

U6 Development Program



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Coaching Overview

Pre-school Children Coaching Rationale:

It is important to understand at the outset that players coming to any sport prior to the age of 6 years old, in general, do not do so by their own choice. As a result, their coaches need to give them something about which to get excited. Further, at this age, learning to play soccer is secondary to most other things in their lives.

With the above assumptions, let's look at some things that we can do to energize the U-6 players, and, hopefully, get them to the point where they will enthusiastically initiate the sign up for next year.

- Each session should be geared around touching the ball as many times as possible. Basic movements such as running, skipping, hopping, etc. need to be emphasized. If these can be done while kicking, catching, rolling, or dribbling a ball... all the better.
- Training should not last for more than one hour. This is primarily due to physical fatigue and attention span considerations.
- Have as many different kinds of activities ready as you can get into one hour. The emphasis must always be on FUN.
- Encourage your children to bring their own size 3 ball.
- Although your children may be very much the same age chronologically speaking, their physical and/or mental maturity may vary by as much as 36 months. You need to be aware of this and plan your activities accordingly.
- Team play and passing is an alien concept to these players because they know that if they pass the ball, they may never get it back. In fact, they often will steal it from their own team-mates. So don't be concerned if they won't pass, just let them dribble to their heart's content.
- Plan for at least four 90 second drink breaks, especially in warmer weather. Their "cooling system" is not as efficient as in older players

Pottsgrove Soccer Club (Spring 2009)

Modified Laws of the Game for U6

Law 1 **The Field of Play:** Dimensions: The field of play must be rectangular. The length of the touchline must be greater than the length of the goal line.

Length: 30 yards Width: 15 yards

Field Markings: Distinctive lines not more than five (5) inches wide. The field of play is divided into two halves by a halfway line.

The Goal Area: N/A

The Penalty Area: N/A

Flag posts: N/A

The Corner Arc: N/A

Goals: Goals must be placed on the center of each goal line. They consist of two upright posts equidistant from the corners and joined at the top by a horizontal crossbar. The goal size is 4' X 6'. Dimensions are smaller to accommodate the four-versus-four game and are appropriate for the movement capabilities of four and five year old children. These adjusted dimensions provide more practical space allowing players to be successful.

Coaching: Coaches are allowed on the field during play to provide in game direction as well as to act as referee.

Law 2 **The Ball:** must be a size three (3). The smaller ball is lighter and more easily kicked, received, dribbled and passed.

Law 3 **The Number of Players:** A match is played by two teams, each consisting of not more than four (4) players, with no goalkeeper. Teams and matches may be coed. In the event a game has become one sided, the coaches should adjust the number of players on the field during play to compensate (3v4).

Substitutions: Substitutions may be made at the following times:

- (1) Prior to a throw, by either team.
- (2) Prior to a goal kick, by either team.
- (3) After a goal, by either team.
- (4) After an injury, by either team.
- (5) At half time.

Playing time: Each player SHALL play a minimum of 50% of the total playing time.

Law 4 **The Players' Equipment:** Conform to FIFA. Non-uniform clothing is allowed based on weather conditions, but uniforms must still distinguish teams. Players must wear shin guards to play.

Law 5 **The Referee:** per FIFA. Both coaches should act as referees during the game.

- Law 6 The Assistant Referees:** Not required.
- Law 7 The Duration of the Match:** per FIFA with the exception of the halves being 15 minutes each. A running clock will be used.
- Law 8 The Start and Restart of Play:** Conform to FIFA where the opponents of the team taking the kick-off are at least eight (8) feet from the ball until it is in play.
- Law 9 The Ball In and Out of Play:** Conform to FIFA.
- Law 10 The Method of Scoring:** Conform to FIFA.
- Law 11 Offside:** there shall be no offside called during these games.
- Law 12 Fouls and Misconduct:** there shall be no fouls called during the game. However players must be corrected for unsportsmanlike or rough play.
- Law 13 Free Kicks:** N/A
- Law 14 The Penalty Kick:** No penalty kicks will be awarded
- Law 15 The Throw-In:** Conform to FIFA with the exception of allowing a second chance on illegal throw-ins.
- Law 16 The Goal Kick:** the ball shall be placed approximately four (4) feet in from the end line, and approximately four (4) feet out from the goal post. A goal kick is awarded to the defense when the offensive team puts the ball out of play over their offensive end line.
- Law 17 The Corner Kick:** the opponents remain at least eight (8) feet from the ball until it is in play. A corner kick is awarded to the offense when the defensive team puts the ball out of play on their own end line.

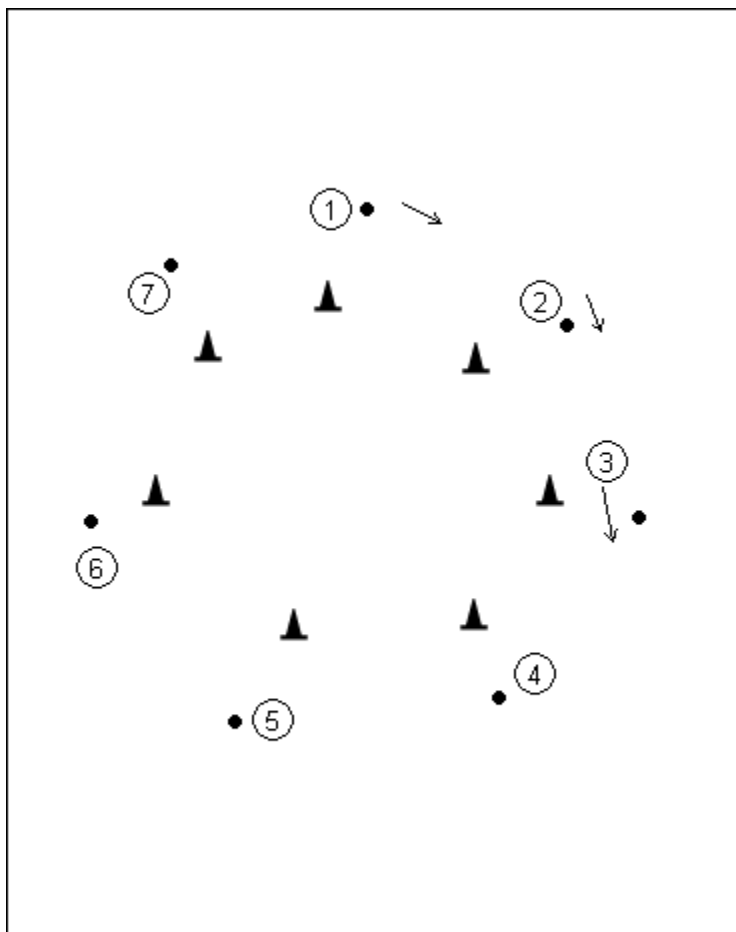
US Youth Soccer Under 6 Recommendations

1. Opposing parent/coaches and players should shake hands after each match.
2. Players should sit together on the sideline and watch the game while not on the field playing.
3. Parent/coaches, non-participating players and spectators should be there to enjoy and encourage the activity of the youngsters.
4. Spectator and team benches should be on opposite sides of the field when possible.
5. No alcoholic beverages will be consumed or allowed near the playing area.
6. Coaches of U6 teams should attend the U6/U8 Youth Module coaching course and the Grade 9 referee course.

Dribbling lessons



Speed Racer

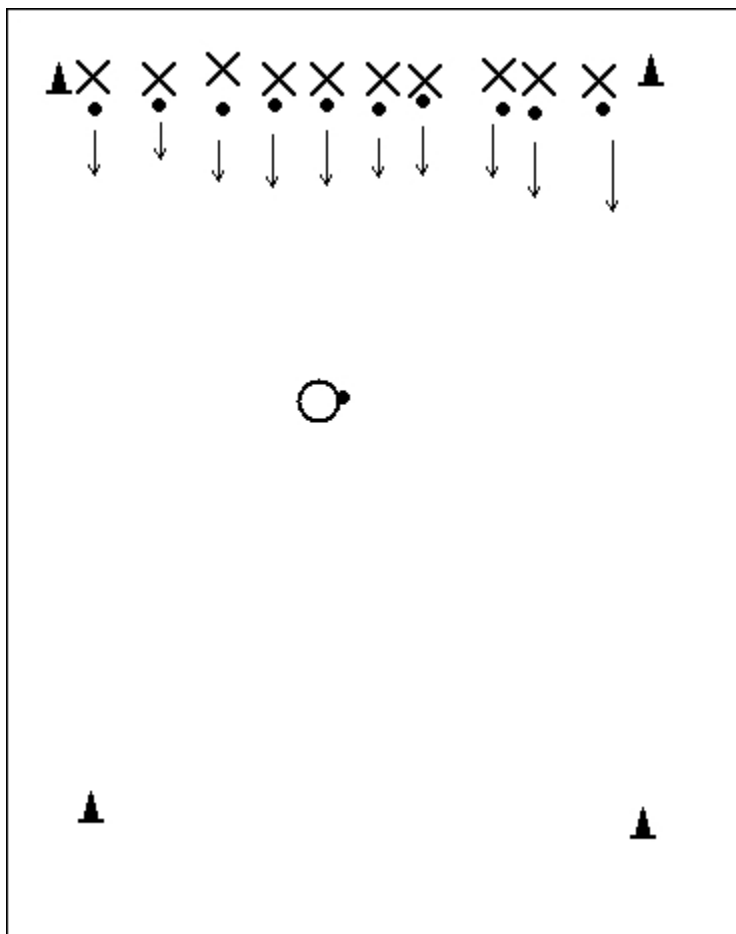


Setup: Players find & stand next to a cone with a ball.

The Game: On the coach's whistle, the players race around the track and try to be the first one back to their cone.

Progression/Variations: Have the players go in one direction, and then switch to the opposite direction the next turn. Have the players weave in & out of the cones as they go around. Have the players circle each cone as they go around.

Sharks & Minnows

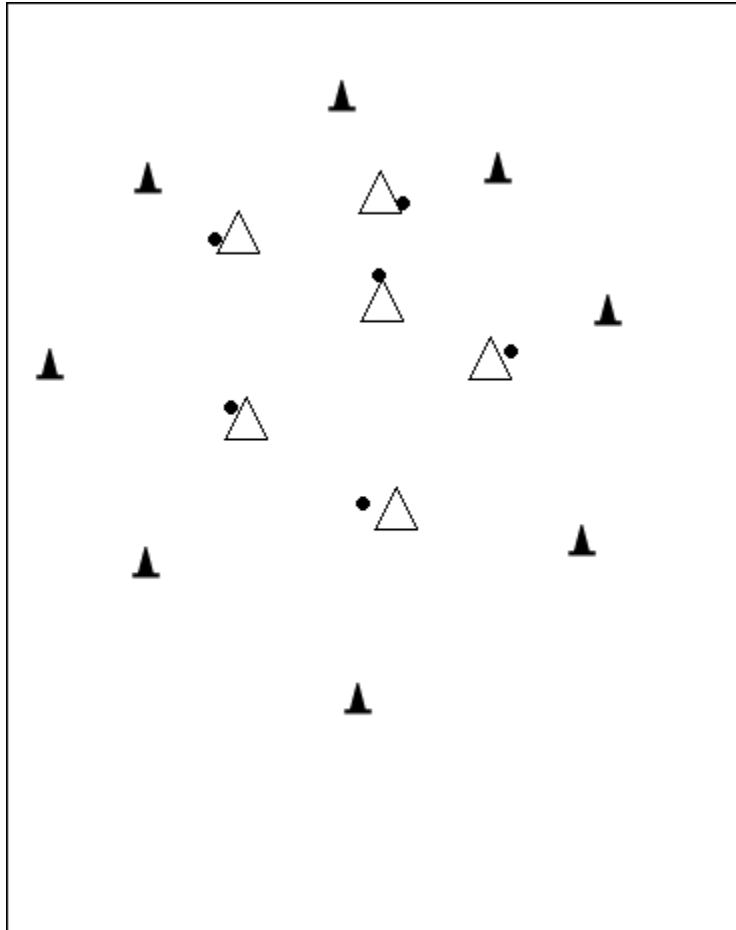


Setup: Using your half of the field, either mark off the borders with cones or point out the lines to your players. Start with the coach in the middle, he is the shark. All the players line up on one end of the grid with a soccer ball at their feet.

The object of the game: ON THE COACHES WHISTLE, players dribble from one end of the grid to the other without losing their ball. If the shark takes a players ball **and puts it in the net**, that player joins the sharks for the remaining turns. Dribblers stop when they get to the other end of the grid the game continues until there are no more players with a ball.

Coaching Points: Let them succeed for a few turns!! After a player is a shark the coach drops out of the game. Encourage the players to keep their heads up & turn to shield the ball to avoid the shark. If they do lose their ball encourage them to challenge for the ball before it's put into the net.

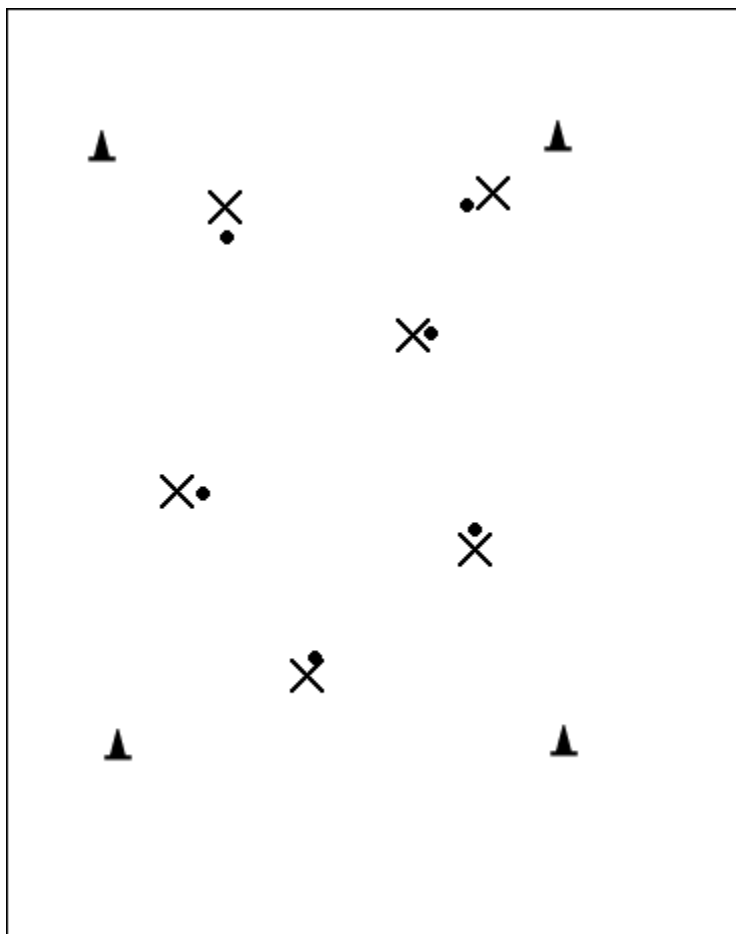
Knock Out



Setup: Create a large circle with cones. Each player with a soccer ball starts inside the circle.

Object of the game: Each player tries to kick another soccer player's ball out of the circle while protecting his or her own soccer ball. Each player keeps track of how many balls they kicked out as their score. **A player who's ball was kicked out gathers the ball and continues with the game.**

NASCAR



Setup: Either using your $\frac{1}{2}$ of the field or marking off a smaller square with cones, create a square. Each player is inside the square with a soccer ball

Coach yells: “Ladies and Gentlemen, start your engines”. All players have to tap the top of the soccer ball with the bottom of their cleat ten times. (toe taps)

Coach yells: “First gear”—players dribble their soccer ball slowly. “Second gear”—players dribble a little faster. “Third gear”—a little faster, “Fourth gear”—as fast as they can.

Coach can yell “reverse” & everyone has to reverse their race car.

Red Light, Green Light



Skill: Dribbling

Equipment: 4 cones to mark grid and 1 cone and 1 ball for each player

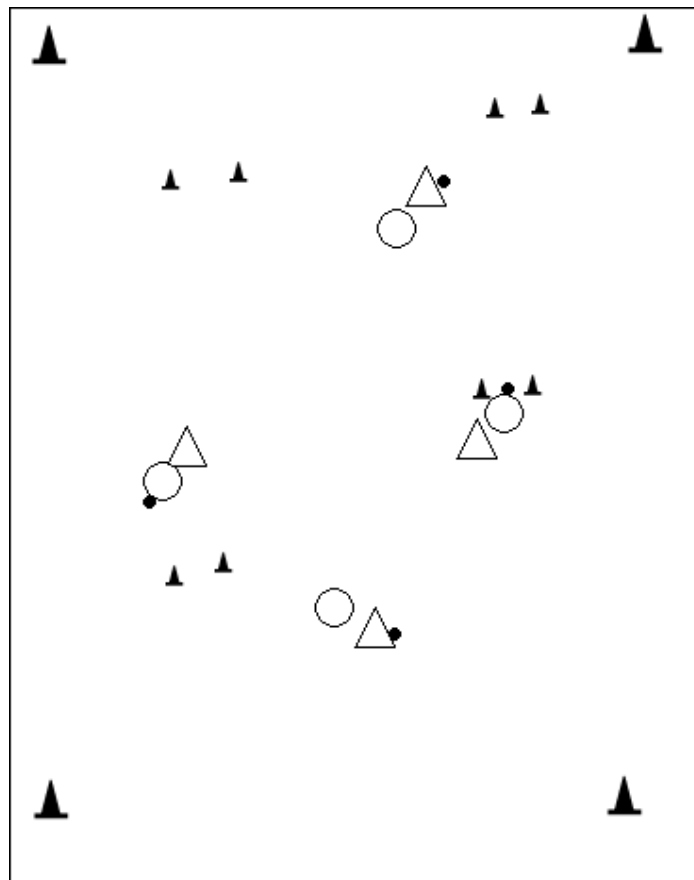
Grid Requirement: 20 X 20 yard grid

Organization: Create a 20 X 30 yard grid marked with cones. All players are required to play within the grid and each player must have a soccer ball.

How The Game Is Played: The coach stands on one endline with his back to the players who are spread along the opposite endline. Place 5 cones behind the coach, when the coach has back to the players, the players must dribble toward the opposite endline. Before the coach turns around he yells “1 2 3 Red Light” and then turns around. At that point all players must have stopped the ball with the sole of their feet. Any one seen moving is sent back to the end line. The coach turns his back again. Repeat. The first player to pick up a cone wins.

Variations: Allow players to only use left foot, right foot, outside of R or L, or use inside of both feet. Use the end line in place of cones (first player to the end line wins).

Dribbling Through Gates



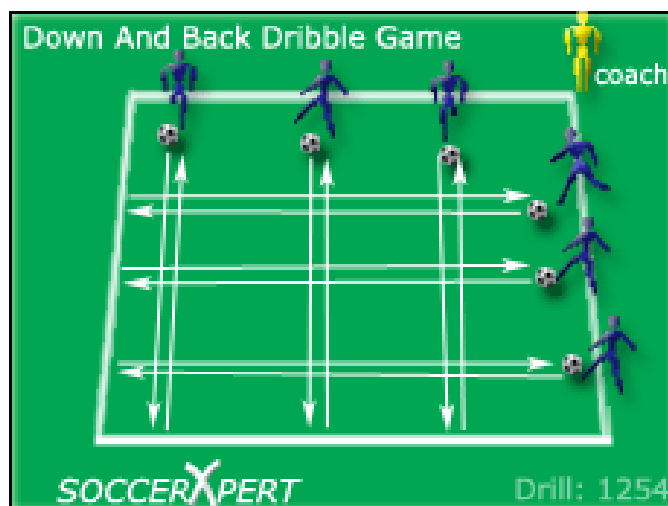
Setup: On your half of the field, set up an obstacle course of “cone gates” set about one yard apart. Stagger the gates so the players are forced to turn.

The Game: On the coach’s whistle, players try to dribble through as many gates as possible. Players need to go through the gates in order.

Coaching Points: U6 players do not like to stand in line! Either set up the obstacle course in a large loop & have the players continue thru more than once or set up as multiple courses so that any lines are only a couple of players. Start off the more skilled players first & when they reach the first gate send the next player, this will avoid bunching up

Variation: You could set up the gates toward the net & have a shot on goal as the finish line. At the end of the drill call out each player’s name to dribble in & shoot on goal before taking a break.

Down and Back Dribbling Game



Setup: Start by making a grid approximately 20X20 yards. Split the team into two groups. Each player should have a ball. Instruct each group of players to line up outside the grid facing inward on two adjacent sides of the grid (half of the group on one side, the other half on the side next to the other group).

Instructions: On the coach's command, instruct the players to dribble to the other side of the group and back to the starting position (down and back). The first player back in each group gets a point. The first player to 5 wins that set. Play 3-4 sets.

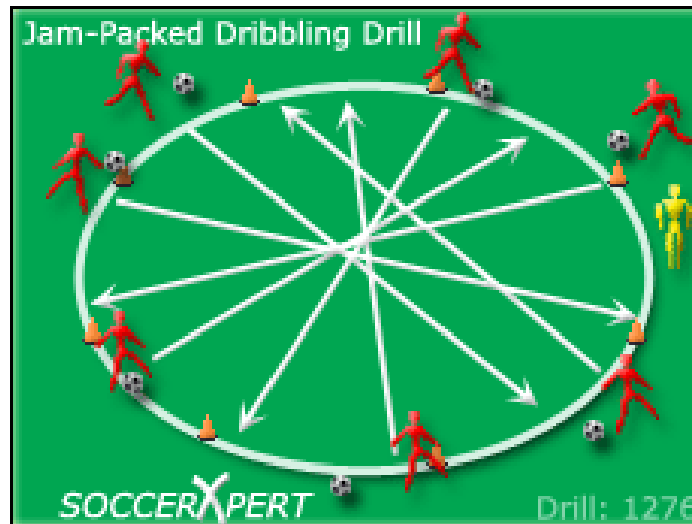
- Variations:

- restrict players to touches with a certain foot or part of the foot. (example: left foot only, or outside of the foot only)
- Have the player turn or cut when they reach the opposite side of the grid
- Place even groups on all four sides of the grid and play the same game.
- Make the grid a bit larger and have the players dribble with speed.

Coaching Points:

- focus on the players getting their heads up while dribbling for awareness and to avoid collisions
- make sure players keep the ball at a close/safe distance. If the ball is too far in front of them they will most often hit another player or lose their ball.

Jam-Packed Soccer Dribbling Drill



Setup: To begin this drill, create a circle with disc cones that is approximately 20 yards in circumference. Make sure each player has a ball, and instruct them to line up around the outside of the circle.

Instructions: Have the players begin the soccer drill by dribbling around the outside of the circle all in the same direction. The coach should inform the players to listen for certain queues and perform those actions once the coach shouts the command. These commands are:

- JOG - players should dribble at a comfortable speed
- FULL SPEED - players should dribble at their top speed
- CUT - players should cut the ball in the other direction and travel in the other direction around the circle
- CROSS - all players should cut across the grid avoiding contact with other players or other player's balls.

Coaching Points:

- Since all the players should be entering the center area at the same time make sure players are looking ahead of them with their head up.
- Remind players to keep the ball close when entering the traffic area.
- Have players start playing with their arms up and out for balance and shielding
- Instruct players to dribble with both feet and all parts of the foot.
- This is a fun soccer drill, so make sure to HAVE FUN!

Soccer Tag



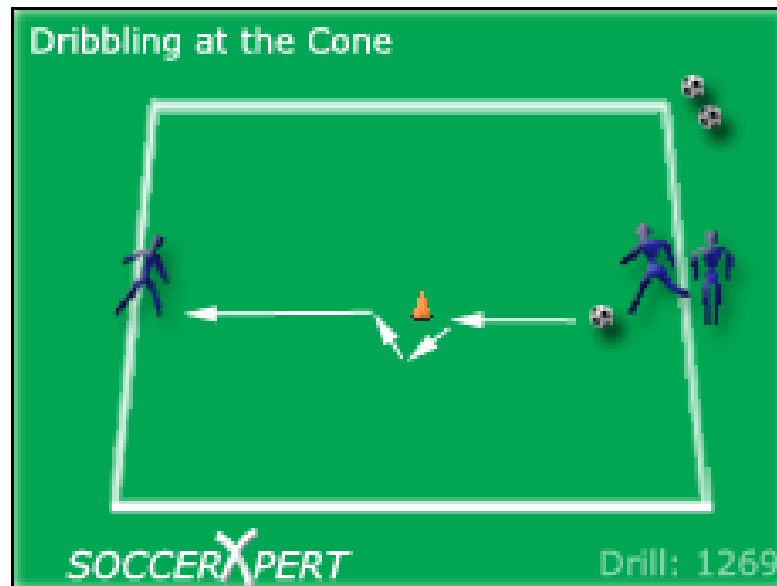
Setup: Build a grid that is approximately 20X20 (or larger depending on the number of players involved). Each player should have a ball and position them inside the grid.

Instructions: Instruct the players to tag (touch) other players within the grid. Once the player gets tagged they must hold that area of the body that was tagged while still dribbling while avoiding other tags and attempting to tag others. If players are tagged a 2nd time they must hold both tagged areas while dribbling. If the player is tagged a 3rd time, the player must move to the outside of the grid and perform an exercise such as 10 toe touches, and then rejoin.

Coaching Points:

- * Keeping the ball close to the player.
- * Head up where they can see ball and players.
- * Use all parts of the foot while dribbling (inside, outside, bottom, heel, top)

Dribbling at the Cone



Setup: Build a grid that is 20X10 yards with a cone in the middle of the grid. This grid will be for 3 players, so build additional grids as needed depending on the amount of players.

Instructions: Position the players where 2 players are on one end line and 1 player is on the other end line. The first person in the group of 2 will start with the ball. This player will dribble at the cone, change the direction of the ball as he makes a move (fake) around the cone. After moving past the cone, the player should increase his speed to finish at the other side of the grid. He then lays the ball off to the other player who performs the same fake on the cone.

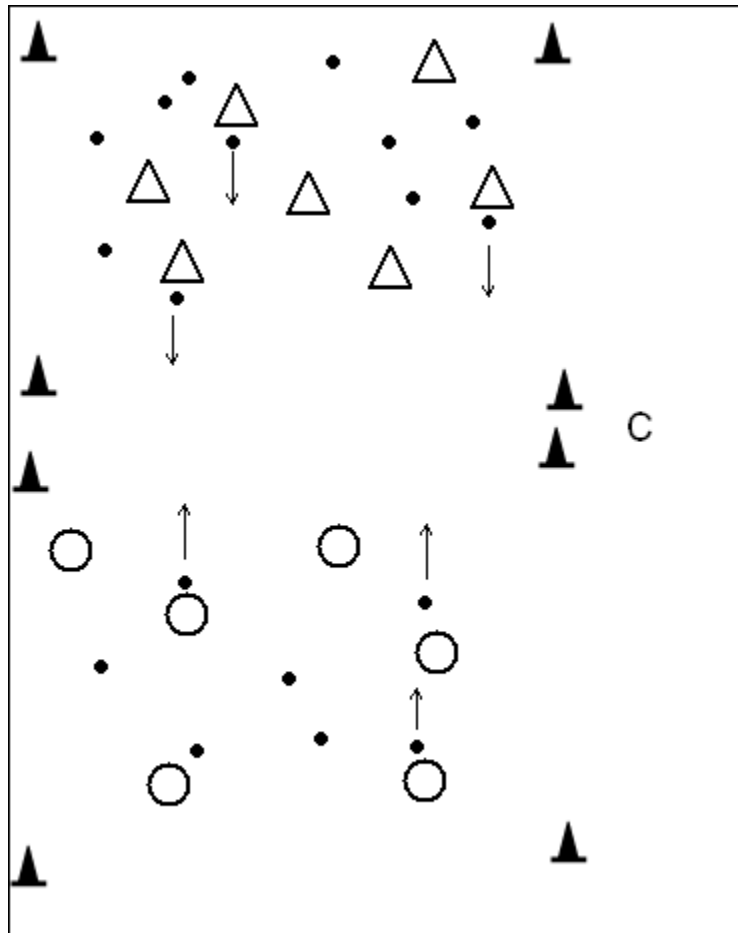
Coaching Points:

Make sure the players move towards the cone with the ball under total control. Make sure there is a good change of direction at the cone. Make sure they sell the move to the cone. After passing the cone, make sure the player has a burst of speed.

Passing Lessons



Keep your yard clean



Object of the game: Keep your yard clear of soccer balls.

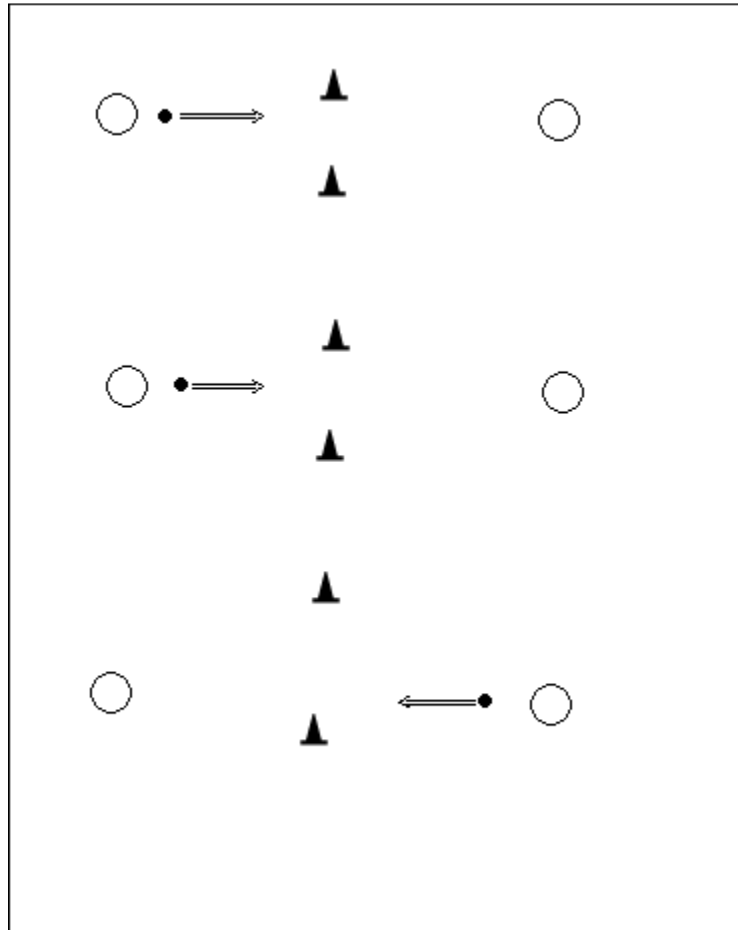
Setup: In your $\frac{1}{2}$ of the field, set up 2 lines of cones to separate 2 separate squares with a 5-10ft space in the middle.

The Game: Two equal teams, one in each box. Each player has a ball to start the game. On the coach's whistle, the players try to **PASS** the ball from their yard into the opposing team's yard. When the coach blows the whistle (3-5 mins), play stops, the team with the least amount of balls in their yard wins.

Coaching Points: Tell the players what type of pass to use. LEFT FOOT ONLY? Deductions for balls too high. Have each coach stand behind the box to keep balls in play

Important: This is a passing drill, not a shooting drill.

Passing Through Gates



Setup: Split group into pairs, each pair with one ball. Use cones to create gates about three yards apart.

Playing the Game: Each player takes a turn trying to **PASS** the ball between the gates. A point is awarded each time the ball goes through the gates without touching a cone. Players keep track of their own points.

Play for 3-4 minutes.

Make the game easier or tougher by adjusting the size of the gates or by adjusting the distance between the two players.

Coaching Point: The ball should be reaching the partner so adjust the distance accordingly. Have the players control the ball with their foot prior to passing the ball back.

Hitters and Dodgers



Setup: With disk cones, outline a grid that is about 15X15 yards. You might want to make it a bit bigger or smaller depending on the age and number of kids you have. You will need to have a ball for each player; however, only 3 players start off with balls. The remaining balls should be placed outside the grid. The three players with balls are called the "hitters". The remaining players should start off scattered throughout the grid they are the "dodgers".

Instructions: Instruct the "hitters" to dribble inside the grid and attempt to pass the ball to any of the "dodgers" and hit them with the ball. The "dodgers" are attempting to avoid being hit by the "hitters". If a "dodger" is hit, he must collect a ball from the extra balls outside the grid and join the hitters. The last players standing win.

Coaching Points: Coaches should talk to the hitters about keeping their ball close to them while getting their heads up to find the dodgers. Coaches should focus on good passing form: using the inside of the foot with good pace on the ball.

Ouch!



Setup: Build a grid 20X30 (may adjust if too large or small). Every player must be in the grid with a ball.

Instructions: The coach jogs around in the grid and players try to kick their balls and hit the coach. The players get a point each time they hit the coach. The coach should yell OUCH each time they are hit to make the game FUN. Make sure the players are striking the ball with the proper part of the foot.

Variations:

- * If the players are struggling to hit the coach, the coach should stop for a couple seconds to give the players a chance.
- * Use different parts of the foot: Inside, Instep, Right and Left foot.

Guard the Castle



Setup: Set up a grid that is 12 X 12 yards. Organize the team into groups of three plus one coach or parent. The coach/parent is the designated defender (guarder of the castle). Take a ball and place it on the top of a disc cone in the middle of the grid, this will become the “castle”. If you do not have disc cones, a tall cone will work just as good.

Instructions: It will be up to the 3 attackers to pass the ball around the defender in the grid in attempt to knock down the castle with a pass. The castle is considered knocked down when the ball is knocked off the cone or the tall cone is knocked down with a pass.

Variations: Depending on the age level and skill of the players, you can remove the 12 x 12 grid limitations, or make the grid smaller for very skilled players.

* If players are standing next to the cone, you can build a 3x3 grid and not allow players to step into that small grid.

* Require players to complete a certain number of passes before they are allowed to knock down the castle.

Coaching Points:

* Instruct players to get their heads up to find the pass and make sure the players are passing the ball with proper weight on the ball.

* Make sure players are moving about the grid in order to find open space. Make sure players know it is ok to dribble the ball to space or beat the defender before making the pass.

* Make sure players are making the easiest decisions when passing.

Pass and Move



Setup: Create a 20X20 yard grid (you can change the size of the grid based on the number of players). Organize the players into groups of two with only one ball per group.

Instructions: Each group of two should only pass to their partner while moving around the grid. Each player should be instructed to pass and receive with the inside of the foot.

Coaching Points:

- * Make sure the players are using the inside of the foot for both trapping and passing
- * Make sure the receiving player moves his body behind the path of the ball when receiving.
- * Make sure the players move after making the pass to their partner.
- * Make sure the players are putting the right amount of weight and pace on each pass.

Angle of Support Possession Drill (Squares)



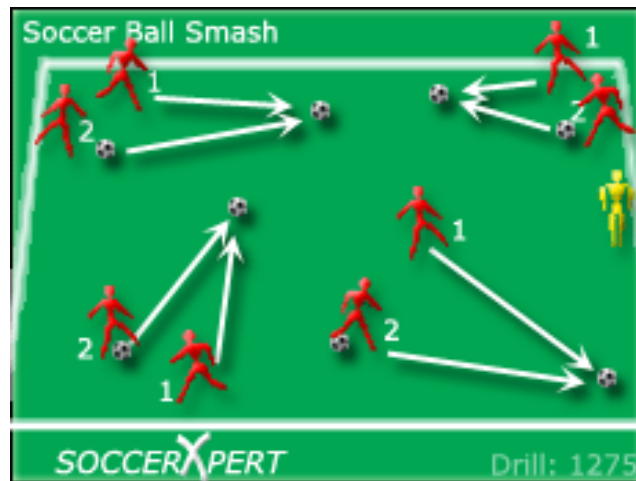
Setup: Set up a grid that is 10 X 10 yards. Organize the team into groups of three players per grid. Each of the three players should position themselves near 3 different corners of the grid with one ball.

Instructions: The instructions are simply to never leave an empty cone adjacent to the player with the ball. For example, say the drill begins with a player at position 1 in possession of the ball while players at 2 and 4 start at the cones adjacent to the player at 1. The player at position 1 can pass to either of the players at positions 2 and 4. If the player at position 1 passes to the player at position 2, the player at position 4 must quickly move to position 3 in order to support the player in “un-defended space”. The play continues with no defensive pressure and players are allowed to pass to either supporting player. This soccer drill is simple, however, players will have to pay attention to the ball movement and often anticipate the next move in order to move to space quicker.

Variations:

- Play in 1 or 2 touches.
- Add a defender (coach or parent) after the players understand the rules & how to play the game.

Soccer Ball Smash



Setup: Set up a large grid approximately 40X50 yards. Pair up each of the players and make sure each player has a ball. The two partners should stand near to each other inside the grid but spread away from other groups of players when starting this drill.

Instructions: Instruct player 1 to pass his ball forward. After Player 1's ball stops moving, player 2 then passes their ball at player 1's ball in attempt to hit player 1's ball. If player 2 misses, then player 1 tries to hit player 2's ball from where it landed previously. Each time a player hits their opponent's ball, they collect a point.

The first player to 5 wins that match.

Variations:

- Alternate the groups and repeat.
- Limit players to passing with certain parts of the foot: inside, outside, instep

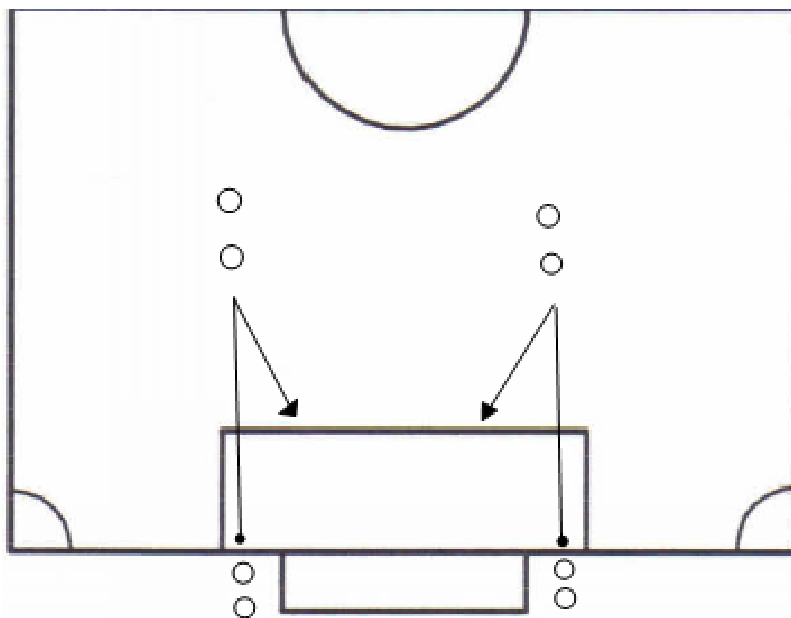
Coaching Points:

- make sure the players are striking the ball with the correct surface of the foot.
- make sure the weight of the pass is good
- watch the plant foot to make sure it is pointing to the target.

SHOOTING LESSONS



Pass & Shoot



Setup: Four cones, one set on the end line on either side of the goal & one set 15-20 feet out in front of the goal. Players form 4 lines, one line at each cone with the two lines next to the goal with all the balls.

The Game: Players next to the goal pass the ball to the players in line in front of them. The players from the lines in front of the goal control the ball & take a shot. Each player gets into the back of the opposite line after each turn.

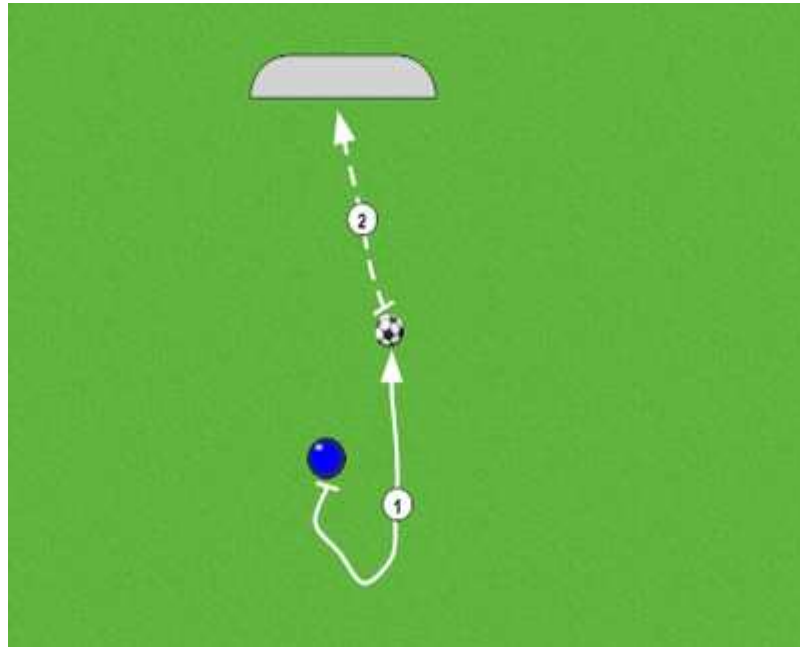
Coaching Point: The players will be inclined to dribble the ball into the net, if need be set up a line of cones in front of the goal (6-8ft out) that the players cannot dribble past.

-encourage the players to shoot the ball while it is moving as they will be inclined to stop the ball & then shoot.

-make sure the players are striking the ball with the correct surface of the foot (instep or laces).

Tip: Make sure the players are getting into the shooting/passing line directly in front of them to cut down traffic. After a few minutes stop the game & have all the lines switch sides.

Over the Head



Setup: Each player's stands with his back to the goal about 10 to 15 yards away.

The Game: Each player tosses the ball over his head, turns and then chases it down to shoot on goal. This game really develops foot/eye coordination. Encourage the kids to get the shot off before the 3rd or 4th bounce. If needed, put a line of cones in front of the goal that the players cannot pass before shooting.

-encourage the players to shoot the ball while it is moving as they will be inclined to stop the ball & then shoot.

-make sure the players are striking the ball with the correct surface of the foot (instep or laces).

Instep Shooting Drill



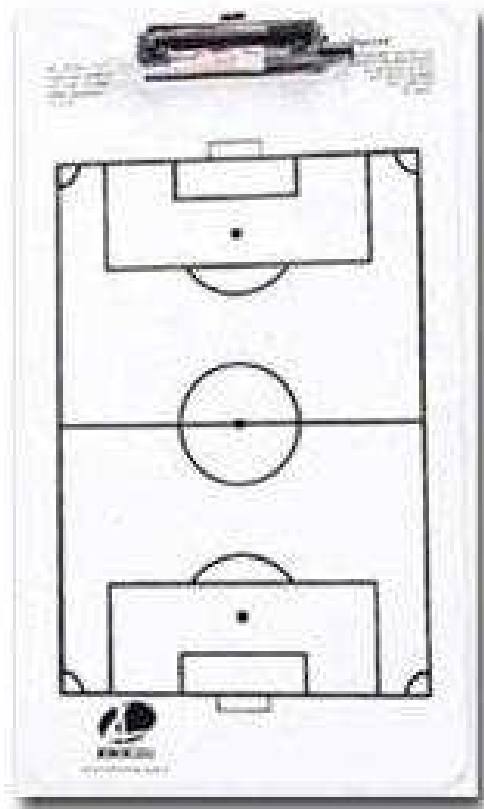
Setup: Setup a grid and place 3-4 tall cones, or disc cones with balls on them, in the middle of the grid. Divide the team into groups of 2. Partners stand on opposite sides of the grid facing each other. Each group of 2 needs a ball.

Instructions: Players get points by knocking over a cone by driving the ball to their partner's side of the grid. Any of the players on the side can return the ball by driving it with the instep of the foot while attempting to knock over a cone.

Variations: Drill can be used for younger players to work on inside of the foot passing

Coaching Points: * Striking the ball with the shoelaces, toe pointed down, ankle locked, non-kicking foot should be next to the ball and slightly behind it and pointed towards the target. Players should try to land on their kicking foot to use the full transfer of body weight.

Blank Lesson Plans



United States Youth Soccer Association

Practice Plan



Name: _____ Date: _____

Age Group: _____ Theme: _____

Activity	Coaching Points
1st Activity (warm-up) <i>Name</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪
2nd Activity <i>Name</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪
3rd Activity <i>Name</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪
4th Activity <i>Name</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪
5th Activity (the game) <i>Name</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪

Scrimmage 2v2 or 3v3