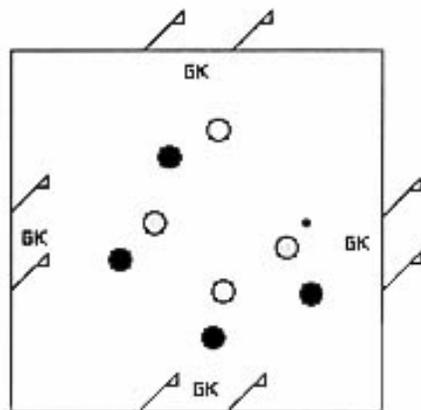
There are two teams, and a coach wearing the same colors as one team

Teams score by playing a pass to the coach wearing their color

Coaches should move around the perimeter of the field; do not stay stationary; make the players find you

If two coaches are not available, a player can be used as a moving target

Stage III : Game : 3-6-9-12 O'Clock Game



3-6-9-12 O'clock Game

in reality, 3 teams: the light shirts, the dark shirts, and the temporary keepers

GK's switch out every 3 to 5 minutes

one team attacks the goals located at 3 and 6 o'clock -other team attacks goals located at 9 and 12 o'clock

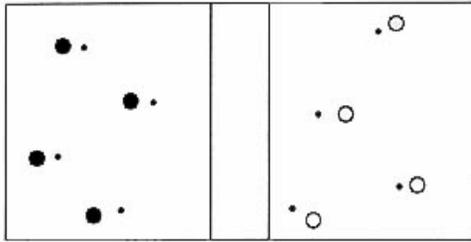
notice that the field is square

Stage IV: Game: Scrimmage

Use small-sided goals. Goals scored above knee height do not count. Make the game a fair one by dividing the best players onto different teams.

READY-MADE PRACTICE #7

Stage 1a: Exercise: Clean Your Yard!

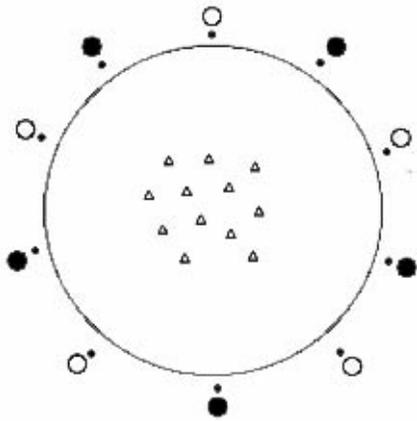


What would happen if lots of soccer balls were left out in the front yard, and mom came home? Obviously, the yard would have to be cleaned!

The team that wins is the team with the least amount of soccer balls left in their yard after one minute. Send them to the other yard!

This exercise works on striking. The middle zone is about 5 yards wide, while the end zones closer to 20. If a ball does not make it across the middle, go get it. Coaches help keep the balls in.

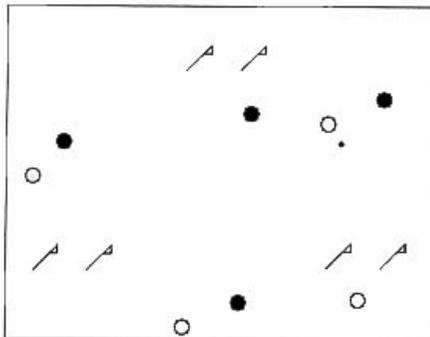
Stage Ib : Exercise : The Holy Grail



Divide the players into two teams. Both teams spread around the circle with a ball. Notice the teams are intermixed. When signal is given, players strike the balls at the cones (the small kind that fall over when hit with a ball). Team that wins is team that knocks down last cone - the "Holy Grail."

This exercise works on striking. Coaches, keep a good eye out for form - is ankle locked? Is plant foot pointed at target? Is center of gravity lowered? Is foot touching the ball center?

Stage II : Game : Pass Thru Game



Pass Thru Game

Two teams

The goals are approximately five feet wide

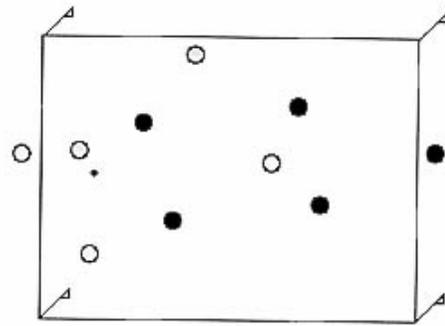
One point is given for passing the ball through the big goals to a teammate on the other side

No team may score two consecutive goals on the same goal; must go to another goal to score the next goal

Players are allowed to go behind the goals

The distance between each goal is approximately 30 yds.

Stage III : Game : Beat the End-Man Game



Beat the End-Man Game

Two teams

In this example, one end-man guards the end line for each team; this could be an adult, the coaches, or additional players. Also, more than one end-man could be used.

Goals are scored when the attacking team passes the ball over the end line past the end-man

Teams attack one end line and defend one end line

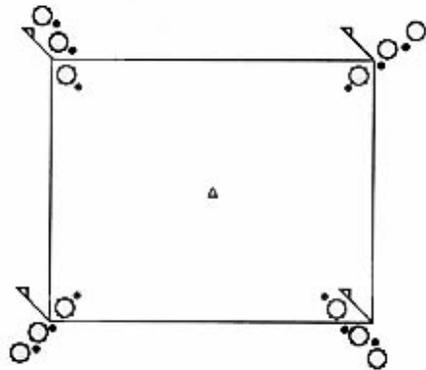
The coach can add two end-men per end to make the game more challenging

If using only one end man, the field can be made narrower to better challenge offense

Stage IV: Game : Scrimmage

Use small-sided goals. Goals scored above knee height do not count. Make the game a fair one by dividing the best players onto different teams.

READY-MADE PRACTICE #8



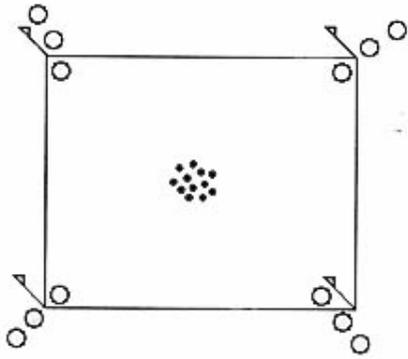
Stage 1a: Exercise: Cone & Back

The first player from each line dribbles towards the cone. Once reaching the cone, each player turns and dribbles back.

The exercise is designed to work on controlling body and ball, particularly teaching the players how to turn while on the dribble.

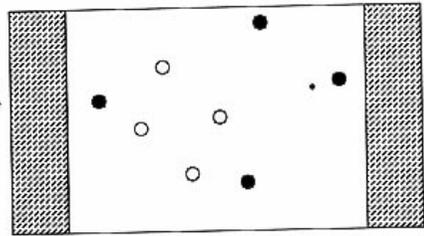
A number of surfaces can be used to turn the ball: the bottom of the foot, the outside, the inside, the heel, a fake kick and then pull back, behind the plant foot (Cruyff), fake one way and then turn the other, etc.

Stage 1b: Exercise: Easter Egg Hunt



This exercise can be done in conjunction with the "Cone & Back' exercise, as they are very similar. Players can either dribble in and leave the balls in the middle, or, as is diagrammed below, they can come to the middle to retrieve a ball.
 Again, the surface of the foot that is used both in dribbling, leaving it, or turning - can be designated.

Stage II : Game : End Zone Game



End Zone Game

Two teams

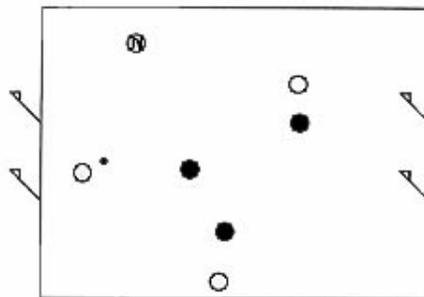
Both teams attack one direction

A goal is scored when the ball can be passed to a teammate standing in the end zone; this teammate cannot be stationed there; he must be in the field like everyone else, but must rush in to get the ball

Or, a goal could be awarded by dribbling into this zone

Or, a goal could be awarded to those who can stop the ball 'dead' in this zone

Stage III: Game: 3 vs. 3 + 1 Game



3 vs. 3 + 1 Game

the neutral player plays with whatever team has the ball

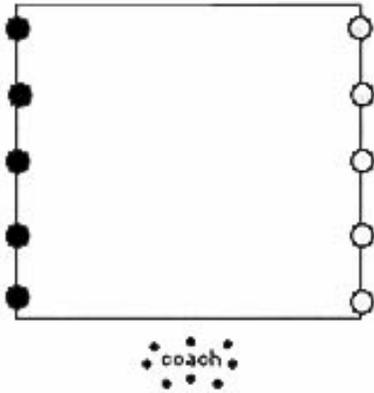
in reality, the game is always 4 vs. 3

Stage IV: Game : Scrimmage

Use small-sided goals. Goals scored above knee height do not count. Make the game a fair one by dividing the best players onto different teams.

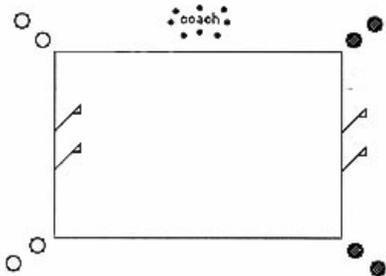
READY-MADE PRACTICE #9

Stage 1a: Exercise: Farm Animals Escape!



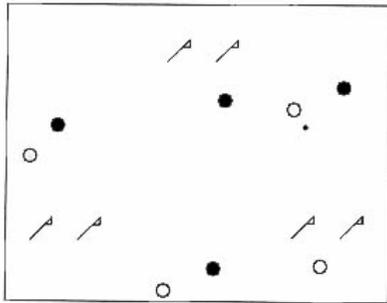
This exercise is hilarious! Divide the players into two teams, and set them up accordingly. Assign one player, each team, to be an animal - a cow, duck, sheep, pig, and horse, for instance. When each player receives his assignment, he must make the sound that animal makes, i.e. a duck 'quacks,' cow 'moos,' etc. When the coach calls out "SHEEP!," he sends a ball into the grid. The two players assigned sheep (one from each team) make the 'baaaaaa' sound, and rush into the grid to play 1 vs. 1, trying to score by playing a ball past the other players, who guard the end line. When the ball goes out, they clear out, and the coach calls another animal. The coach can call 2 vs. 2, if desired. Change animals periodically.

Stage 1b: Exercise: Scram!



Notice players occupy four corners of the field - greys on one end, white shirts on other. When the coach plays a ball in, one player from each line enters, making it 2 vs. 2. As soon as the ball is out, the coach calls out "SCRAM!," and the players leave the grid. Balls are served in quickly, and players asked to be ready. Small goals have no keepers.

Stage II : Game : Pass Thru Game



Pass Thru Game

Two teams

The goals are approximately five feet wide

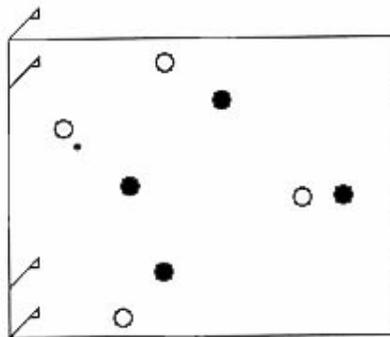
One point is given for passing the ball through the big goals to a teammate on the other side

No team may score two consecutive goals on the same goal; must go to another goal to score the next goal

Players are allowed to go behind the goals

The distance between each goal is approximately 30 yards.

Stage III: Game: The Four Corner Game



Four Corner Game

Two teams

Each team attacks one direction -A goal can be scored through the flags in either corner, i.e. each team can score on 2 goals

If one goal is well defended, it means that the other goal is probably available

This game fosters the decision about where, when, and why to attack

Stage IV: Game : Scrimmage

Use small-sided goals. Goals scored above knee height do not count. Make the game a fair one by dividing the best players onto different teams.

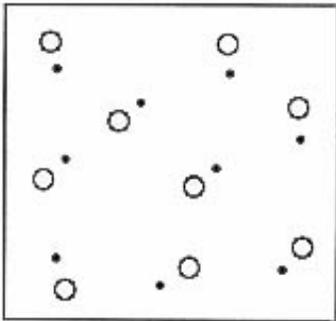
READY-MADE PRACTICE #10

Stage 1a: Exercise: Dribble in the Square

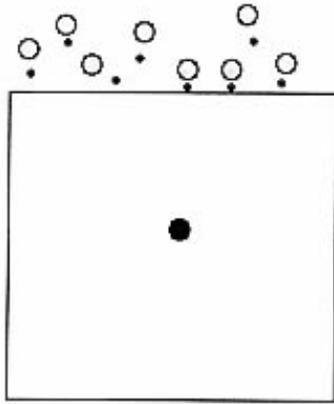
- **Hold Up the Numbers:** As players dribble, the coach walks around holding up fingers. Players must count how many. Also, what color is my shirt? Where

is the nearest tree?

- **Change or Clear Out:** When players hear the 'change' command, they leave the ball they are dribbling and get a different one. When they hear 'clear out,' they quickly dribble out of grid.
- **Freeze Tag:** The one "freeze tagger" chases the others, who each dribble a ball. If touched, they "freeze," only unfrozen if a teammate rolls the ball between their legs. Rotate taggers.
- **Nutmeggers:** Players partner up. One player has ball at feet, other no ball. Those with no ball spread legs a little wider than shoulder width. Dribblers tap ball between legs (nutmegging) of standers. Dribblers should not go to same person two times in a row. How many nutmegs in 30 sec.?
- **Bridge Builders:** Players partner up. One player has ball, other no ball. Those without ball spread out inside the square, stand feet together. Players with ball dribble around inside square, touching ball around one side of stander while running around other to get ball (bridge). In other words, if you touch ball around right side of stander, run around left. Switch after 30 seconds?
- **Change Tag:** One "tagger" chases dribblers. When tagged, tagger gets ball, "tagged" becomes tagger. Players keep eyes on tagger at all times, since tagger constantly changing.



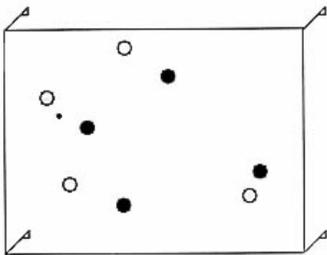
Stage 1b : Exercise: Shark and Minnows



One player designated as defender in grid (shark). The rest (minnows) get ball and align themselves at end of grid. The minnows job: dribble to other side. The shark's job is to win any ball, and send it out of grid. Those who make it to other side must wait until everyone else's fate is decided, and coach signals second round to begin. Those whose balls get sent out, become sharks. Each round increasingly difficult.

Last minnow declared "Minnow of Year," gets year's supply of worms, and picture on cover of FishWorld Magazine.

Stage II : Game : Line Soccer

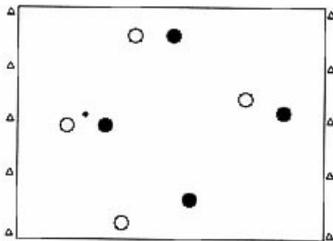


Line Soccer

light shirts attack one direction, dark shirts the other

teams score by stopping the ball on the end line

Stage III : Game : Knock Down the Cones



Knock-Down-the-Cones-Game

object of game is to knock over all of the opponents cones with the ball

idea is to attack the cones that are least defended

Stage IV: Game: Scrimmage: Small-sided goals.

Goals scored above knee height do not count. Make the game a fair one by dividing the best players onto different teams.