

## Warm-up 1: "The Foundation"

**Objective:** Learning to manipulate and develop a feeling for the ball

**Time:** 5 - 10 minutes.

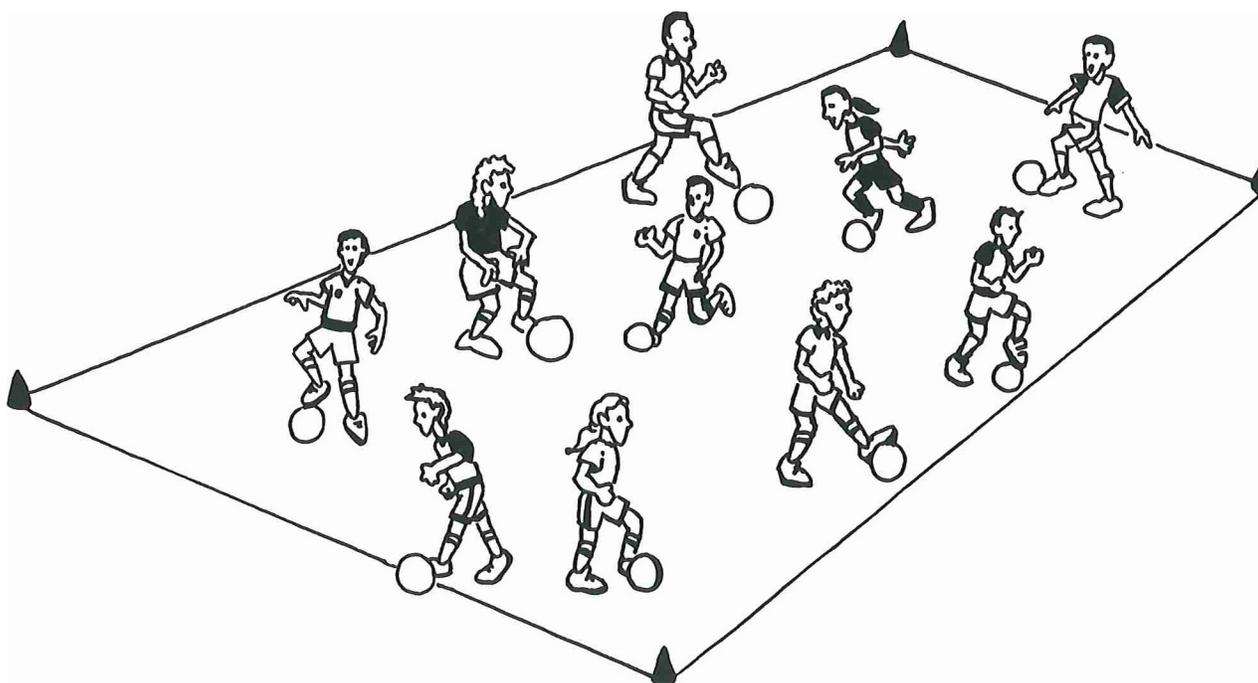
**Equipment:** Cones, one ball per player

**Procedure:** See Ball Feeling and Manipulation Exercises in Skills Section.

**Coaching Points:** In a grid, players learn and practice various ball feeling and manipulation exercises. These exercises are the foundation for advanced techniques and skills requiring ball control. Coaches must ensure players practice and learn using both feet, and that players work on weaknesses and do not just perform the exercises they are comfortable with and adept at. At each session, players should spend time on these exercises. Coaches can have their players do these exercises once or twice (i.e., after every 3 - 4 drills) or they can have these exercises incorporated into some of the drills, especially drills where a 2 - 3 minute "breather" is required. See drills "Knockout," "Snakes in Grass," "Slalom," "Daytona Dribbler." These are also important exercises for coordination and balance.

**Various Progressions:** Have players progress to doing exercises with hands behind their backs.

Have one or two players (each session) do a 90 second routine displaying their ball handling technique to the rest of the group. "Ask for volunteers" is the best, least intimidating approach.



## Warm-up 2

**Objective:** Learning and practicing dribbling the ball; learning to juggle

**Time:** 5 - 10 minutes

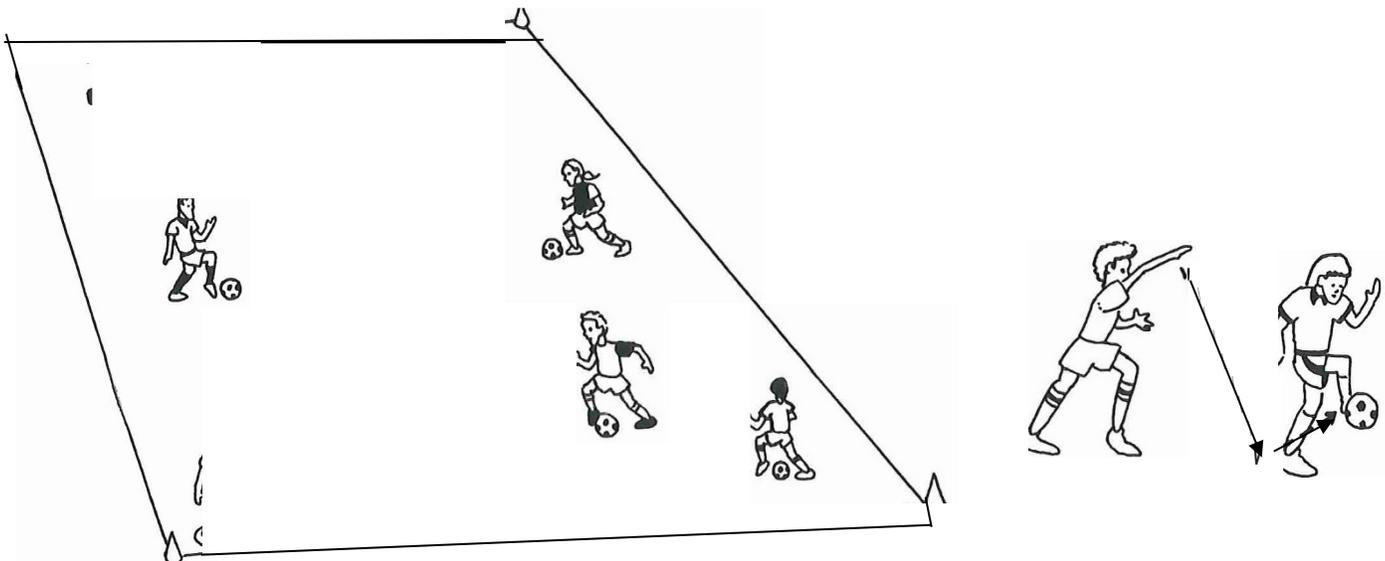
**Equipment:** Cones, one ball per player

**Procedure:** Players will dribble inside of grid. On whistle, they bring ball to full stop with sole of foot resting on ball. On whistle, they resume dribbling. Next whistle, bring ball to full stop with other sole. The dribbling phase of this activity should be 25 - 40 seconds. For the dribbling phase, have them try these activities:

- dribble with both feet
- one foot only
- hands behind back
- place a few cones inside grid for them to avoid.

After players bring ball to full stop, have players pick ball up and drop from eye level, letting ball bounce once on the ground, then attempt to kick ball back up into the air as vertically as possible (not any higher than 2 - 3 feet over head). This is a precursor to learning to juggle. Players drop ball, bounce, kick, bounce, kick, bounce, etc. Players are kicking after every bounce, trying to keep ball alive. Have them alternate feet. This is called "bounce juggling." Make sure they do not kick ball too high; 2 - 3 feet over head are high enough. If a player can do ten consecutive "bounce" juggles, introduce regular juggling, no bounces. This juggling phase should last 25 - 40 seconds; then resume dribbling phase.

**Various Progressions:** Introduce regular juggling; no bounces.  
Encourage players to juggle using thigh, head.



## **Slalom**

**Objective:** Learning to dribble and manipulate the ball using both feet and using inside and outside of the foot touches

**Time:** 5 - 10 minutes

**Equipment:** Cones, one ball per group of three

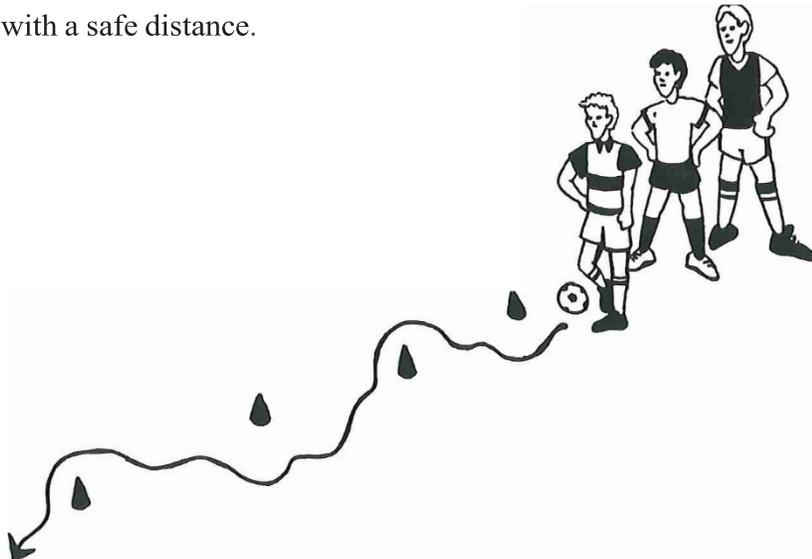
**Procedure:** Player's dribble (groups of three) through the cones in a weave fashion. Player 1 dribbles up through cones and returns through cones. When he has returned, the next player in line goes. Players not dribbling can practice ball control / manipulation exercises while they wait for player to return. Place 6 - 8 cones per group of three. Place cones 7 -10 feet apart at first. (If short on cones, use balls, players' water bottles or sneakers.)

**Coaching Points:**

- 1) Emphasize controlled dribbling.
- 2) Use both feet.
- 3) Reset knocked over cones.
- 4) See "progressions" below. Especially important.

**Various Progressions:** One foot only; requires inside, outside alternating touches.

- : Hands behind back.
- : Shorten distance between cones, i.e., 5 - 6 feet apart.
- : \*The shorter the distance between cones, the harder it is. Start off with a safe distance.



## **Minefield**

**Objective:** Learning to dribble and manipulate the ball

**Time:** 5 - 10 minutes.

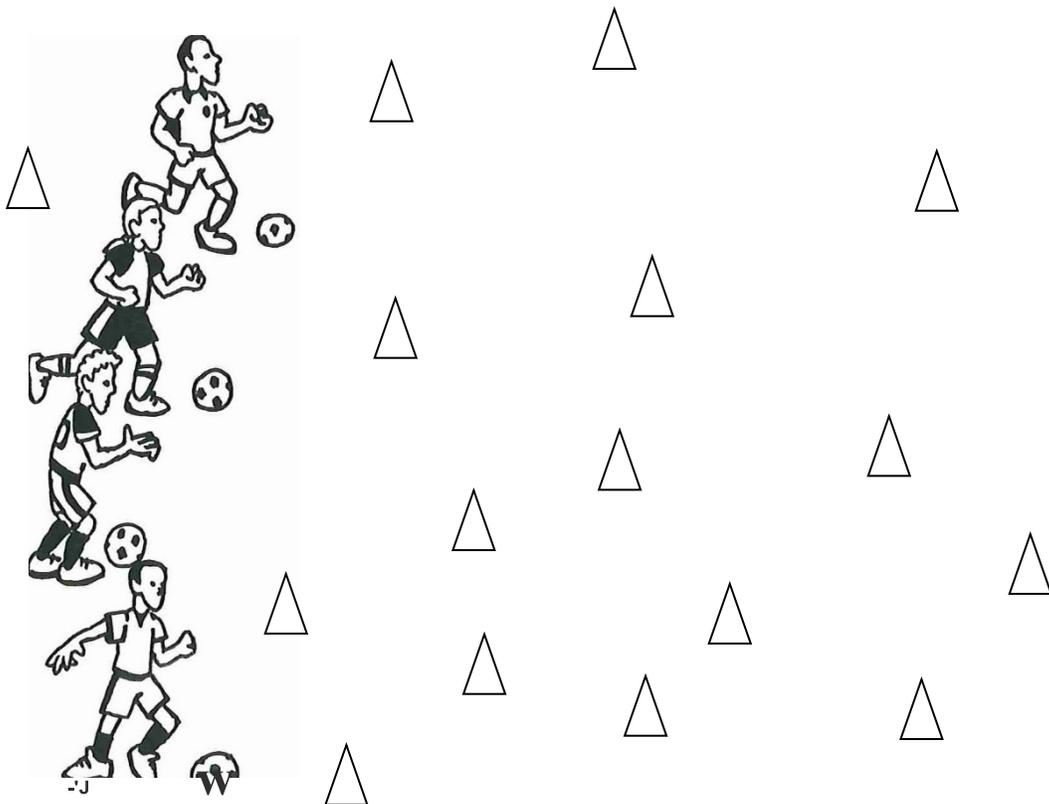
**Equipment:** Cones, one ball per group

**Procedure:** Players begin on one side of minefield and dribble to opposite side avoiding the cones (mines.)

**Coaching Points:**

- 1) Emphasize keeping ball close while dribbling.
- 2) Use both feet. Have players use both inside and outside parts of foot. Restrict players to one foot, using inside and outside part on alternating touches.
- 3) Players reset any cones they knock over.

**Various Progressions:** Start with a few scattered cones.  
Add one cone each turn.  
Restrictions; one foot only, hands behind back.  
Half of players begin on one side; other half begin on other side.  
Players must avoid cones and oncoming traffic.



## Jungle Jim

**Objective:** Learn to dribble and manipulate the ball

**Time:** 5 - 10 minutes.

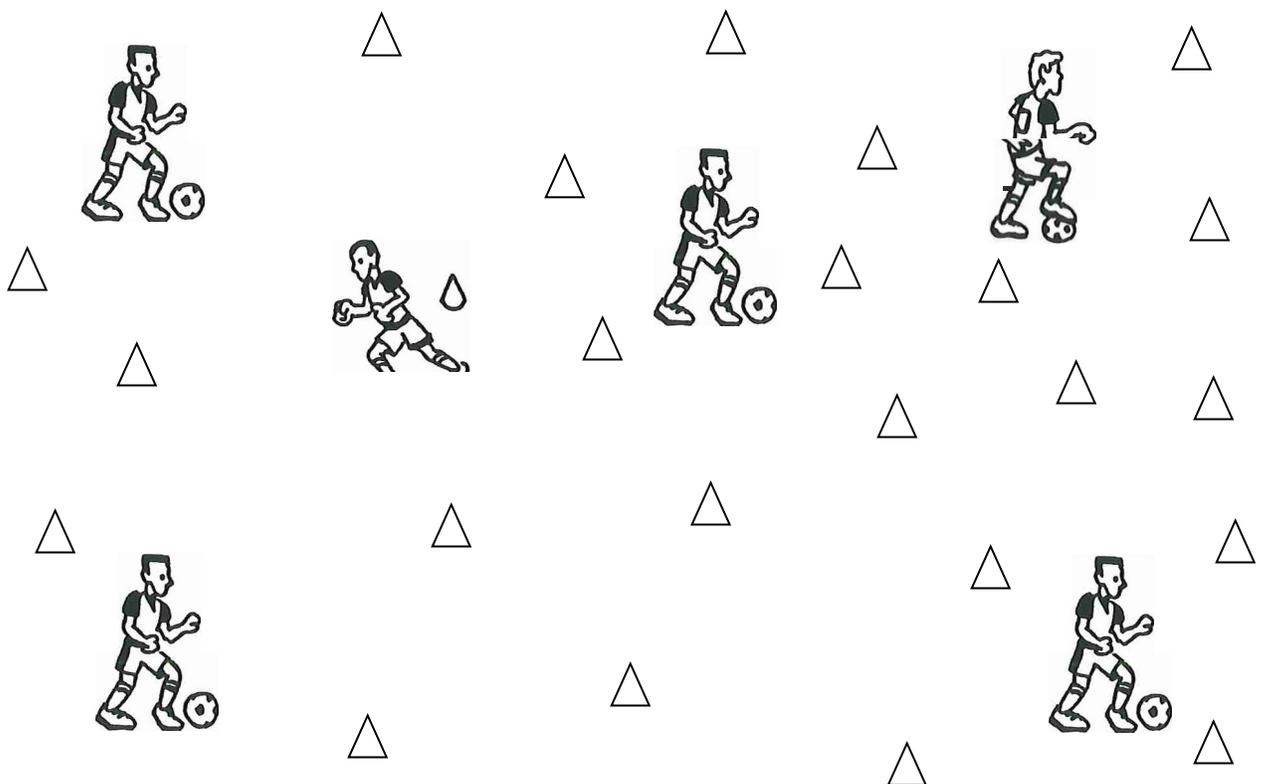
**Equipment:** Cones, one ball per player

**Procedure:** Players dribble in and around cones. Periodically, coach will blow whistle and players will leave their balls, exit the grid, run one lap around outside of grid, re-enter grid, and continue their dribbling. Must exit and enter grid at same point, ensuring full lap.

**Coaching Points:**

- 1) Emphasize keeping ball under control while dribbling.
- 2) Use both feet.
- 3) Players set up cones they hit.

**Various Progressions:** Restrictions; one foot only; inside of foot only; outside of foot only; alternating inside / outside touches.  
: Hands behind back  
: On whistle, players use sole of foot to manipulate ball and change direction.



## Captain Highliner

**Objective:** Learning to dribble and manipulate the ball

**Time:** 5 - 10 minutes.

**Equipment:** Cones or markers, one ball per player

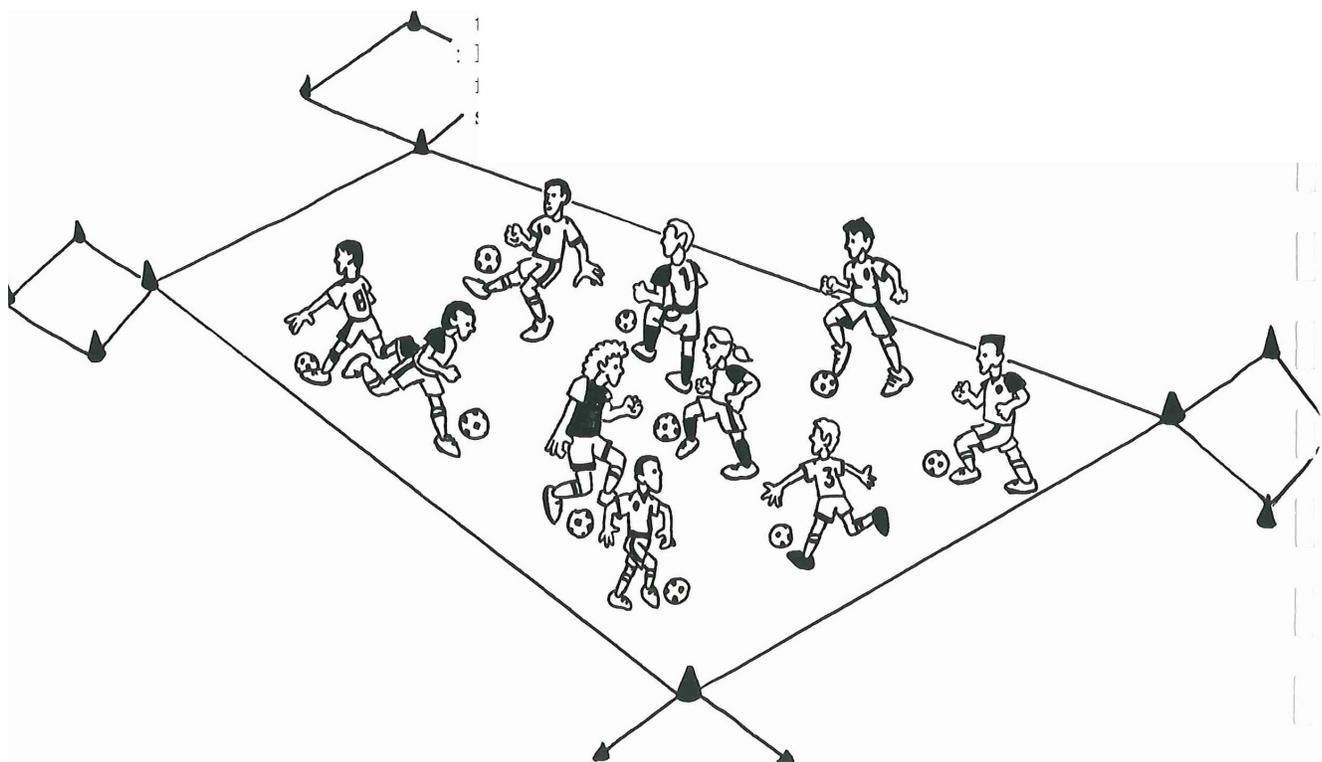
**Procedure:** Players start by dribbling inside main grid (open seas.) After 25 - 30 seconds, coach blows whistle and yells "storm;" players then dribble inside one of the four "ports" to safety. If coach yells "abandon ship," players leave their balls inside grid and quickly seek "port." Next whistle, resume dribbling or retrieve balls and resume dribbling. (Will have ball mix-ups; stress sharing.)

**Coaching Points:**

- 1) Emphasize keeping ball under control while dribbling.
- 2) Use both feet.
- 3) Players can miss turn if they confuse command.
- 4) Don't allow players to dribble near port while waiting for command. If this is a problem, say they cannot go to nearest port on command.

**Various Progressions:** Place a few cones (icebergs) on the open sea. Designate one port as "dry dock" where players must go if they hit an iceberg. Keep them there for 30 seconds to one minute.

Restrictions; one foot only; hands behind back; inside / outside of foot touches only; on "storm" command, must pull ball back with sole of foot and change direction 180° and dribble to port.



## Daytona Dribble

**Objective:** Learning to dribble and manipulate the ball

**Time:** 5 - 10 minutes.

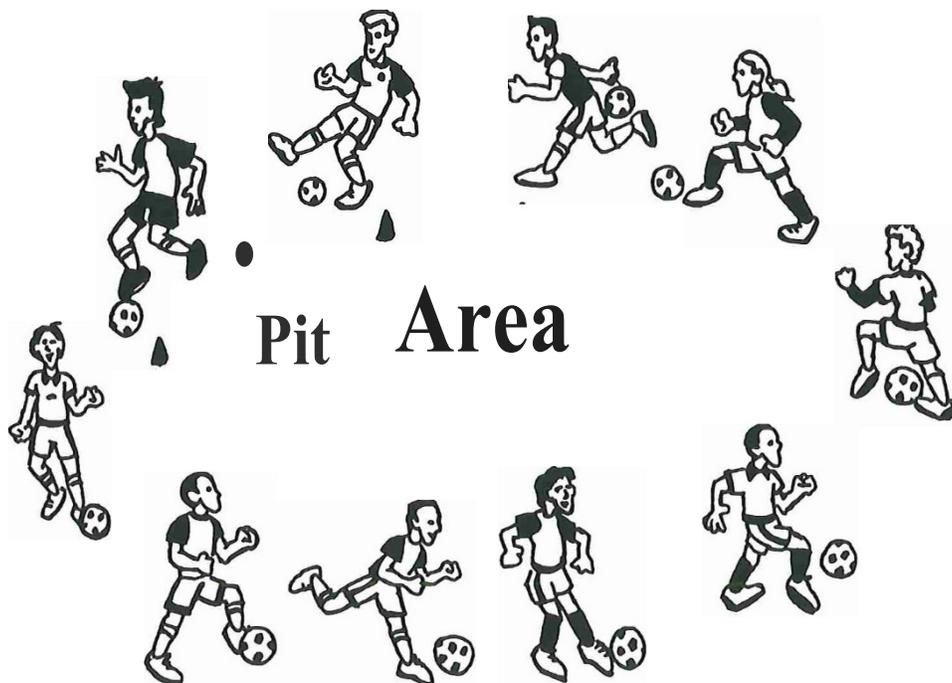
**Equipment:** Cones or markers, one ball per player

**Procedure:** Place cones in oval shape as in Diagram A. Players dribble in one direction around the cones (track.) After 30 - 45 seconds, coach blows whistle: 1 blast - bring ball to full stop, 2 blasts - dribble in opposite direction, 3 blasts - dribble into pit area and practice ball handling and manipulation exercises.

**Coaching Points:**

- 1) Emphasize close control while dribbling.
- 2) Use both feet.
- 3) When giving whistle blasts, give verbal command also, i.e., "pits," "turn," "full stop."

**Various Progressions:** Players partner up. One partner will dribble around the "track," while other partner practices ball control and manipulation exercises inside pit. After 30 - 45 seconds, blow whistle; partners switch roles. Restrictions; hands behind back; one foot only, switch direction often so player will turn corner using inside part of foot and outside part of foot.



## Snakes in the Grass

**Objective:** Learn to dribble and manipulate the ball

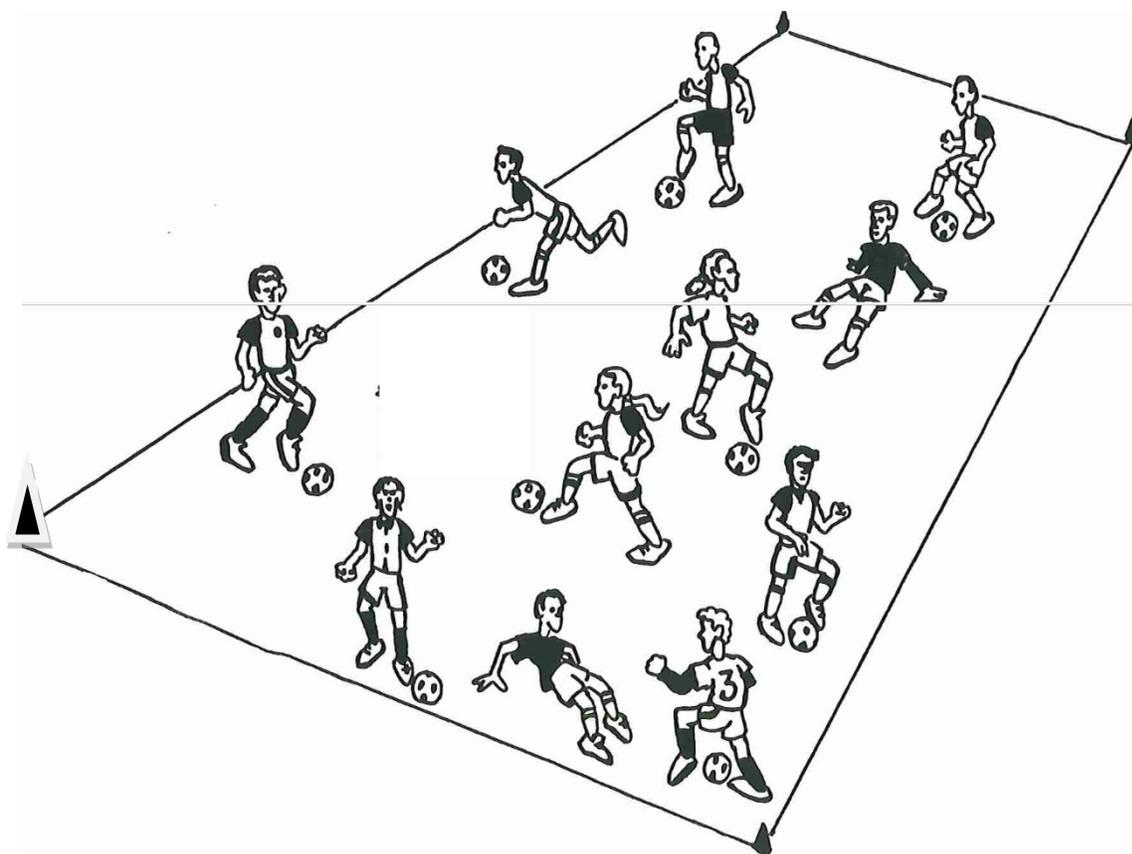
**Time:** 5 - 10 minutes

**Equipment:** Cones, most players will need balls

**Procedure:** Players will dribble inside a grid avoiding three to six players who coach designates as "snakes". The snakes maneuver in a crab walk trying to touch a dribbler or kick a dribbler's ball. A dribbler who is touched or whose ball is kicked by a snake will exit grid and practice ball control and manipulation exercises on the outside of grid. After all dribblers have been touched (or have had their balls kicked), rotate new snakes into the game. It is best to designate 25% as snakes (3:1 ratio).

**Coaching Points:** 1) Emphasize dribbling using both feet.  
2) Emphasize quick turns and evasive action to avoid snakes.

**Various Progressions:** Players dribble with hands behind back.  
Restrict dribblers to one foot only, using inside and outside touches to change direction.



## Fort Knocks

**Objective:** Learning to dribble and manipulate the ball; learning to kick accurately

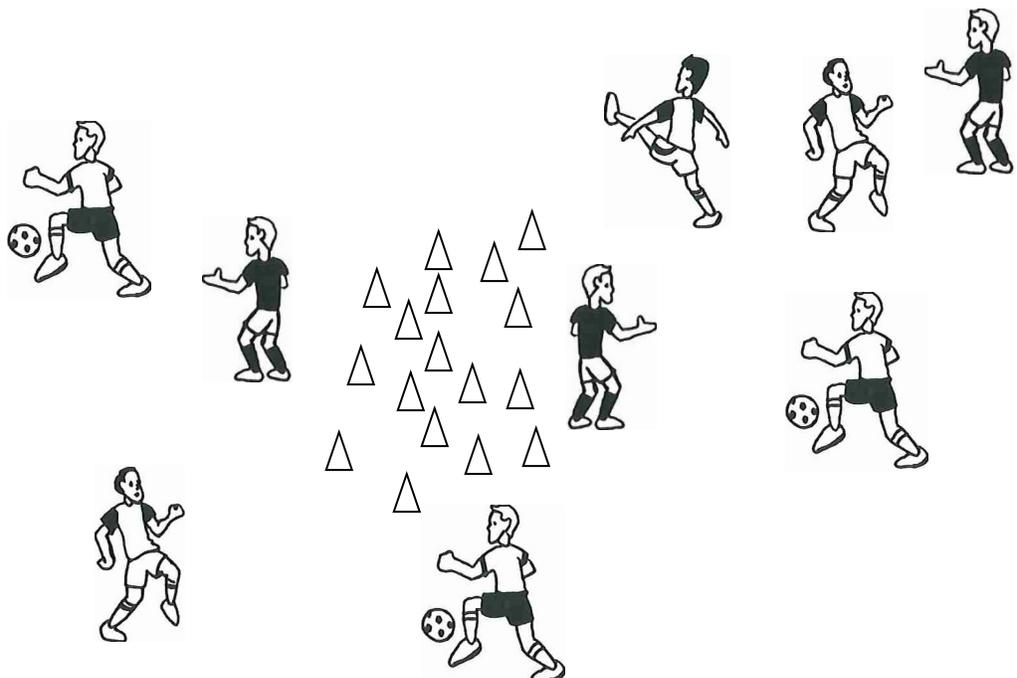
**Time:** 5 - 10 minutes

**Equipment:** Cones, 50 - 90 % of players will need balls.

**Procedure:** Place cones at random as in diagram. This is the "fort." Have one quarter to one third of players (without balls) station themselves in and around fort to protect cones from being knocked over by the rest of the group who must dribble around and kick their own balls, hoping to knock over the cones. Defenders will try to kick attackers' balls away. New game begins when all cones have been felled. Defenders are not to kick balls too far. Dribblers attack fort at will. 3v1 superiority of dribblers to defenders works best. If defenders stray too far from fort, they leave fort vulnerable. Spread cones out; do not bunch.

**Coaching Points:** 1) Emphasize dribbling and kicking using both feet.  
2) Attackers must attempt shot at least five feet from targeted cone.

**Various Progressions:** Once all cones are felled, rotate players, new defenders.  
Variation: continuous game: Defenders steal an attacker's ball and become an attacker. It is now a game of trying to steal balls and kick.  
Have defenders defend with hands behind back. This will greatly encourage a good defensive stance and posture.



## Knock Out

**Objective:** Learning to dribble and manipulate the ball; learning to shield and maintain possession of the ball

**Time:** 5 - 10 minutes

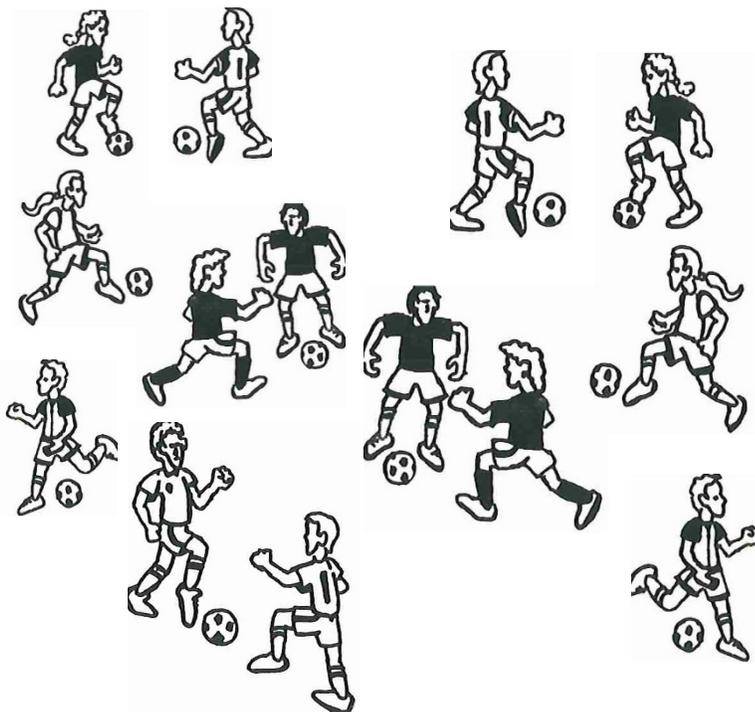
**Equipment:** Cones, most players will need balls

**Procedure:** In a grid, 75 % of group are dribbling their own balls. The other 25 % try to knock the balls of the dribblers outside of the grid. When a dribbler loses his ball outside of the grid, he leaves the grid, retrieves his ball, and does ball control / feeling exercises outside the grid. When all balls have been knocked out of the grid, players rotate so new defenders are in. A 3:I or 4: I ratio is ideal.

**Coaching Points:** 1) Emphasize dribbling with both feet.  
2) Emphasize proper shielding of ball, keeping body between ball and defender.

**Various Progressions:** To make it more successful for dribblers, restrict defenders by having them place their hands behind their backs. This will also teach defenders proper "low" stance and posture.

B) Change structure of game to a "steal the ball format" where, instead of kicking a ball out, defenders will attempt to steal a ball. Dribbler who loses a ball will therefore become a defender. Use this format only after Procedure A where everyone has an opportunity to practice ball control and manipulation exercises.



## 1 v 1

**Objective:** Learning and practicing dribbling and shield the ball under pressure

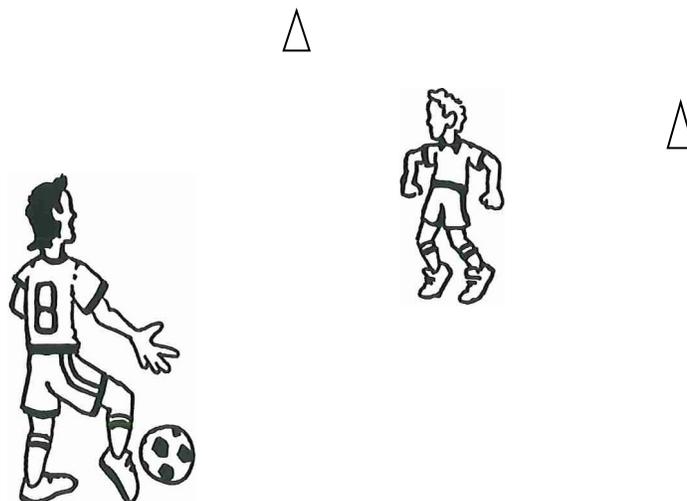
**Time:** 5 - 10 minutes

**Equipment:** Cones or markers, one ball per duo

**Procedure:** Place two cones about 8 feet apart (goal). One player is the attacker, and one is the defender. Players play 1v1 with the attacker scoring a goal by dribbling the ball between the two pylons (goal line). Defender must defend with hands behind his /her back. This will allow the attacker to develop confidence and composure on the ball, at the same time teaching the defender to stay low and balanced. If a defender wins possession of the ball, his / her hands become free and he / she becomes the attacker and roles reverse. Coaches should encourage attackers to demonstrate their ball skills in trying to beat the defenders. Also, emphasize players should be shielding the ball properly. After the ball changes possession, player should take the ball to starting line 12 - 15 m from goal (half-court game similar to basketball).

**Coaching Points:** 1) Encourage attackers to showcase their ball skills and be creative.  
2) Emphasize defenders staying low, on the balls of their feet.  
3) Emphasize proper shielding of the ball by attackers.

**Various Progressions:** No restrictions on defenders. Hands free!  
With no restrictions, try to match up players of similar ability.



## Speed Dribble

**Objective:** Learning to dribble with pace.

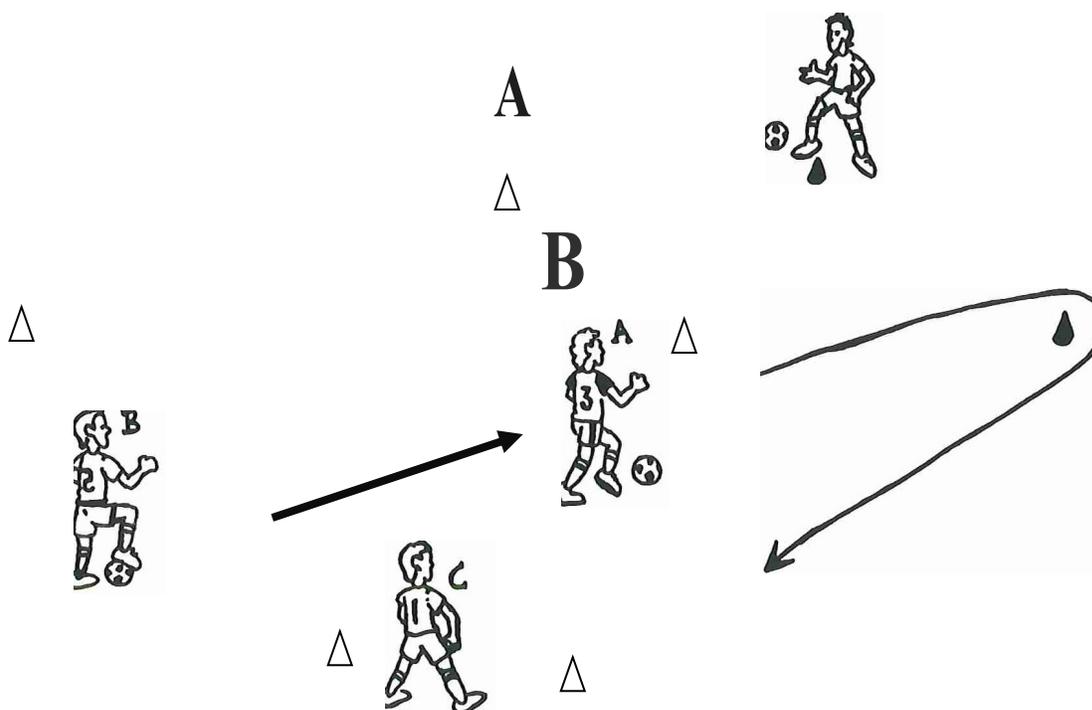
**Time:** 5 - 10 minutes

**Equipment:** Cones, one ball per player

**Procedure:** In groups of two, one player will dribble as fast as he/ she can to a cone 25 - 35 m away, round the cone and return to the starting point. After first player returns, second player goes. After players have gone three times each (one cycle), they spend 3 - 5 minutes practicing ball control and manipulation exercises. Then they do one more cycle of speed dribbling (three times each player) followed by another 3 -5 minutes of ball control and manipulation exercises.

**Coaching Points:**

- 1) Emphasize use of both feet.
- 2) In dribbling with pace, players will dribble with ball pushed further ahead than normal. But don't let players push ball miles ahead! Keep it reasonable.
- 3) Normal sprinting or pacing stride is also the correct dribbling stride at high speed. A player should not turn foot out and touch ball with inside part of foot. This is unnatural as it breaks (slows down) player's stride every time he / she touches the ball. When sprinting or running fast with the ball, a player touches ball with his / her laces, keeping foot straight ahead. Some players will even have a very slight pigeon toe-in when they touch the ball. This is okay. (See diagram for ideal technique.)



**Speed Dribble(continued)**

**Various Progressions:** Add a shooting element! Place three players in a group. (See Diagram B.) Player A dribbles out to pylon and returns where he shoots on Player C, who is keeper. Player A then becomes keeper. Player B begins dribbling and Player C will be next player to dribble after Player B shoots on Player A. Players rotate after every shot. Make net 12 feet wide. Don ' t allow players to shoot closer than a determined mark. Can use parents as a backdrop to prevent the balls from straying too far. Make it a friendly competition; see who can score most goals from each group.

## Partner Pass

**Objective:** Learning and practicing passing with accuracy

**Time:** 5 - 10 minutes.

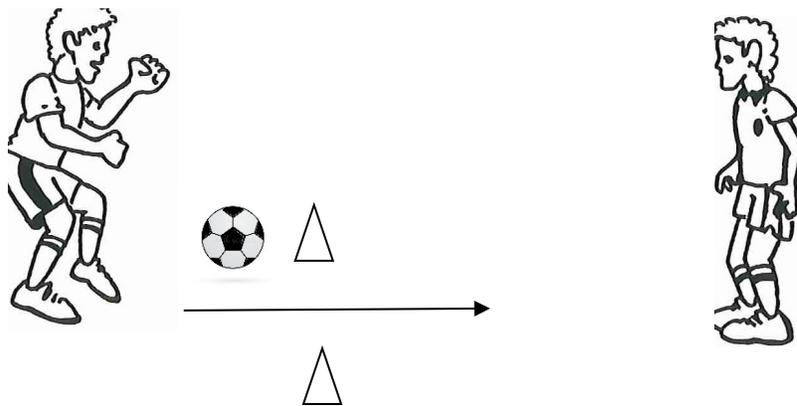
**Equipment:** Cones or markers, one ball per duo

**Procedure:** Place cones or markers about 8 feet apart. Partners will pass the ball back and forth between cones. Depending on their abilities, the distance they stand from each other will vary. Move players further away from each other as they improve.

**Coaching Points:**

- 1) Stress accurate passes arriving near partner.
- 2) Pair partners with similar ability.
- 3) Progress from unlimited touches to 3-2-1 touch.
- 4) Encourage a short dribble before passing so players always strike a moving ball.
- 5) Use both feet!
- 6) Stress keeping ball on ground.
- 7) Receiving partner must be ready to move laterally to receive ball.

Demonstrate receiving, with sole, or with foot turned out. Do not allow players to receive all passes with same foot, or with sole all the time.



## Partner Pass (continued)

**Various Progressions:** Increase distance between partners.

Limit touches, 3-2-1.

Require alternating feet, left foot pass, right foot pass.

Cones are used as a learning tool. When players get proficient, eliminate cones.

Introduce players to receiving ball on outside part of the foot. This is a skill of receiving ball while under pressure. Practice both feet!

## Don't Let the Cat Out

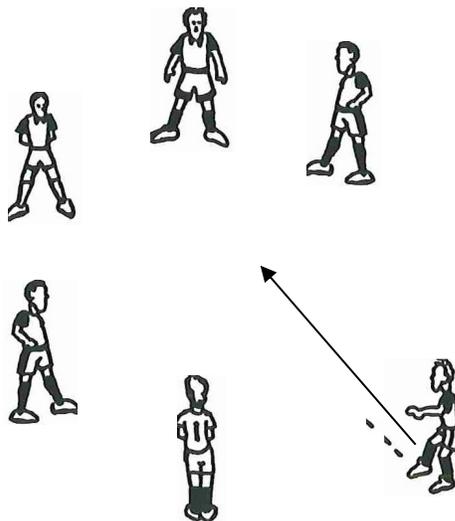
**Objective:** Learning to pass (kick) the ball

**Time:** 5 - 8 minutes

**Equipment:** One or two balls

**Procedure:** Players form a circle. For younger players, a very tight circle, about 2 - 3 feet separating players. Older or more capable players, about 4 - 6 feet apart. One ball per circle is passed around inside circle, and ball must never escape circle. Players pass to teammates who receive ball and continue passing. Any player who lets the ball (cat) escape the circle (house) must sit down for 20 - 25 seconds. Players are not allowed to pass to person beside them.

- Coaching Points:**
- 1) Unlimited touches
  - 2) Demonstrate and reinforce good mechanics (non-kicking foot placed beside ball, no toe kicks, etc.)
  - 3) Encourage use of left and right foot.
  - 4) Receiving / collecting
    - a) Players receive with one foot.
    - b) Turn foot out and cushion ball.
    - c) Do not allow players to cross one leg over in front of other to receive pass. (Dominant leg will try to receive all passes. Discourage this habit! If pass is to player's left, left leg must receive pass.)



## Don't Let the Cat Out (continued)

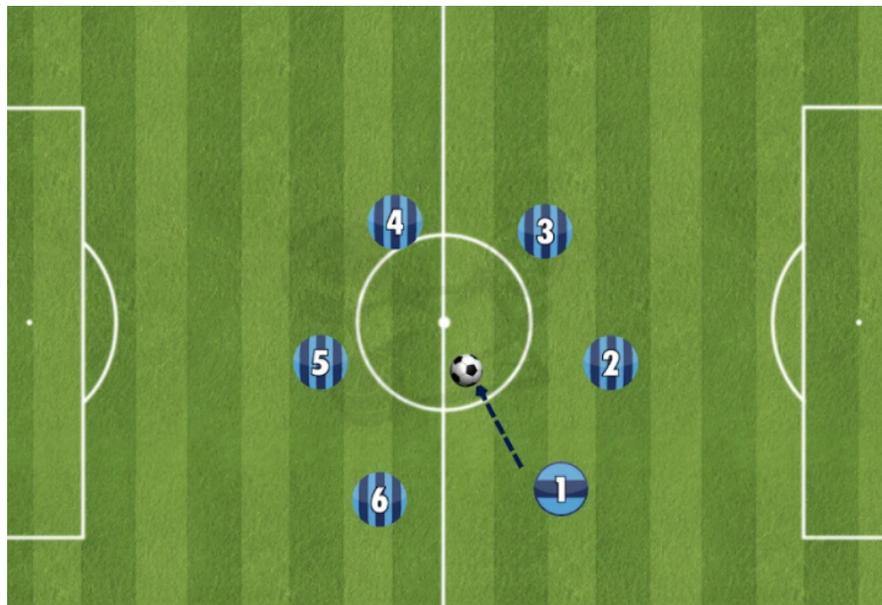
**Various Progressions:** For a period of time, only allow right foot passes, left foot passes.  
If players are capable, restrict touches; 3 touch, 2 touch.  
Put two balls in play per circle.  
Instead of sitting down, a player who let the "cat" out sprints around outside of circle.

**N.B.:** This game provides a great deal of flexibility in how the coach forms the circle. If very novice players build a tight circle (with small diameter), their passes will be quicker as the ball does not travel a great distance. The players do not have to move to react. There is no demand on the player to move, to learn agility.

If very novice players build a larger circle with increased distance between them and nearest player, it will mean a larger diameter. Consequently, the passes will take longer to reach their destination, giving the receiving player more time to react to a ball before it goes out. Players learn to react and learn agility.

Not every pass should leave the circle. Not every pass should stay in the circle.

Try progressing to the point where players (regardless of age / ability) have to read the path of the ball and move / react accordingly, forcing them to move laterally a few feet to intercept the ball.



## Two Line Continuous Passing

**Objective:** Learning and practicing passing and receive

**Time:** 5 - 10 minutes

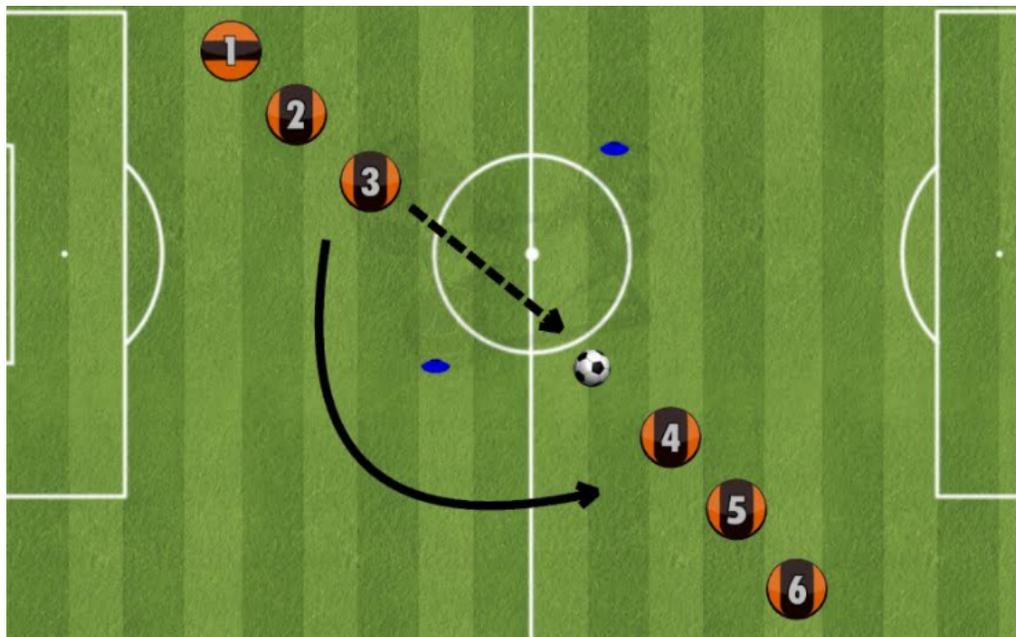
**Equipment:** Cones, two -three balls

**Procedure:** Two lines (with three players in each line) face one another about 12 m apart. Player at front of one line passes to player at front of opposite line. After passing, player runs to back of the line he/ she just passed to. Place a cone at front of each line. Also, as a learning tool, you may place two cones (6 - 8 feet apart) halfway between the two lines. A player gets a point every time he / she splits the cones. Deduct a point every time they fail to split the cone. Players must sprint to end of other line.

**Coaching Points:**

- 1) Must use both feet. Restrict use frequently.
- 2) Unlimited touches, then, 3, 2.
- 3) Encourage players to strike a moving ball.
- 4) Demonstrate quality first touch, which sets up second touch pass. (Very important when playing 2-touch.)

**Various Progressions:** Increase distance to 18 -22 m. (May allow a short dribble.)



## Immaculate Reception

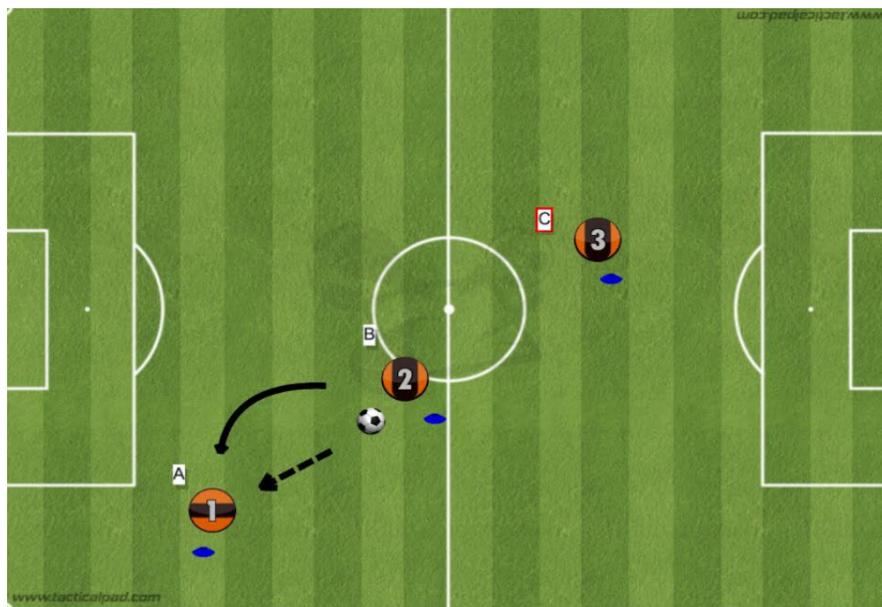
**Objective:** Learning and practicing passing and receive special emphasis on receiving techniques

**Time:** 5 - 10 minutes

**Equipment:** Cones, one ball per group of three

**Procedure:** Set three cones in a line about 12 m apart. Players work in groups of three. Put one player at each cone, with middle player in possession of ball. Drill starts by having middle player (A) pass to Player B, who receives ball and begins dribbling towards middle cone. Player A, after passing, follows his pass and takes up Player B's spot. Player B dribbles to middle cone and then passes to Player C, who receives pass and begins dribbling to the middle. Player B follows his pass and take up Player C's position. This is a continuous drill. Players must remember two operative rules: 1) follow your pass, 2) pass only from the middle.

- Coaching Points:**
- 1) Players must pass and receive well with both feet.
  - 2) Outlaw the sole trap in this drill. This trap slows down the fluidity and quickness of the drill.
  - 3) Encourage and / or incorporate receiving ball with outside part of the foot simulating shielding technique.
  - 4) Ball should not leave the ground when passed.
  - 5) Have receiving players "meet" the ball to increase the quickness of the drill. Their first touch will be a little firmer to ensure ball ends up out in front as they prepare to dribble.



### Immaculate Reception (continued)

**Various Progressions:** Use restrictions to ensure players practice different forms of receiving, i.e., outside part of foot, "meeting" ball to get a goodjump, etc.  
Use restrictions for passing also. Left foot, right foot.  
Have passer become a very passive defender as the receiver dribbles towards him. Do not attempt to win ball. Encourage dribbler to use feints and body fakes.

## Chest and Thigh Control

**Objective:** Learning how to receive and control passes, using thigh and chest to bring ball under control

**Time:** 5 - 10 minutes

**Equipment:** One ball per duo

**Procedure:** Players learn technique of bringing ball under control using thigh and chest. Players work in pairs with one partner tossing ball to the other. Players should stand 10 -12 feet apart. Players take turns lobbing easy passes to partner to receive with thigh and chest. After players become comfortable and proficient, players can then do a basketball-style "bounce pass" instead of a toss.

**Coaching Points:** 1) Practice receiving using both thighs. Work on weaker leg.  
 2) Key is to "relax and withdraw."  
 3) Emphasize *getting* ball under control as quickly as possible.

**Various Progressions:** Tosses  
 Bounce pass basketball style  
 \* Player receives with chest or thigh, gets ball quickly under control, and kicks (passes) ball back to partner. Ten times, then players switch roles.  
 Work towards this:

chest

thigh



## Pass and Run.

**Objective:** Practicing short and long passes, as well as receiving ball along the ground, off the bounce and out of the air

**Time:** 5 - 10 minutes

**Equipment:** Cones, one ball per group (10 - 15 players per group)

**Procedure:** Place three cones in a triangular configuration, about 15 m apart. Put four to five players behind each cone. Players pass ball to one line but run to the end of the other line. Players can pass to either line. However, players must realize when one line is short on players and pass to the opposite line to rectify the player shortage. This drill forces players to think and problem solve. After passing, players must sprint. As players' passing becomes better, increase distance to 22 - 25 m, forcing longer, firmer passes.

**Coaching Points:**

- 1) Short passes at first, slowly moving to longer passes.
- 2) Must pass with both feet!
- 3) Players can use a variety of passes depending on distance, i.e., chip. Make sure players practice using both feet, especially chip, and long pass with weak foot. Make it a restriction/ condition if necessary.
- 4) Receiving ball is emphasized as well. First touch is very important. "Relax and withdraw" is operative phrase. Players practice thigh, chesttrap as well. Getting ball under control as quickly as possible from all varieties of passes.

**Various Progressions:** Unlimited touches → 3 → 2. Have players hit a moving ball.  
: Increase distances.



## Four Corners on the Move

**Objective:** Learning and practicing passing and receive

**Time:** 5 - 10 minutes

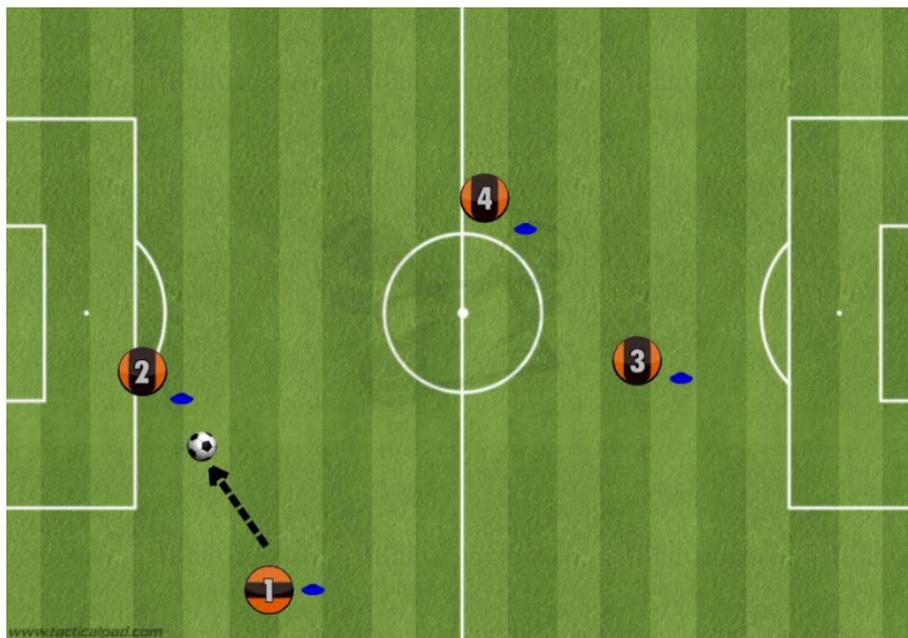
**Equipment:** Cones or markers, one ball per group of four

**Procedure:** Using four cones, make a square about 20 x 20 m. Place one player at each cone. Players simply pass ball from one corner to next corner. Each player remains at his / her corner. This is the warmup phase (2 - 3 minutes). Next, proceed to main part of the drill where each player passes ball to next corner and then immediately runs to next corner following his / her pass. Every fourth turn, a player is forced to dribble to next corner as it is unoccupied. After dribbling to the unoccupied corner, player passes to next corner and follows his / her pass. This adds a bit of a dribbling component to the drill, however, a small one.

**Coaching Points:**

- 1) Stress accurate passes.
- 2) Pass with both feet.
- 3) Stress keeping ball on ground.
- 4) Encourage players to kick a moving ball.
- 5) Make sure players receive ball in a variety of ways, using both feet.

**Various Progressions:** Limit touches; 3 - 2. One touch is probably too difficult. Put restrictions on dribbler; hands behind back; one foot only, et c. Enlarge grid; have players dribble halfway to next corner before passing.



## Into Space 1

**Objective:** Learning and practicing passing ball into space

**Time:** 5 - 10 minutes

**Equipment:** Cones, one ball per duo

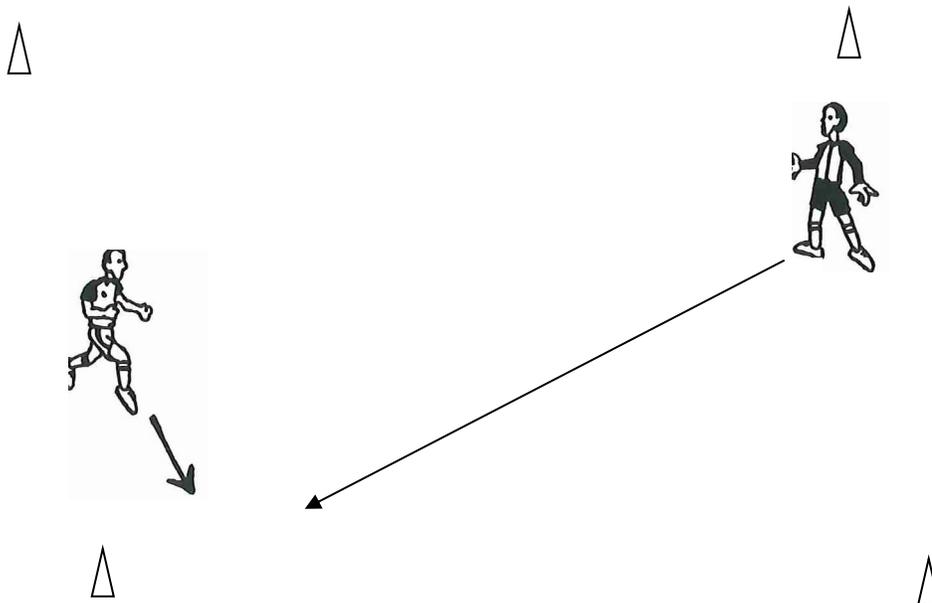
**Procedure:** Players perform drill in pairs. Each player will stand between two cones which are placed about 10 m apart. Players will stand about 10 m from their partners. Partners take turns passing ball towards partners' cones. Receiving player stands in middle of his / her cones and runs to corner to receive a ball already played. The emphasis in this drill is on the passer being able to push a ball into space for receiving player to run onto. Receiving player collects pass, dribbles back towards middle and gives a pass into space, back to partner.

**Coaching Points:**

- 1) Players use both feet; both in giving and receiving pass.
- 2) Have players practice passing with outside of foot, disguising passes.
- 3) The weight of the pass is important. Not too hard, not too soft.
- 4) Have players give instructions to partner, i.e., where they want the pass. Use non-verbal, hand, head, eye cues.

**Various Progressions:** Allow players more creativity. In a 10 x 10 m grid, the partners can pass to each other using any of the four corners. Players can dribble anywhere in grid before passing. The partners will have to communicate well. Emphasis still is on passing into space. Communication, both verbal and nonverbal, is important.

: Expand grid dimensions; bring other partners (groups) into one main grid.



## Into Space 2

**Objective:** Learning and practicing passing ball into space under pressure

**Time:** 5 - 10 minutes

**Equipment:** Cones, one ball per group of three

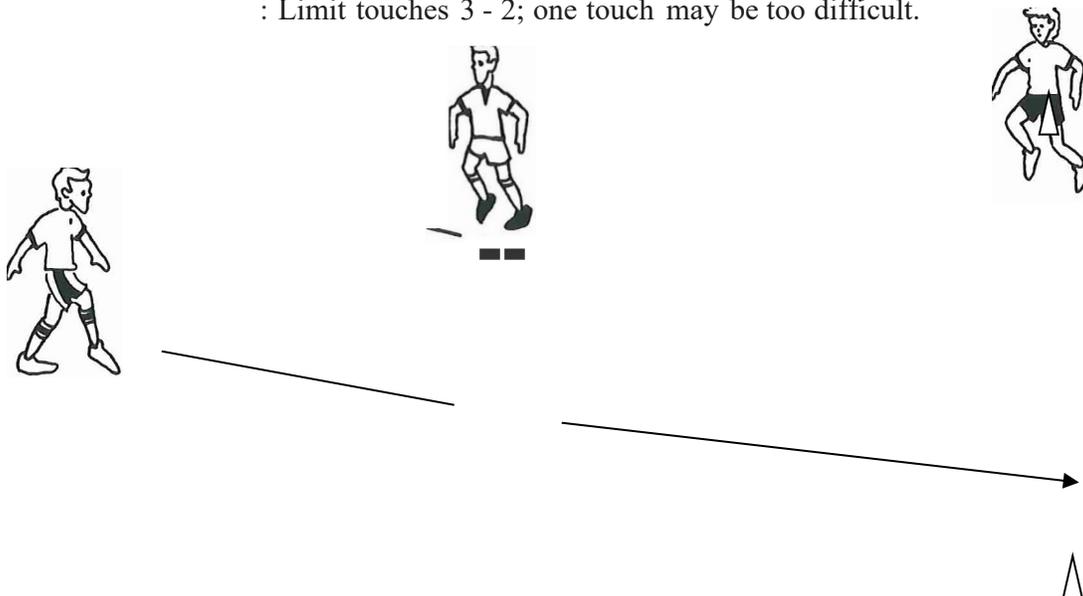
**Procedure:** Players work in groups of three. Same set-up as Into Space 1, except with a passive defender in middle of grid. Player with ball passes into space for receiver. Defender in middle is passively defending against pass. The emphasis is now on receiver getting open and / or communicating, indicating to passer where he / she wants ball played. The receiver must not hide behind the defender. Must work to get open. This drill must be progressive for maximum benefit to passer - receiver. Here are suggested progression levels for defenders:

- 1) Passive, not trying to win ball.
- 2) Semi-passive, with hands behind back (will restrict movement/ quickness)
- 3) Hands behind back, trying to win ball at all costs.
- 4) No restrictions

Only progress to next level when passers - receivers are proficient. Majority of drill will be in levels two and three.

**Coaching Points:** 1) Rotate players around; everyone has chance to defend.  
 2) Make sure defender stays inside the middle third of grid (shaded area).  
 3) Encourage outside of foot passes (disguise).

**Various Progressions:** Use the appropriate defender progressions.  
 : Limit touches 3 - 2; one touch may be too difficult.



### Passthrough Traffic.

**Objective:** Learning and practicing passing ball under pressure

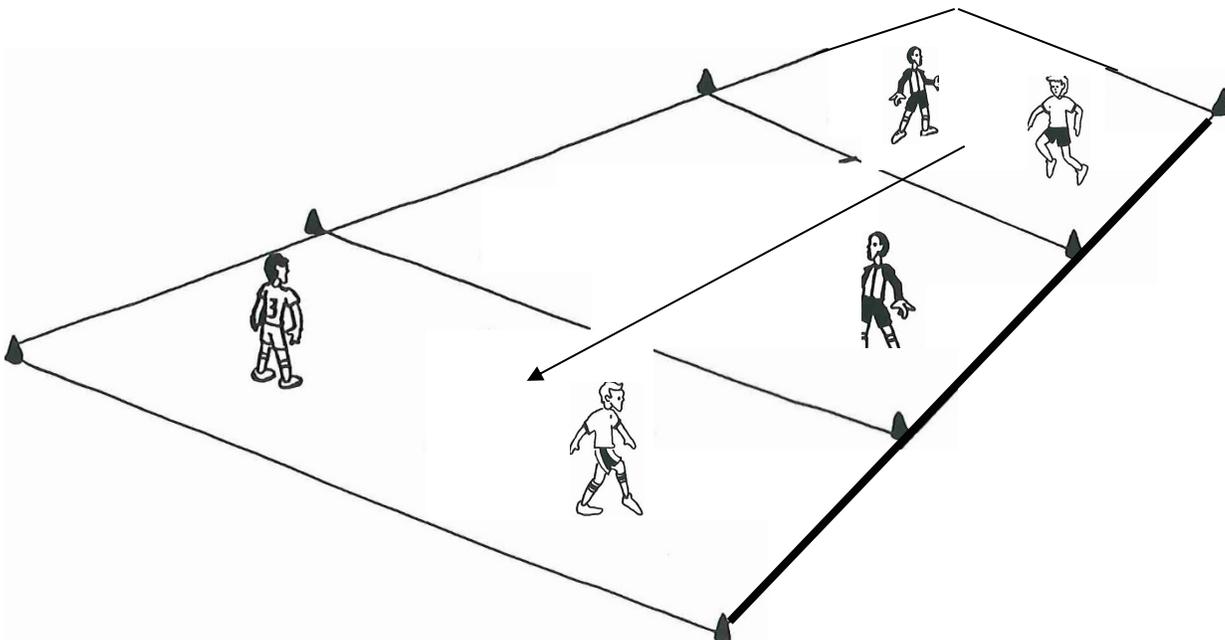
**Time:** 5 - 10 minutes

**Equipment:** Cones, one ball per group

**Procedure:** In a divided grid (15 x 20 m to start), three players of one group try to complete pass to group of three on other side e. In the middle third, place one defender who tries to intercept passes. Players must stay in their respective thirds. Here are the progression levels for defenders and their restrictions. Try to work up toward two defenders. Levels: 1) one defender - hands behind back  
2) one defender - no restrictions  
3) two defenders - hands behind back  
4) two defenders - no restrictions  
Only progress to next level when success is realized in completing passes.

**Coaching Points:** 1) Pass and receive using both feet. Use outside of foot passing.  
2) Receivers: don't hide behind defenders!  
3) Passes will be made into space, and to feet.  
4) Defenders must stay in middle third.  
5) Rotate players. Everyone defends.

**Various Progressions:** Use appropriate defender progressions.  
If two defenders are in place, passing team may pass square to each other to generate a good passing opportunity to the other group.  
Intra-group passing may be a necessity with Level 4 defending. May widen grid to 25 m.



## Keep away 1.

**Objective:** Learning and practicing passing ball under pressure; emphasis on a quality firsttouch

**Time:** 5 - 10 minutes

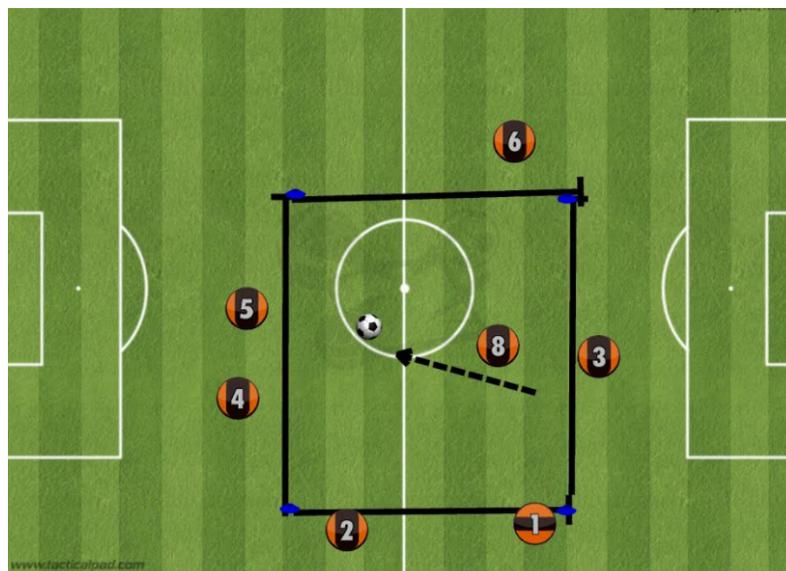
**Equipment:** Cones, one ball per group (six to eight players in a group)

**Procedure:** Make a grid 15 x 15 m. Position one defender inside the grid who tries to intercept passes. Position five to seven players around the perimeter of the grid. Players pass the ball through the grid to other players, trying not to let the defender intercept their passes. Here are suggested progression levels for the defender:

- 1) Coach is defender - very passive, lets most of the passes through.
- 2) One player - hands tied, will restrict movement, but careless passes will probably be intercepted.
- 3) One player - no restrictions.

**Coaching Points:**

- 1) Have players concentrate on making good, accurate passes.
- 2) Players' first touch when receiving should be close to perfect. A good first touch will set them up for their second touch being a pass. This is a good 2-touch drill. Demonstrate to players the fact they will not have a lot of time while being pressured.
- 3) Players without ball should be moving to support the player in possession. "Move to support" is the operative phrase. Demonstrate to players how to "show" for the ball before teammate gets in trouble.
- 4) Player in possession should not let defender get too close as this close passing angles. Show players what is a comfortable distance and what is not.



**Keep away 1 (continued)**

**Coaching Points (continued):** 5) Players should be encouraged to pass with outside of foot. to disguise passes.  
6) Rotate defenders and players.

**Various Progressions:** Adhere to the progressions for defenders.  
: Do not go any lower than a 4v1 ratio of players to defenders. At least one player per side of grid.

## Keep Away 2

**Objective:** Learning and practicing passing ball while under pressure; also, emphasis on a) shielding ball, b) quality first touch receiving, c) moving to support player in possession

**Time:** 5 - 10 minutes

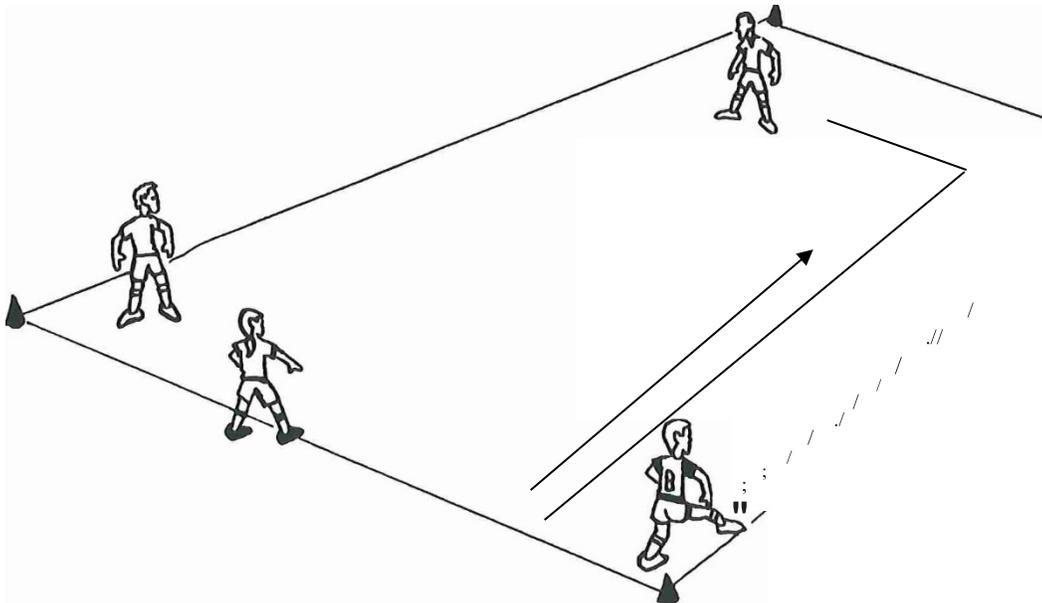
**Equipment:** Cones, one ball per group (four to six in group)

**Procedure:** Make a grid, measuring 15 x 15 m. Position one defender in this grid (hands behind back at first). Also place three to five players in the grid who must maintain possession of the ball and not let defender intercept passes or dispossess dribbler. There is a 5-touch maximum on dribblers. This is a simple game of keep away. Start with a 5v 1, and work towards a 3v1 after players get proficient and can keep possession fairly well, i.e., five consecutive passes.

**Coaching Points:**

- 1) Defender restrictions: a) hands behind back, b) no restrictions.
- 2) Players must move to support player in possession.
- 3) Emphasize quality first touch which sets up second touch (pass).
- 4) Utilize three touch maximum on players.
- 5) Introduce and demonstrate one touch to players. Explain how this is used under extreme pressure.
- 6) Rotate defenders and players so everyone has a turn at defender.

**Various Progressions:** Progress from 5v1 to 4v1 and then 3v1 (ideal). With a 3v1, players must "move to support." Tell players they cannot stand still and play 3v1.  
Target is five consecutive, unimpeded passes.



## Goal Line Stand

**Objective:** Learning and practicing to shoot

**Time:** 5 - 10 minutes

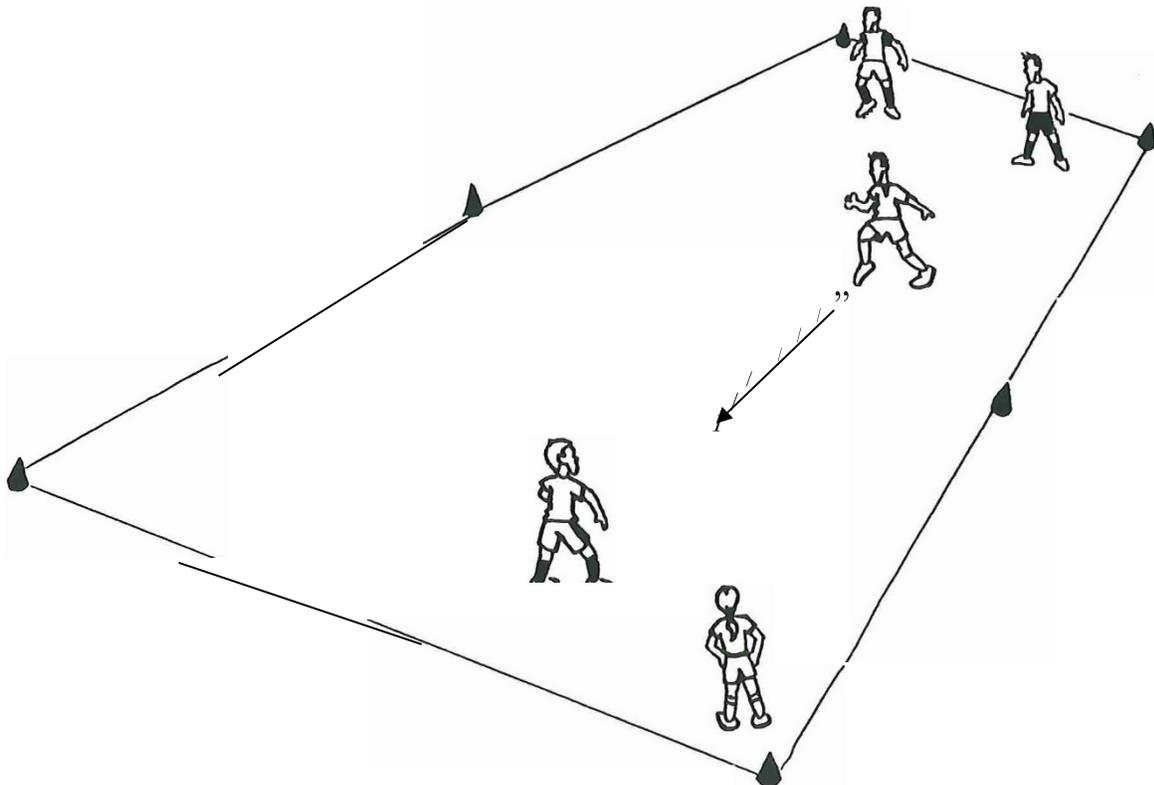
**Equipment:** Cones or markers, one ball per group of six

**Procedure:** Divide players into teams of three. Make a grid 20 m long x 10 m wide. Place cones at midpoint of this grid. Each team will defend the goal line at the back of grid. Players will kick the ball, trying to score by having the ball cross the other team's goal line. Players may shoot from anywhere in their own half. Most will dribble to half and shoot. Defending team saves ball or retrieves ball and then shoots. Defenders may or may not use hands, coach's choice. Defenders must stand on goal line when not in possession of ball.

**Coaching Points:**

- 1) Encourage players to dribble and shoot.
- 2) Players take turns being the shooter.
- 3) Emphasize shooting / kicking using right and left foot. Give three points to player / team for goals scored with weak foot.
- 4) Encourage quick counterattack shots.
- 5) Don't allow players to hit a dead ball. Hit a moving ball.

**Various Progressions:** Restrictions a) left foot shots, b) right foot shots.



## Operation Goal Score

**Objective:** Learning to dribble and shoot; learning the position of "keeper"

**Time:** 5 - 10 minutes.

**Equipment:** One ball per player, two mini-nets

**Procedure:** Place mini-nets 30 - 35 m apart (mini nets 12 feet wide). To the right of each net, put a group of players, each with a ball. Players are in single file. Players in each line will dribble down to opposing net, take a shot, retrieve their ball, and get in line beside the net they have just shot at. Have the next player in line begin dribbling when the player ahead reaches the halfway point. May place a cone at mid-field. Place a keeper in each net. Rotate a new keeper in every 15 - 20 shots.

**Coaching Points:**

- 1) Emphasize kicking with both feet.
- 2) Speed is not important. Control is.
- 3) Encourage players not to shoot from too close. No doorstep heroes.
- 4) Make it fun; stick a parent in goal.
- 5) Players in line must watch for errant shot.

**Various Progressions:** Progress to same corner format so there is a risk of head on dribbling. (Diagram B)  
: Send two at a time; see who can score first. (Use four-line format, Diagram C)



## Slalom with Shot

**Objective:** Learning and practicing to shoot and dribble

**Time:** 5 - 10 minutes.

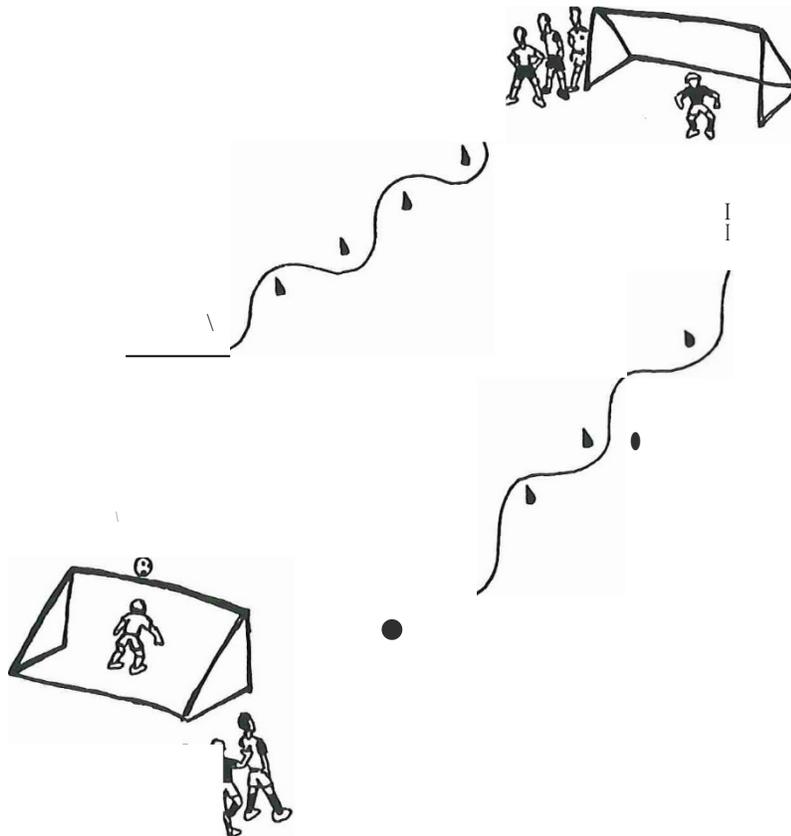
**Equipment:** Cones, one ball per player

**Procedure:** Set 7 - 10 cones in a line, spacing them 6 - 10 feet apart. (Start at 10 feet, shorten spacing to 6 feet after players gain proficiency.) Players dribble through one line, shoot, dribble through other line. A player begins dribbling when player ahead reaches halfway point. Make two goals, about 12 - 15 m from last cone. Goals 12 feet wide. Use keepers. Players not to shoot any closer than 10 m.

**Coaching Points:**

- 1) Quickly navigate through cones, but under control.
- 2) Use of both feet. Restrict use of one foot periodically.
- 3) Have players shoot as soon as they have passed last cone.
- 4) Stress accuracy before power.

**Various Progressions:** Shorten spacing between cones to 6 - 7 feet.



## Minefield with Shot

**Objective:** Learning and practicing to shoot and dribble

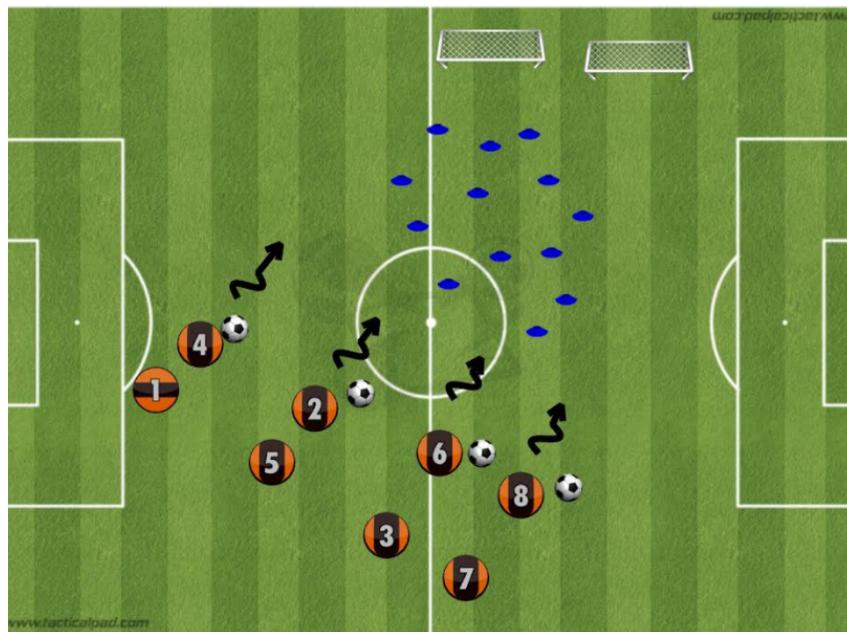
**Time:** 5 - 10 minutes.

**Equipment:** Cones, one ball per player

**Procedure:** Place cones at random as in diagram. Divide players into four lines. Two lines shoot at one net after navigating through minefield, and the other two lines shoot at the other net after doing same. First player in each line dribbles through the minefield, then shoots on goal. He retrieves ball and falls in behind a line at end he just shot at. Player next in line commences dribbling when player ahead finishes with a shot. Place each net 15 m from minefield area. Do not allow shots any closer than 10 m. Make nets 12 feet wide.

**Coaching Points:**

- 1) Area should be 40 x 20 m. Minefield should be 10 m.
- 2) Do not place too many cones, especially at first. Every few minutes, add a cone or two.
- 3) Restrictions on dribbling and shooting; left foot, right foot.
- 4) Rotate keepers. Everyone plays goal.
- 5) Make sure players are mindful of not shooting at same goal at same time. Periodically two players will come through minefield at same time. Keeper is to yell name of player he wants to shoot first.
- 6) Stress accuracy before power.



**Minefield with Shot (continued)**

**Various Progressions:** Take a few cones out so players can dribble faster. Emphasize dribbling technique at faster speed. (Straight on touch with foot.) Place a coach off to the side of the net(s), who tosses a ball into air for player to head immediately after shooting. (Player shoots, then runs in for header goal.)

### 3 Player Shootout Showdown

**Objective:** learning to kick (shoot); learning goalkeeping

**Time:** 5 - 10 minutes

**Equipment:** One ball per group of three players, cones, or markers

**Procedure:** Players are divided into groups of three (similar abilities please). Two are shooters and one is the "keeper." Each group has a net 12 feet wide. One shooter stands 15 m away on one side; other shooter stands same distance away on opposite side. Play starts with one player shooting, trying to score. Shooter at opposite side retrieves ball (it should end up near him) and takes a shot. Players shoot from at least 10 m away. Keeper must stay on goal line. If keeper makes a save, he throws ball (underhand bowling style) to next shooter. After 2 - 4 minutes, rotate players. If you have to put four in a group, use two keepers who alternate with each shot.

**Coaching Points:**

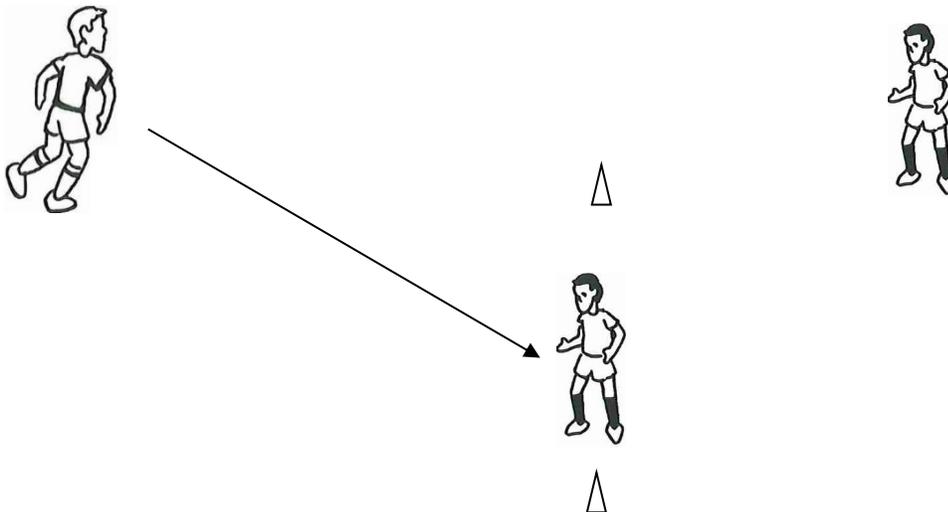
- 1) Shoot with both feet.
- 2) Aim for corners.
- 3) Stress accuracy before power
- 4) Quality distribution from keepers, no "bouncing throws."
- 5) The width of net and shooter's distance will depend on abilities/ ages of players. One group's net may be wider than another group's net.

**Various Progressions:** Let each shooter have a ball. May speed up action.

: Allow shooters a brief dribble. Discourage players from kicking dead ball.

: Friendly competition (inter or intra group).

: Restrictions; left foot, right foot, alternate every shot, etc.



## Revolving Rapid Fire

**Objective:** Learning and practicing shooting technique

**Time:** 5 - 10 minutes

**Equipment:** Cones, one ball per player

**Procedure:** Set cones up in triangular configuration, 12 feet apart (three goals). Form three lines facing each goal, about 15 m from each goal. Place a goalkeeper in each goal. First player in Line A shoots, then first player in Line B, then first player in Line C and so on. (A revolving sequence; A, B, C, A, B, C, etc.) After a player shoots, he / she retrieves ball and dribbles to a different line. Shooters may play their own rebounds. Only one line shooting at a time! Players not allowed to shoot any closer than 10 m.

**Coaching Points:**

- 1) Have players dribble 2 - 4 m before shooting or take 1 -2 touches before shooting. Do not allow players to hit a dead ball.
- 2) Restrictions; left foot, right foot shots.
- 3) Stress accuracy before power.
- 4) Rotate new, keepers in.
- 5) Aim for comers.

**Various Progressions:** Use two keepers instead of three. Keepers alternate every shot, forcing them to scramble from goal to goal.

As a learning tool for shooters aiming for comers, place extra cones 12 - 18 inches inside the existing cones (goal posts). Have shooter aim for these "target" cones. Award one point for every target cone hit. Use a 12 - 18-inch margin of error



## Quality First Touch

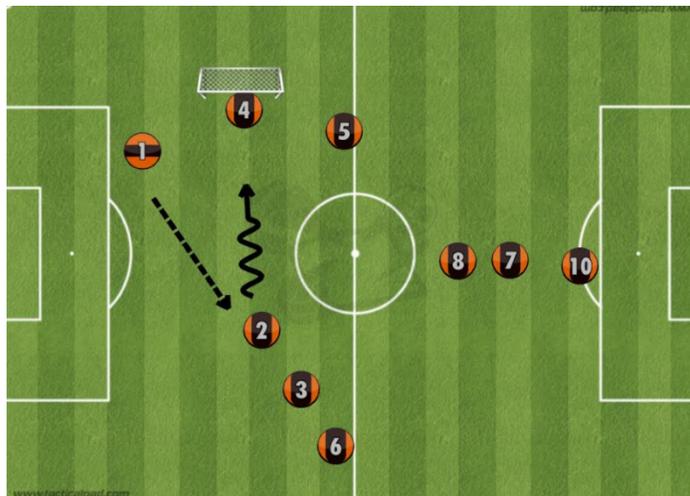
**Objective:** Learning and practicing to shoot with special emphasis on developing a quality first touch

**Time:** 5 - 10 minutes

**Equipment:** A healthy supply of balls, cones, or net 12 feet wide

**Procedure:** - Players form two lines 16-20 m in front of a 12-foot-wide goal. Lines should be 7 - 8 m from one another. Place one player (server) 5 m from one goal post, and another player (server) in same position on other post. Play starts when a server passes ball to first person in line who takes one touch to control and then shoots on goal. Two touch drill! After each player shoots, he retrieves his ball and gives it to server, who has a steady supply of balls. Place a keeper in goal. Rotate new servers and keeper in every few minutes. After shooting, player goes to other line. A player's first touch should see ball end up 3 - 4 feet in front of player's path as his momentum takes him into his second touch (shot). Player should not be standing still when making contact on first touch. Emphasis is on getting shot away as quickly as possible with as much pace and accuracy as possible, with only two touches allowed. That is why players must walk into the pass, and into the shot. Their forward momentum will put more pace on their shots, while making them harder to defend against, as they are moving.

- Coaching Points:**
- 1) Have players run to meet pass. Tell them not to wait on the ball.
  - 2) First touch, get ball under control second touch shoot! They will need quality first touch.
  - 3) Use restrictions, right foot shot, left foot shot.
  - 4) Servers (passers) must give firm, accurate passes along the ground.



### Quality First Touch (continued)

- Coaching Points (continued):**
- 5) Players aim for comers. Place cones 12 - 18 inches inside post as "target" learning tool. One point for a goal; three points for a "cone kill."
  - 6) Emphasize players striking ball with hips "square" to target (net).
  - 7) Stress accuracy before power.
  - 8) Players must practice left and right foot first touch.

**Various Progressions:** Move servers to Position B, then to C. Lines remain in same place. Encourage players to use outside of foot as their first touch. Place servers in Position A Players shoot on their first touch. Stress: accuracy before power, run "through" the shot, hips square to goal, stay over ball on contact.

## Lay Off

**Objective:** Learning and practicing to shoot ball on a limited number of touches

**Time:** 5 - 10 minutes

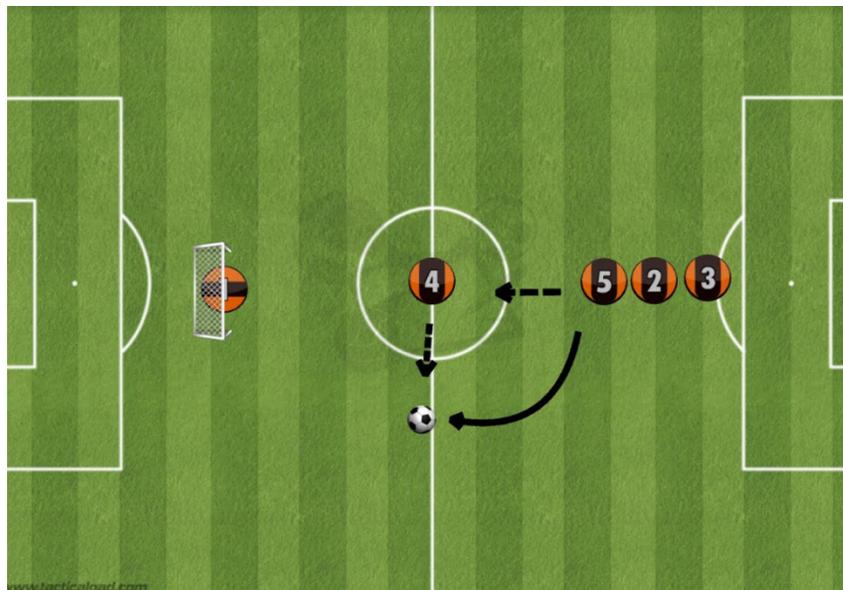
**Equipment:** One ball per player, goal 12 feet wide

**Procedure:** Players form a line 18 - 20 min front of goal. Place a server 14 - 15 min front of goal. (It is a good idea to have the coach be the server at first.) Each player has a ball. First player in line passes ball to coach who one touches pass at 90° angle either to left or right of breaking player who collects ball and shoots on goal. Use a keeper. This drill can be set up with two goals, two lines, and two keepers, especially if there are enough players. This drill is a classic "wall pass in the box" drill.

**Coaching Points:**

- 1) Players give firm passes on ground, then break towards server.
- 2) Limit touches; three, two, and, finally, one.
- 3) After players understand drill, put a player in server's role and eliminate coach.
- 4) Restrictions; left foot, right foot shots. The side the ball is laid off on usually dictates shooting foot.
- 5) Place "target" cones 12 - 18 inches inside goal posts. Award three points for a target "cone kill."
- 6) Hips square to goal (target), run through ball, accuracy before power.

**Various Progressions:** Increase the layoff angle up to 120°. As the angle is increased, players will need less touches. A ball laid off at 120° can be hit first



## Wall Pass

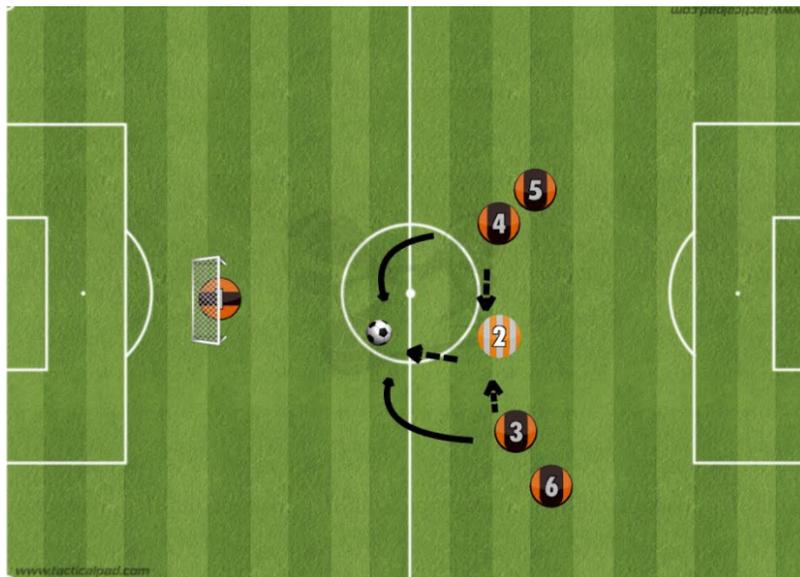
**Objective:** Learning and practicing shooting technique as a result of wall pass; shooting on goal from angles

**Time:** 5 - 10 minutes

**Equipment:** One ball per player, two cones or one goal

**Procedure:** Coach starts off being server with one keeper in goal. Server positions himself 18 - 20 m in front of goal. Players form two lines 7 - 8 m from coach. Every player has a ball. A player passes his / her ball to server who one touches a pass back to the player along a 30-70° angle. The player runs onto ball's path and dribbles to goal for a shot. After shooting, player retrieves own ball and dribbles to the back of the opposite line. Server turns around and plays wall pass with other line.

- Coaching Points:**
- 1) Emphasize shooting with left and right foot.
  - 2) Limit touches to 3, 2, then, finally, 1. For one touch, give them a good "through" ball.
  - 3) Demand good, firm, ground passes from players.
  - 4) Demonstrate to players that their first touch should send ball towards net in their path, about 3 - 4 feet ahead.
  - 5) Shooting: accuracy before power, hips square to target, run through ball.
  - 6) Head up, looking for goal-keeper's position in net.
  - 7) Have player run onto ball's path. Players must realize their first touch is not stopping the ball, but rather redirecting it in their path to the goal.



**Wall Pass (continued)**

**Various Progressions:** Let a player be server. Emphasize quality return passes One touch!

: Place a learning tool "target" cone 12 - 18 inches inside the "far post."

: Place second net at opposite end. Server can play wall pass towards either net. Players will not be able to run until they see which way server plays return pass. This will keep player's alert.

## Missile Launch

**Objective:** Learning and practicing shooting the half volley and full volley

**Time:** 5 - 10 minutes

**Equipment:** One ball per player, goal, or cones

**Procedure:** Players form one line 15 min front of goal (12 feet wide). All balls are with server (coach) who stands 5 min front of players' line. Server tosses ball 6 - 7feet high into air for first player to move forward and strike after ball bounces once on the ground. Server should toss ball to either side of himself, at 60- 90° angles. Player's practice striking with both left and right foot. Player retrieves ownball, returns to line. Rotate keepers in goal. This is the half volley and is easier tolearn than full volley.

**Coaching Points:**

- 1) See correct posture for striking half volley and volley. Player tries to get striking leg parallel with ground. Hips square to goal on contact. Leg should swing on an even horizontal plane to prevent ball from "skying." Can even swing on a high to low plane to force ball's trajectory downward. If players shoot high, it is probably because they are swinging on a low to high plane.
- 2) Stress accuracy before power. Do not allow any wild, out of controlattempts. Emphasize contact and placing ball on target.
- 3) Operative phrase for players: "Level Swing" or "High to Low."
- 4) Emphasize readiness and quickness of feet. Most half and full volleys that are mis-hit are the result of late swings. Better to be early than late. Timing is the key.



## Missile Launch (continued)

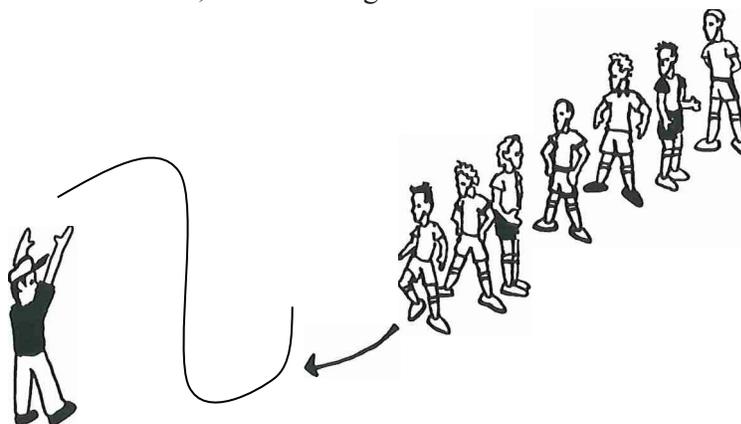
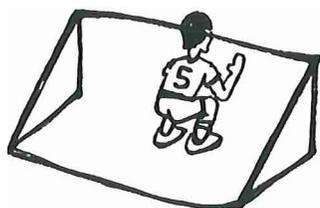
**Various Progressions:** Server stands just off to one side of players' line about 6 - 7 m away and tosses ball into air with a more flattened trajectory and players will strike ball after bounce with their near foot. From right side - right foot, left side - left foot.) As players get better, server moves further away, using faster tosses. (May try flattened trajectory basketball bounce pass.) Again, same coaching points apply. Players may have to move feet to get in position to strike ball. Stress quick footwork.

Leaming  
Full Volley

For the full volley (no bounce), repeat previous progression, except server (coach) should be closer (3 - 4 m) starting with very short, slow tosses that travel 3 - 4 feet high. Players strike ball before first bounce. As players get better, server moves further away using stronger, more flattened trajectories.

\*

The half volley and full volley are difficult techniques to master. Players must learn them progressively. Also, coaches must ensure practice is given to right and left foot. Equal, if not more, practice to the weaker foot. Coach (server) positions himself accordingly. The end results are beautiful, well-struck goals.



## Circle Heading

**Objective:** Learning and practicing heading technique

**Time:** 5 - 10 minutes

**Equipment:** One ball per circle (eight to ten players in a circle)

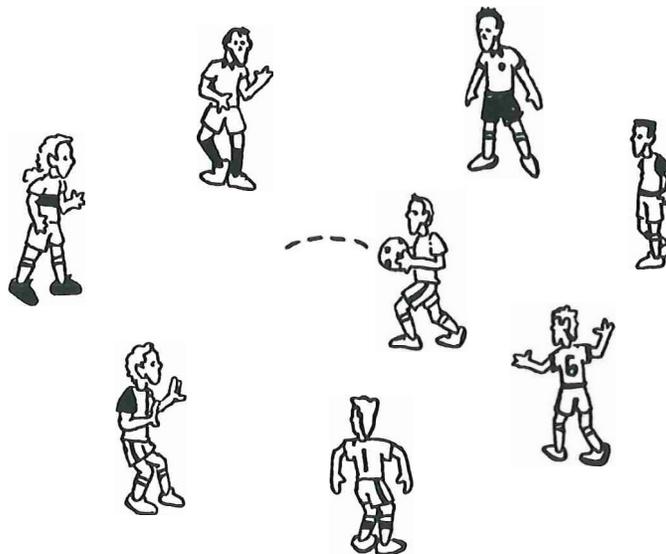
**Procedure:** Place eight to ten players in a circle (5 - 6 foot spacing between players). One ball per circle. Play begins when player with ball tosses underhand to another player in circle who must head ball to anyone in the circle. Ball must not leave circle. Here are the tasks / progressions this drill will evolve into:

Warm-up: 1) Players head ball to anyone in circle who must catch ball, then they toss ball. Players catch a headed ball, then toss. Players heading ball try to put as much strength on ball as possible, so ball does not hit ground before being caught.

Heading to score: 2) Players head ball to ground other players who must not let ball escape circle by making a keeper save. Players heading ball are trying to score on the circle keepers.

Heading to pass: 3) Players in circle act as teammates. Players head the ball (pass) to another player in circle who must control ball (trap) with chest, thigh, instep, etc. and try to get ball under control quickly.

**Coaching Points:** 1) Correct heading position; eyes on ball, strike on forehead, don't be passive, knees bent, meet the ball.  
2) Make sure everyone is getting an opportunity. Don't let three to four players monopolize the drill.  
3) In heading to pass, players must realize the distance of intended receiver and not head a ball that is too difficult to trap / receive. Must head with appropriate strength.



## **Circle Heading (continued)**

- Coaching Points (continued):**
- 4) This is a good drill for receivers also. Must be ready to move, quick footed.
  - 5) Keep drill going quickly. After receivers bring ball under control, they quickly become the person now tossing.
  - 6) Stress good underhand tosses, to someone in particular

**Various Progressions:** As mentioned before.

## Try Angles Part 1

**Objective:** Learning to control and change the direction of the ball while heading

**Time:** 5 - 10 minutes

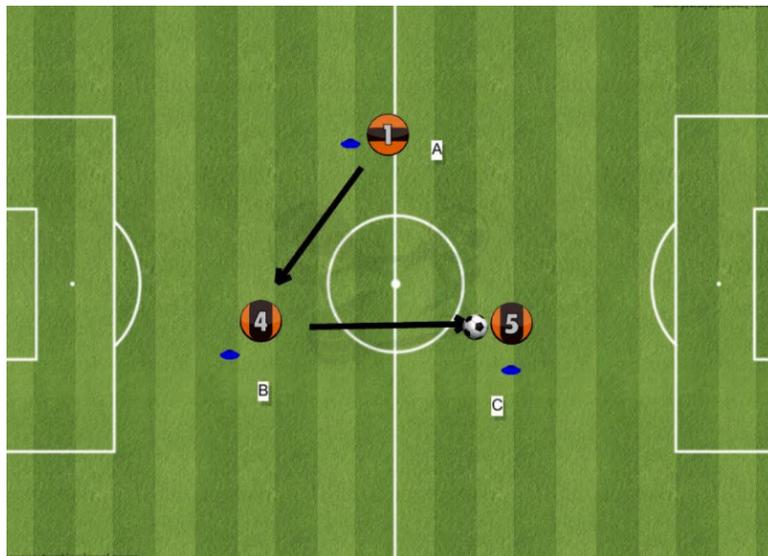
**Equipment:** Cones or markers, one ball per group of three

**Procedure:** Place cones in an equilateral shape, 4 -10 m apart depending on age / ability, for each group of three. Each player stands directly in front of a cone, inside the triangle. Group players with similar abilities. Player A tosses ball to Player B, who heads the ball to Player C. Player C retrieves / catches ball and tosses to Player A who heads the ball to Player B, who retrieves / catches and tosses to Player C, who heads to Player A, who retrieves / catches. Cycle repeats. This is a continuous cycle moving in one direction. After a few minutes, reverse directions so players practice heading to the right and left.

**Coaching Points:**

- 1) Emphasize proper technique; eyes open, use forehead, knees bent for power, "slingshot" into the ball. Use appropriate balls, i.e., nerf, beach, volleyball, or a soft stitched ball.
- 2) Instead of squarely facing server, the player heading must open their stance up so that peripherally they can see both server and person they are heading to.
- 3) Players receiving the headed ball can also use chest, thigh, instep, etc. to bring ball under control.

**Various Progressions:** Have players head the ball to feet.  
: Have players head for distance (legs for power). Move cones further apart if necessary. Players may take quick step to meet the ball to generate more power / distance.



## Try Angles Part 2

**Objective:** Learning to head ball accurately and with power/ distance

**Time:** 5 - 10 minutes.

**Equipment:** Cones, one ball per group of five

**Procedure:** Place cones in grid formation (3 - 6 m apart depending on age / ability). Five players per grid. One player in middle of grid acts as server, while four remaining players stand in front of each cone facing the inside of the grid. Server tosses the ball to any of the four players, who have the option of heading to any other player in the grid except the server. Can head to person on the right or left, or the person directly opposite them (behind the server). To head to person directly across the grid, they must head with power over the server. After a few minutes, alternate server. After each heading attempt, return ball to server.

**Coaching Points:** 1) Players must attempt heading to all other three players in grid.  
2) Group players with similar abilities. Consequently, arrange grid accordingly.  
3) Players receiving the headed ball can use chest, thigh, instep, etc. to bring ball under control.



## **Try Angles Part 2 (continued)**

**Various Progressions:** Friendly competition; 1 point if headed to person on right or left, 3 points if headed to person across the grid.  
Make it a keeper drill. Take a point away from player if receiver drops / fumbles ball.  
If group is proficient, try this:  
Server tosses to player. Player heads ball to another player who, instead of catching ball, also heads to server. In other words, two consecutive head balls.

## Goal to Goal

**Objective:** Learning and practicing heading to score

**Time:** 5 - 10 minutes.

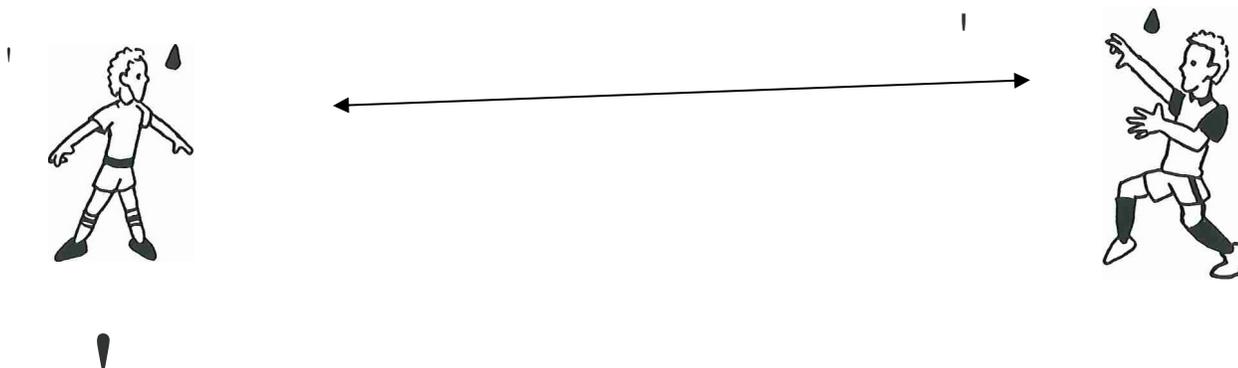
**Equipment:** Cones or markers, one ball per duo

**Procedure:** Divide players into partners with similar abilities. Make two goals with cones. Each goal should be 10 - 12 feet wide depending on age / ability. The goals should be 5 - 10 m apart from each other, again depending on age / ability. One player tosses a ball from his own goal to other partner (who is standing on his respective goal line) who will head ball back, trying to score in server's goal. Player alternate serving every 5 - 10 tosses. If short on cones, one goal will suffice. Players toss understand.

**Coaching Points:**

- 1) Watch for proper technique.
- 2) Use appropriate balls.
- 3) Encourage players to head ball downwards and, if possible, to comers.
- 4) Stress importance of "meeting the ball" to generate power.

**Various Progressions:** One partner toss ball upward, so ball will drop halfway between two goals. Other partner moves from his / her goal and heads ball, trying to score before ball bounces a second time. Players must be quick to react to initial ball. On their first few attempts, their timing may be off. Must learn to judge bounce of the ball. This is a good drill, however. May have to move goals to 10 - 12 m from each drill.



## Clearing Header

**Objective:** Learning and practicing heading technique, emphasis on clearing

**Time:** 5 - 10 minutes

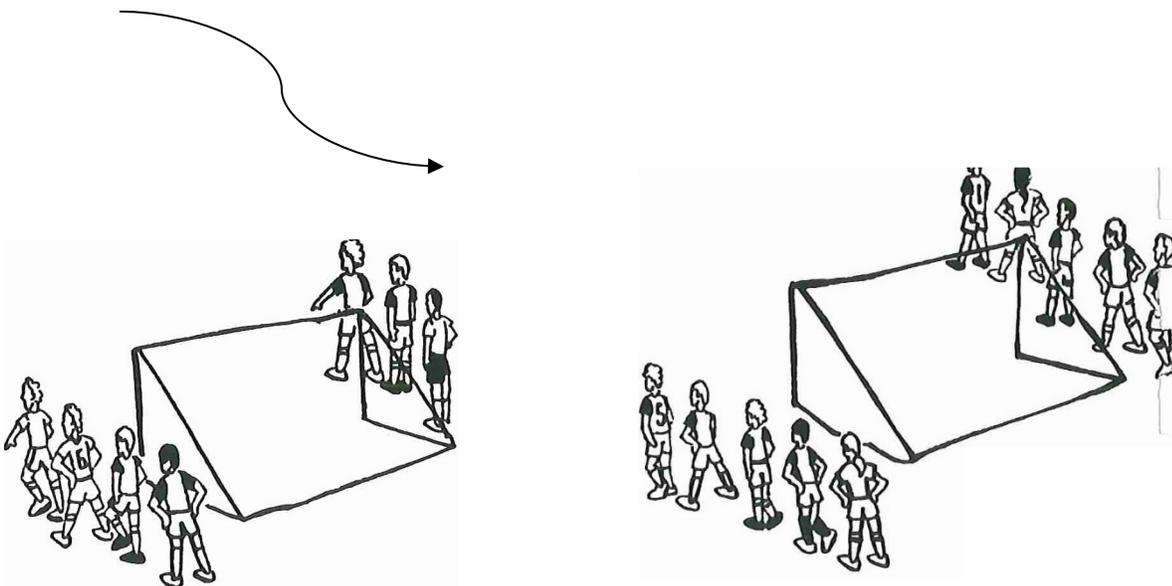
**Equipment:** Supply of balls, goal, cones

**Procedure:** Players form two lines (3 -4 m to side of each goal post). A server (coach) stands 18 - 20 m in front of goal with a supply of balls. The server tosses a ball high into air (15 - 20 feet), ball bounces once, and first player in Line A runs and heads ball back to server out of danger before ball bounces twice. Server then tosses a ball for first player in Line B to run towards and head out of danger, back towards server. After heading, players retrieve their balls and place beside server before switching lines.

**Coaching Points:**

- 1) Players must run towards the ball, time the first bounce, jump high and head ball before second bounce. Demonstrate a clearing header; go for distance out of danger.
- 2) Have players practice one foot and two-foot takeoff jumps as they head the ball.
- 3) Slingshot into ball. Power from legs and arched back.

**Various Progressions:** Do not let players leave their line to head ball until ball has hit ground on first bounce. Will require players to be quick and react. Server moves off to the sides (Diagram B) requiring players to head ball to flanks to clear danger. Explain to players this is a safer play. not up the middle.



## Clearing Header (continued)

**Various Progressions (continued):** Progress to point where players in one line are the passive attackers (hands behind back will accomplish this) and players in the other line are the defenders (no restrictions). Server tosses ball and first defender clears ball out of danger while being passively challenged by first attacker, where mobility and vertical jump will be restricted. This will introduce player to heading ball while being challenged. Lastly, progress to all drills featuring no bounces. Server tosses ball; player heads before first bounce.

### Goal for It

**Objective:** Learning and practicing heading technique, emphasis on shooting for goal

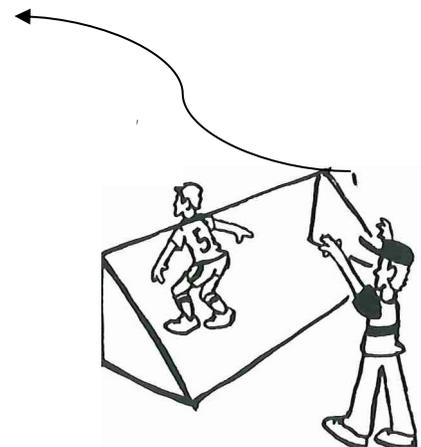
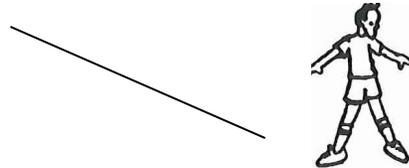
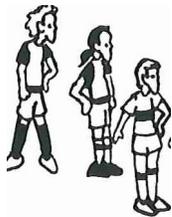
**Time:** 5 - 10 minutes

**Equipment:** Supply of balls, goal(s), cones

**Procedure:** Players form one line 15 - 18 min front of goal (12 feet wide). Server (coach) stands behind goal with supply of balls. Server tosses ball over goal, high into air and first player in line runs toward goal and heads ball for a goal before ball bounces twice. Similar to drill "Clearing Header" with the tosses, except players are now heading for goal. After player heads ball, he retrieves his ball and places it beside server; then he returns to end of line. Depending on players and assistant coach, go to two goals, two lines, etc. Put a keeper in goal.

**Coaching Points:**

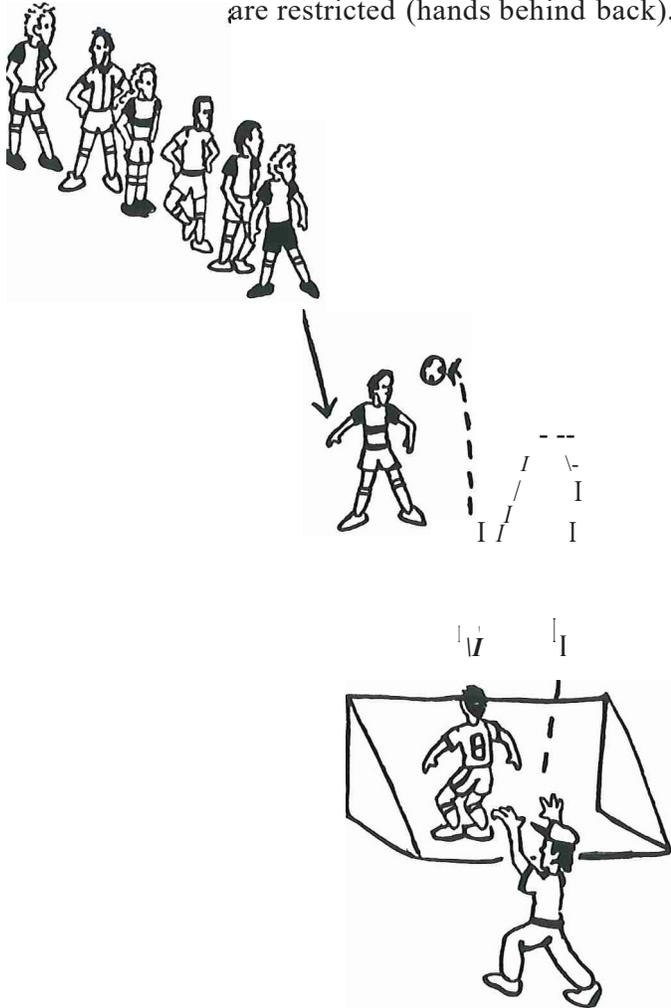
- 1) Demonstrate a shooting header. Aim for comers of goal. Remember; eyes open, contact on forehead, meet the ball, use forward momentum for power, slingshot into ball, accuracy before power.
- 2) Vary the headers; some will require a jump; some will be met without the need for a jump. Server tosses, accordingly, high, low, as well as flat and curved trajectories.
- 3) Place a target cone 12 - 18 inches inside each goal post as a learning tool. Players get three points if they hit this target cone, and one point if they get a normal goal.
- 4) Encourage players to head ball downwards when shooting on goal. This makes it harder for keeper to get a handle on the ball. (Gordon Banks and Pele would disagree.) A headed ball that bounces on the goal line, or even just in front of the goal line, is a nightmare for a keeper.



Goal for It (continued)

**Various Progressions:** Move players' line to an angle, so they are heading towards goal at an angle (Diagram B). Place a target cone (learning tool) just inside far post. Server can move to different position(s) as well.

Players head ball with no bounce. Server tosses ball accordingly. Two lines, attacking line and defending line. This time defenders are restricted (hands behind back).



## Netball

**Objective:** Learning and practicing heading technique in a small, sided game

**Time:** 5 - 10 minutes

**Equipment:** One ball per group of eight, two goals, cones

**Procedure:** Mark off a small grid 15 x 20 m where teams play 4v4 (one keeper, three outfield players). Teams can only score a goal by heading. Players pass ball with hands. Players can only take up to five steps. Players do not bounce ball *a la* basketball. Players must try to get open to receive a pass from a teammate. When near goal, player with ball passes to an open teammate who heads ball on goal. Team without ball not allowed to foul but can try to intercept passes. A throw-in occurs when ball goes outside grid. Keepers must stay on goal line. Goals are 12 feet wide. A player cannot toss ball to himself to head on goal.

**Coaching Points:**

- 1) Emphasize getting open and moving to support ball carrier.
- 2) Player passing may have to pass ball to open air space for player to run onto to head or catch.
- 3) Player committing a foul plays 30 seconds with hands behind back.  
Foul - slapping, reaching in, etc.
- 4) Stress to players the need to communicate, to call the ball when open.

**Various Progressions???**



## Keeper Intro - The Cradle Catch

**Objective:** Learning to catch the soccer ball

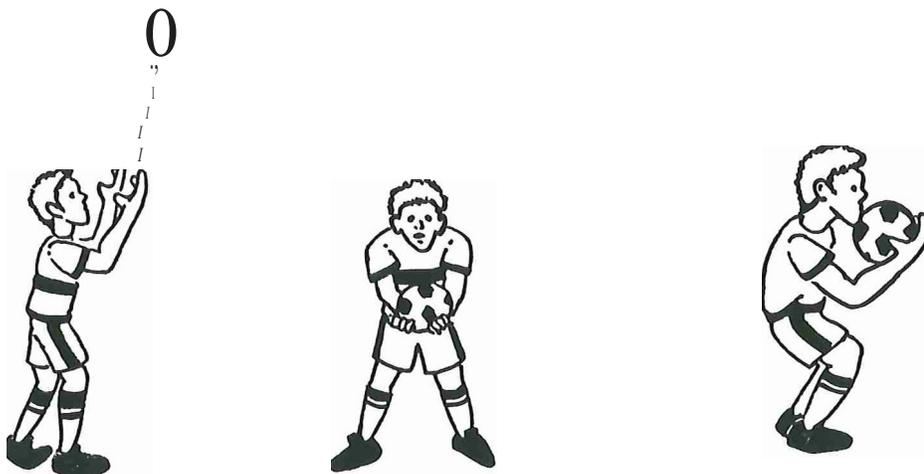
**Time:** 5 - 10 minutes

**Equipment:** One ball per player

**Procedure:** In a large area (grid optional), each player will toss his/ her ball into the air and catch it, cradle style, before the ball hits the ground.

**Coaching Points:** 1) Ball does not have to be thrown high into the air.  
2) Immediately after catching ball, keeper is to bring ball into body.

**Various Progressions:** Players throw ball into air, let it bounce and catch ball.  
: In partners (each has a ball), players throw their ball into air, let ball bounce, and catch their partner's ball.  
: Players partner up (with only one ball) and partner with ball lobs underhand to other partner, who cradle catches.  
: Partner lobs underhand with a more direct trajectory.  
: Partner lobs, ball bounces, and other partner cradle catches.



## Keeper Intro Part 2

**Objective:** Learning to catch and throw; learning to roll and dive

**Time:** 5 - 10 minutes.

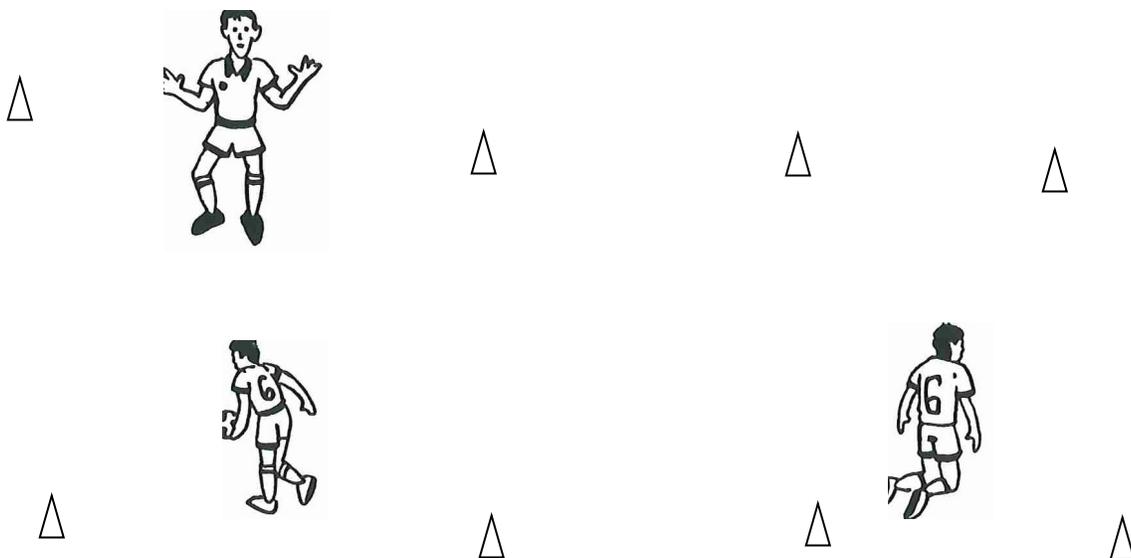
**Equipment:** One ball per duo, cones, or markers

**Procedure:** Players in pairs (one ball per pair), about 6 - 10 m apart, throwing and lobbing to each other. Use cones as nets, with width of nets 12 feet. Players are standing up. Players toss, lob, and throw underhanded at partner in goal. Players are not trying to score.

**Coaching Points:**

- 1) Stress ready position; knees bent, weight on toes, feet shoulder width apart, hands out at side, elbows bent.
- 2) After making save, bring ball into body.
- 3) Cushion ball don't fight it.
- 4) Stress to players the object is not to score.
- 5) For shots that cannot be cradle-caught, keepers extend arms and catch ball with fingers and palms, then bring ball to body.

**Various Progressions:** Bounce shots - ball bounces before keeper makes save. Servers throw slightly to keeper's side, forcing keeper to react, again not trying to score. Have keepers kneeling (5 m apart). Have players "bowl" the ball to the side of another partner. Partner must roll sideways, receive ball, and pull ball into body. Have keepers roll on their sides, not on their stomachs. Again, object is not to score. Low bounces can be attempted as well.



## Dive Hard

**Objective:** Learning to catch and dive from a standing position; to become comfortable in diving to make a save

**Time:** 5 - 10 minutes

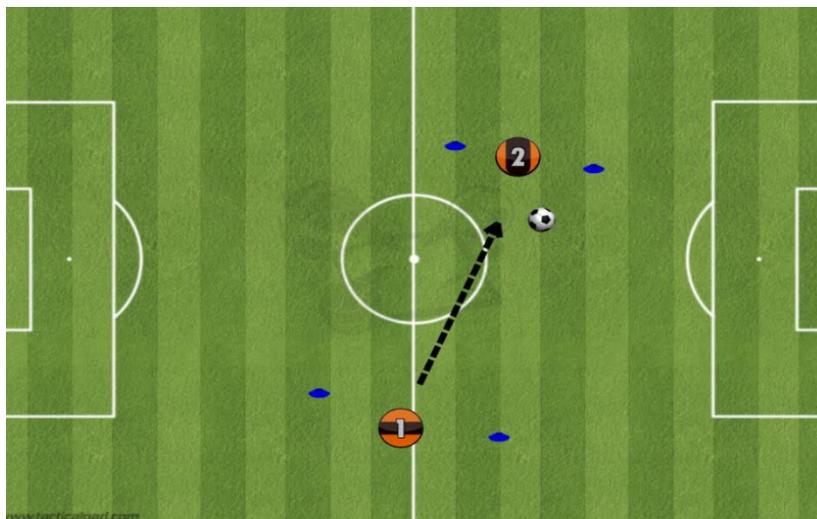
**Equipment:** Cones or markers, one ball per duo, grassy field, or mats

**Procedure:** Cones placed 12 feet apart serve as nets. Two nets facing each other about 10 - 14 m apart. One partner in one goal, other partner in opposite goal. Players are not trying to score; no hard tosses / shots. Have players aim for comers, forcing keeper to dive to save. Players first start by bowling the ball, then progress to "tossed" ball with a bounce, then a kicked ball.

**Coaching Points:**

- 1) No hard shots. Stress to players it is a learning exercise.
- 2) Vary the shots. (Throw, lob, kick, bowl etc.)
- 3) Keepers finishes save by bringing ball to body.
- 4) Keepers in crouched ready position. Keeper's feet should be moving / shuffling prior to shot.
- 5) Keepers may have to take 1 - 2 quick steps to side before diving. Make sure these steps are lateral, not cross overs.
- 6) Stress proper technique on dive / roll. Land on side, not stomach.

**Various Progressions:** Friendly competition; who is best keeper?  
: Increase distance; let players shoot a little harder.  
: Have a demo by "prized pupil." This may motivate others.



## Bounce Ball

**Objective:** Learning to catch, handle properly, and react to bouncing shots; learning to control rebounds

**Time:** 5 - 10 minutes

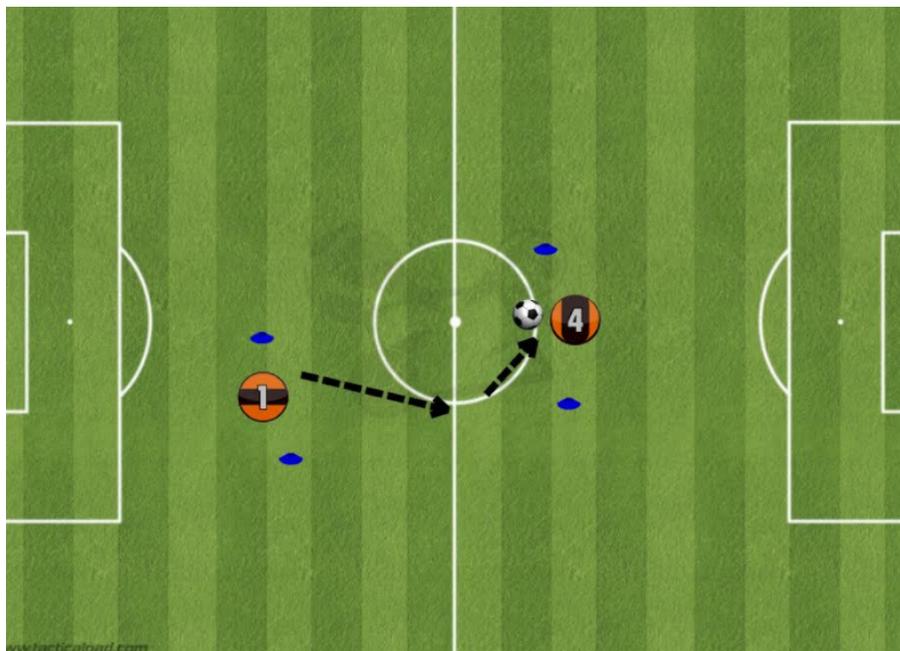
**Equipment:** Cones, one ball per duo

**Procedure:** In partners, players will alternate bouncing (basketball chest pass works fine) shots at the other player. Partners will defend a goal (12 feet wide) and goals will be 6 - 10 m apart, facing one another. (This distance is contingent on players' ability to throw). Group players with similar abilities. If chest pass is difficult, have players lob underhand, or throw overhead with downward trajectory.

**Coaching Points:**

- 1) Keeper in ready position; bent knees, arms at sides, elbows bent, weight on toes, feet shuffling / moving prior to shot.
- 2) Bring ball to body after shot.
- 3) Retrieve rebounds quickly.
- 4) Object is to "test" keeper, not to score.
- 5) Cradle catch for shots directly at keeper.

**Various Progressions:** Let thrower play rebound if there is one.  
: Thrower may try to score with throw. (Ball still must bounce first).  
: Increase distance between partners. Let players throw overhead (bounce still required).



## 1v1 Breakaway

**Objective:** Learning to defend goal and challenge shooter in a realistic game situation

**Time:** 5 - 10 minutes

**Equipment:** Cones, one ball per duo

**Procedure:** In partners, players will alternate dribbling in a breakaway manner on their partner who defends a 12-foot-wide goal (wider for more accomplished / older players). The nets should be placed 15 - 20 m apart. After shot is taken, shooter quickly returns to his goal and keeper becomes the shooter after retrieving the ball. Goalkeepers must stay near their nets (cannot go past halfway point of field while shooter dribbles for a shot). Shooters are not restricted.

**Coaching Points:**

- 1) Emphasize proper ready position.
- 2) All rebounds are playable.
- 3) Have players keep score.
- 4) Keeper should crouch lower as shooter gets closer.
- 5) When kicking foot is extended backward, a shot is forthcoming.

**Various Progressions:** Make shooters only shoot from their half Place emphasis on long range shot.

: Restrict shooters to left or right footed shots only.

: After keepers are proficient, try 2v1 (three per group).



## Butterfingers

**Objective:** Goalkeeper learning and practicing calling for ball and taking ball out of the air; also, emphasis on quality distribution

**Time:** 5 - 10 minutes

**Equipment:** Cones, supply of balls

**Procedure:** Put a keeper in a 12-foot-wide goal. Server starts 15 - 20 min front of goal with balls. Players form two lines, with the lines being 15 m away from the keeper on each side of goal. Place a cone halfway between the players' line and the server. (See diagram.) Drill begins with server tossing a high ball into air towards keeper who will take (catch) the ball out of the air. Keeper calls for the ball ("Keeper's ball"). After catching the ball, keeper throws underhand (bowling style) to first person in one of the players' lines. Player receives ball, dribbles towards cone between him and server, rounds the cone and heads on a breakaway to goal and shoots. After shooting, server tosses another ball; this time, keeper throws underhand to opposite line, whereby player dribbles towards his cone, rounds it and dribbles towards goal on a breakaway. Server tosses after every shot. After shooting, players retrieve balls and place beside server before switching lines.

**Coaching Points:**

- 1) Keepers call for ball, jump high to bring ball down.
- 2) Demonstrate and demand quality underhand bowling style passes to players. (No bounces allowed!)
- 3) Players receiving passes quickly get ball under control and headed towards cone. Show players how to "open up" their stance when receiving pass, so they can see keeper and middle part of field. Player's back should be facing sideline.



**Butterfingers (continued)**

**Coaching Points (continued):** 4) Stress importance of player's first touch from keeper 's pass.  
5) Keeper comes off line when challenging breakaway.

**Various Progressions:** Restrictions on shooters (left foot, right foot).

Place a cone 12 - 18 inches inside each goal post as a target learning tool. Keeper gets one point for a save; shooters get one point for a goal and three points for hitting target cone.

Shooters may play their own rebounds.

Place one player in keeper's proximity who tries to head ball from server ' s toss. Keeper must still get to ball. You may restrict this player somewhat by making him challenge in the air while one hand (or both) behind his back.

Try this!

Keeper distributes to player who dribbles to cone and rounds cone heading towards goal. When player rounds cone, first player in the other line runs out to become a defender (1v1). May restrict defenders at beginning (hands behind back).

## The Ball Winner

**Objective:** Learning and practicing passing and receive, dribble, shoot and defend in a level context

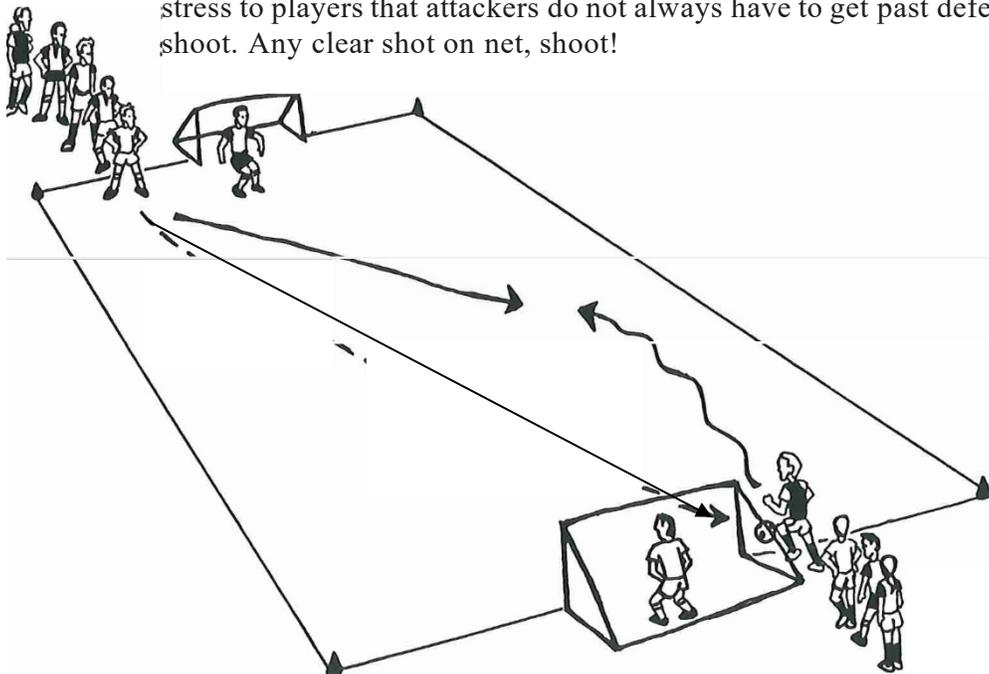
**Time:** 5 - 10 minutes

**Equipment:** Balls, cones, goals

**Procedure:** Make a grid 20 m long and 20 m wide. Place a goal 12 feet wide at each end. Put a keeper in each goal. Make two players' lines and place each one to the right of the two goals. Players in one line will be the attackers and players in the other line will be the defenders. Place all balls with the defenders' line. First defender in line passes a ball towards the first attacker. Attacker meets the pass and dribbles towards the goal in front of him / her. After the attacker plays his / her first touch, the defender who passed the ball jumps into play to challenge the attacker (1v1). If the defender wins possession of the ball, he / she can dribble towards opposite net for a shot. Attacker goes to the defenders' line. Defender goes to attackers' line.

**Coaching Points:**

- 1) Keep drill flowing.
- 2) Blow whistle to start a new sequence.
- 3) If attacker is dispossessed, must go directly to defenders' line.
- 4) Don't allow attackers to attack slowly. Emphasize game-like intensity and pace. Slow attacker? Blow whistle: defender takes over ball.
- 5) Ball out of bounds? Blow whistle, two new players in.
- 6) Encourage attackers to use dribbling skills, change of pace, etc. Also stress to players that attackers do not always have to get past defenders to shoot. Any clear shot on net, shoot!



## The Ball Winner (continued)

**Coaching Points (continued):** 7) Demonstrate proper defending posture. Weight low but forward on feet, hands for balance, one foot ahead of other, angle attacking player to one way. No wild lunges to win ball. Best to remain patient and wait for opportunity to win ball. "Jockey" the attacker.

**Various Progressions:** Two attacking lines. When ball is passed from defender, two attackers take on one defender, 2v1. Use one net. Will have three lines. Players go from line to line.  
Explain offside rule if using above progression.  
Move defending line about 12 m from keeper. Keeper has the balls. Keeper distributes (underhand) to defender who receives, then passes to attacking line. Sequence develops as usual.

### 3v1 with Restriction to Half

**Objective:** Learning how to use space, play with teammates and make decisions; emphasis on promoting passing to create goal scoring opportunities

**Time:** 5 - 10 minutes

**Equipment:** Balls, cones, goals

**Procedure:** A 5v5 game played in a 20 x 30 m grid. Teams play with one defender, three forwards and one keeper. Defender is restricted to own half, and forwards are restricted to the offensive half. This creates a static 3v1 situation. Ball out of bounds results in goal kick, throw-in, or corner kick. Goals are 12 feet wide.

**Coaching Points:**

- 1) This drill should encourage passing to create goal scoring opportunities.
- 2) Encourage players to move to support player in possession.
- 3) Defenders try to send ball to teammates quickly to relieve pressure.
- 4) Forwards must quickly run-down balls / passes sent by defenders under pressure. Also, must try to dispossess opposition defender in possession.

**Various Progressions:** Allow one forward from each team to play in both halves. This will create a 3v2, which will increase defending capabilities. Progress to 5v5 (restricted to half) drill. See# 50.



## 5v5 Restricted to Half.

**Objective:** Learning how to use space, play with teammates and make decisions

**Time:** 5 - 10 minutes

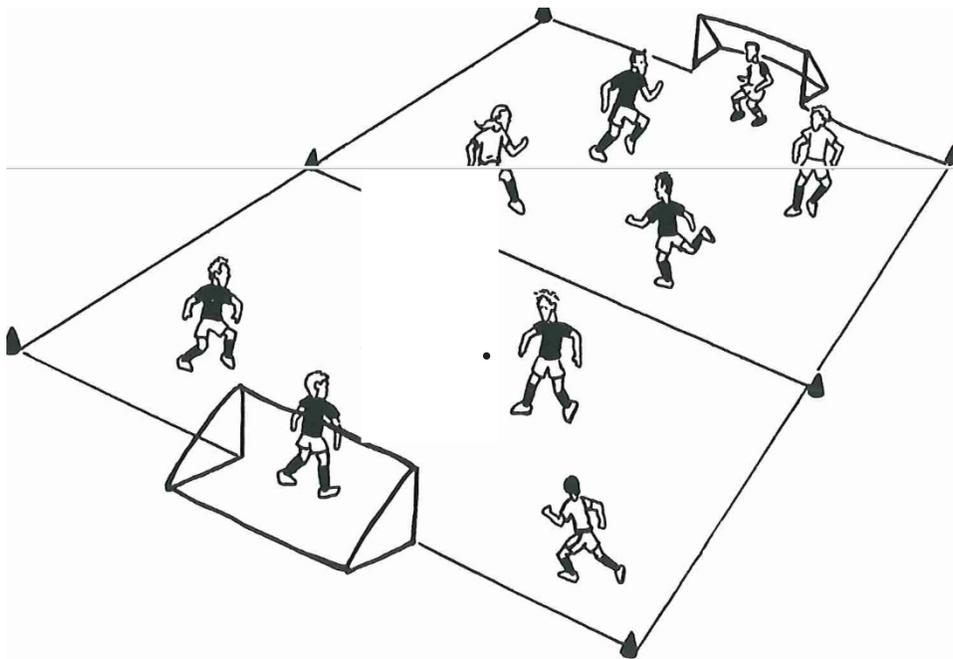
**Equipment:** Balls, cones, goals

**Procedure:** A 5v5 game played in 20 x 30 m grid. A team plays with two forwards, two defenders, one keeper. Defenders are restricted to their own half and attackers are restricted to the offensive half. Ball out of bounds results in goal kick, throw-in, or corner kick. Goals are 12 feet wide.

**Coaching Points:**

- 1) Demonstrate good defending; marking tight, good low posture when challenging.
- 2) Encourage shooting, as well as players taking on defenders trying to beat them on the dribble 1v1.
- 3) When defenders win possession, opposition forwards must pressure, while same team forwards must move to support and receive a forward pass.
- 4) Demonstrate to defenders how to pass forward into space if teammate forwards are being marked tightly.

**Various Progressions:** Allow one defender to play without restrictions. Encourage this. defender to move forward to create a 3v2 situation.



## 4 x 4 x 4 Nets

**Objective:** Learning how to use space, play with teammates and make decisions

**Time:** 5 - 10 minutes

**Equipment:** Balls, cones, goals

**Procedure:** Two teams of 4v4 play in a 20 x 35 m grid. Place two goals (each 6 - 8 feet wide) along each end line. Players play a 4v4 game except there are two goals they can shoot on. After a team scores a goal, players must run back to their end line to tag up and then play resumes. A throw-in occurs whenever the ball leaves the grid, both end line and touch line.

**Coaching Points:**

- 1) Encourage passing and players running into space and moving to support.
- 2) Encourage shooting with both feet. Give three points to team / player who scores with weak foot.
- 3) Demonstrate to players that passing back to maintain possession is prudent. Ball does not always have to be played forward.

**Various Progressions:** Add one keeper on each team to defend two goal nets. This is interesting! (5v5)  
Add two keepers on each team to defend both goals.(6v6) Less interesting!



## Hit the Open Forward Player

**Objective:** Learning how to use space, play with teammates, and make decisions; special emphasis on completing forward pass to teammate

**Time:** 5 - 10 minutes

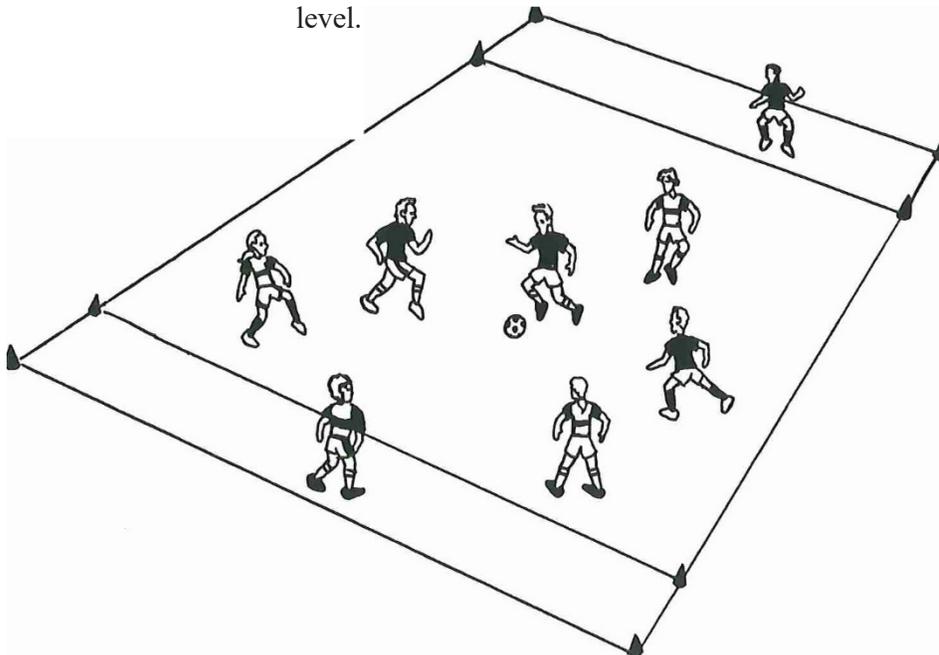
**Equipment:** Cones, one ball per group of eight

**Procedure:** Make a grid 20 x 20 m, with an adjacent 20 x 5 m zone (grid) at two ends of main grid. See diagram. Teams will play 4v4; however, three players from each team are restricted to main grid (middle). Place the fourth player from each team in the two smaller grids. These are the "target" players. They are restricted to the small grid. Teams get one point if they can make a pass to their target player in the smaller grid. Ball out of bounds results in a throw-in. Middle grid players play possession and pressuring soccer until a passing opportunity presents itself. Rotate target players.

**Coaching Points:**

- 1) Target players must show for ball, try to move to become an open target.
- 2) Encourage players to move to support, as well as hit a first-time pass. Find open space.
- 3) Encourage players to think "possession" first, and not attempt passing unless high probability of completion.
- 4) Coach may play as neutral in middle grid, causing 4v3 situation. Do this if passing is not very successful.

**Various Progressions:** Make grid(s) smaller. Places more emphasis on dribbling, passing, shielding ball. Players will have to raise their technical and skill level.



## The Long Ranger

**Objective:** Learning how to use space, play with teammates and make decisions; special emphasis on long range shooting

**Time:** 5 - 10 minutes

**Equipment:** Cones, goals, balls

**Procedure:** Make a grid 20 m wide x 30 m long. Place a goal 12 feet wide at each end. Place a cone to mark grid into two halves. Teams play 5v5 (four plus keeper). Use throw-ins, corner kicks, and goal kicks. Teams get one point for scoring a goal, but three points if goal is scored from a shot taken from their own side of half, i.e., at least 15 m away. Rotate keepers.

**Coaching Points:**

- 1) Encourage / designate player from each team to be "sweeper" player. This player may get more opportunities for long range shots. Sweeper should call for pass if open even if it means a pass back into own half. Give everyone a chance to play this position.
- 2) However, don't let players pass up opportunities to score a one-point goal.
- 3) Encourage passing and moving to support. Also, stress keeping fieldwide.
- 4) Emphasize that ball does not always have to go forward.
- 5) Depending on weight, size of ball, coach may decrease the length of grid to 25 -28 m.

**Various Progressions:** Add a neutral player who plays with team in possession, causing a



## Never Ending 3v2

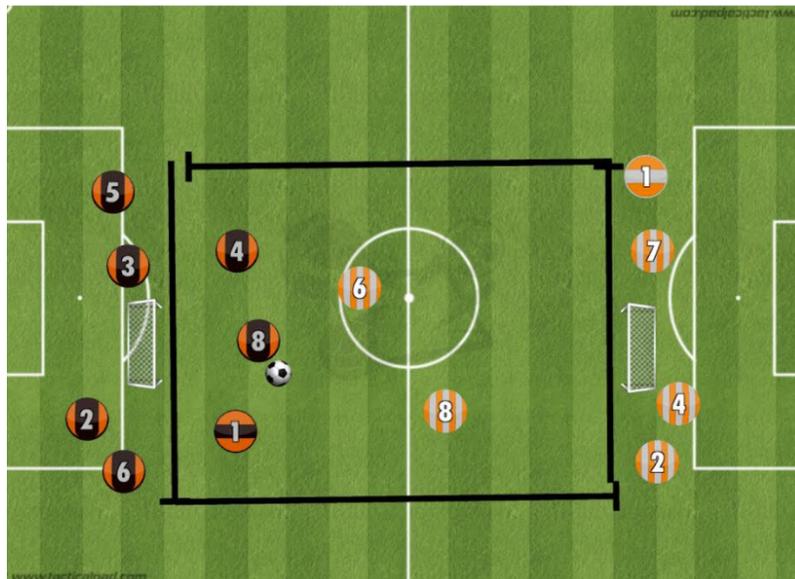
**Objective:** Learning how to use space, play with teammates and make decisions

**Time:** 5 - 10 minutes

**Equipment:** Supply of balls, cones, two goals

**Procedure:** Make a playing grid 30 x 20 m with a 12-foot goal/ net at each end line. Drill requires three teams with three players per team. Players on Team A begin drill by starting at one end with ball. They advance ball towards opposite end where they attack goal defended by Team B, which places one of their players in goal. (Three attackers versus two defenders and a keeper.) When defenders win possession or when ball leaves grid playing area, Team B becomes attacking team. Team B's three players head towards opposite end trying to score a goal on Team C (two defenders, one keeper). When Team C wins possession or when ball leaves grid, Team C becomes attacking team and heads towards opposite end trying to score on Team A (two defenders, one keeper). And on the cycle continues. Have a steady supply of balls beside each net. Each attack begins when player (who was keeper) takes a ball from beside the net and begins dribbling. Players on the team that is not involved at the moment stand behind the net, ready to spring into action when ball is turned over. Simplified, it looks like this:

- A) Attacking team exits field, stands behind net it was last attacking.
- B) Defending team becomes attacking team. (Keeper becomes attacker too.)
- C) Players sitting out (behind net) jump into play when play breaks down at opposite end and begins to return their way. Remember one person must act as keeper.



## Never Ending 3v2 (continued)

- Coaching Points:**
- 1) This drill stresses passing and keeping ball in play.
  - 2) Encourage shooting, especially long range, and first-time shots.
  - 3) Make sure players keep field wide, playing with width.
  - 4) Coach may find it easy to blow whistle when play breaks down, prompting players to change.
  - 5) Players on each team take turns being keeper.
  - 6) Encourage passing into space-, and first-time shots.
  - 7) Keep drill flowing smoothly. When ball exits field, blow whistle; new sequence begins immediately.

**Various Progressions:** May use throw-ins to restart and prolong each attacking sequence if ball kicked out of grid by defenders.

## 4v4

**Objective:** Learning how to use space, play with teammates and make decisions

**Time:** 5 - 10 minutes

**Equipment:** Cones, goals, one ball per eight players

**Procedure:** Make a grid 18 m wide x 25 m long and place a 12-foot-wide goal at each end. Teams play 4v4 (three plus keeper). Game includes throw-ins, goal kicks and corner kicks. Make it "official" game so players get used to rules, etc., of the 7v7 game. Have a kickoff to start game and after goals. Slowly introduce rules, not all at once.

**Coaching Points:**

- 1) 3v3 field players is the best teaching tool, as it represents the basic triangle players will work with.
- 2) Reinforce showing for ball, playing ball into space, etc.
- 3) Stress possession soccer. May have to play ball back.
- 4) Encourage using keeper for back pass if under pressure.
- 5) Encourage shooting and attacking.

**Various Progressions:** Add one more player per team every few minutes until each team has seven (six plus keeper). Every time a player is added, widen grid by 5 - 6 m and lengthen by 7 - 8 m, until you get a grid approximately 40 x 60 m for 7v7.



## **Where Do We Go from Here?**

Once a Grassroots player has graduated to the U-13 age group, their individual technical and skill development takes on more importance. From this point, a player requires in depth individual technical training. Generally, by this age most are receptive to "getting better" and forgo a bit of fun to train to get better. They now play the game because they are hooked on it, especially if they were in a good Grassroots program. They now have an appetite to learn and a desire to get better.

Unfortunately, once young players get to this age the adults place extra emphasis on leagues and games. Although important, to build competence and competence in playing the game of soccer, the benefits of proper training with a certified coach are undeniable. Attacking skills and the individual ability to manipulate the ball at-pace, on-demand, and under-pressure needs to be given priority. Defending skills are important however the game is ultimately played with the ball at the feet. Understanding what to do when on the ball and when off the ball, is information that can thoroughly be ingrained during a relatively short window.

Together let's ensure our young players are given the tools they need to be successful in playing the game of soccer. Regardless of the level a young player wants to eventually play at, it is our duty to instill the game and movement fundamentals.

Sincerely,

Terrol Russell  
PGYSA/IMPACT Director of Club Operations