

INFORMATION PROVIDED BY THE NATIONAL SOCCER COACHES ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA -
NSCAA

YMCA SOCCER CLINIC

COACHES HANDOUT

**PRESENTATED BY NEIL HULL STATE TECHNICAL DIRECTOR NSCAA – TX. CONTACT
neilhull@pass1on1.com for more information visit www.pass1on1.com**

3/11/2010

Clinic presentation covering the planning of a training session and games and activities to enhance the play of 5-8 year olds

II. Organization of a Practice Session

A. Pre-practice preparation:

1. Equipment
 - a. Balls (number, correct size, inflated properly)
 - b. Vests or jerseys to distinguish players
 - c. Cones to delineate confined areas
 - d. Extra shin guards in case players forget them
 - e. Nets for goals (if needed), flags
 - f. Medical emergency numbers, telephone access arrangements
 - g. Medical equipment (ice, band aids, etc...)
 - h. WATER (usually players bring their own but a good idea for the coach to have extra.

B. A Practice

1. Equal length to game length. Have players work in the time periods they would in a game. Reminder, practices should be completed at the announced time.
2. Variety of games/exercises is recommended. Emphasize dribbling and touch of the ball.
3. Choose a topic to work on. For young and new players, the activities should encourage confidence on the ball. Have practice objectives. Set them from seasonal plan or from what the coach saw as weaknesses during the last or recent games. The older the players, the more the observation of the game(s) tells the coach what to practice.
4. Emphasize the focus of the practice session. Do not be overly concerned with other areas of play.
5. Activities should flow into one another to minimize down time and off-task behavior.
6. Teach from simple to complex – games and exercises should follow a progression from easier to more difficult.
7. Sections of practice:
 - a. Warm-up or preparation period
 - 1) Approximately 20% of practice time.
 - 2) Purpose is to prepare players physically and psychologically.
 - 3) Use fun games.
 - 4) Warm-up should be related to the main topic of the practice.
 - 5) Remember movement is the key to learning the skills of soccer.
 - 6) Example – Dribbling:

Conduct 2-3 minute games (games are described under Section III and in the appendices) with static stretching between games:
(1) Follow the leader

- (2) Body part dribbling
 - (3) Sharks and minnows
 - (4) Other
- b. Main activity section
- 1) Approximately 50% of practice time, 20-25% for the youngest players.
 - 2) Related to the game
 - 3) Add opposition
 - 4) Can control what the coach wants by changing:
 - (a) The size of the space to play in. General size is 10 square yards per attacking player, sufficient width to allow for creativity, sufficient length for running, but do not stretch the space too far.
 - (b) The time to do something
 - (c) The number of touches a player can take
 - (d) The number of balls used
 - (e) The number of goals
 - (f) The number of players in the space
 - 5) Example – Dribbling
 - Conduct 4-5 minute games:
 - (a) Shadow dribbling
 - (b) Pac Man
 - (c) 1v1 games
 - (d) Other
- c. Concluding activity section – Playing the Game
- 1) Approximately 25-30 % of practice time. With the youngest players, this may be 50% of practice.
 - 2) Allow players to play the game to goals.
 - 3) Remember that the smaller the numbers the more clear the exercise/teaching point. As numbers are increased, the exercise/teaching point becomes more game like or real.
 - 4) Restrictions are permitted, but limit them and limit the time of restrictions to no more the 1/3 of the time of the activity.
 - 5) Play the game to see if what the players have been practicing can be done in the game.
 - 6) Example – Dribbling
 - (a) To two large goals, must dribble across a line to score
 - (b) Players cannot pass a ball forward, but can pass it backwards
 - (c) Other
- d. Warm-Down
- 1) Approximately 5% of practice time.

- 2) Stretch and permit players to cool down. Do not forget the upper body.
- 3) Example – Dribbling:
 - (a) Stretch using the ball and without it
 - (b) Zen dribble
 - (c) Other
- 4) Use the time to positively reinforce the efforts of all the players!
- 5) For the younger players especially, make sure the parents are around so you can give out any information needed.

III. Activities

(See Appendix E for explanations)

The following activities will encourage comfort with the soccer ball, changing speed and direction, using different surfaces of the foot, vision with and without the ball, protecting the ball (shielding).

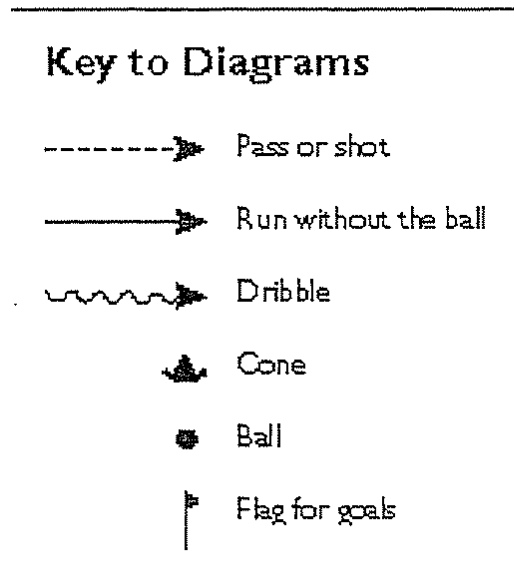
- Step-ups
- Pendulum
- Follow the Leader
- Red Light – Green Light
- Body Part Dribbling
- Speed Dribbling
- Tag
- Hospital Tag
- Crows and Cranes
- Crab Soccer
- Sharks and Minnows
- Knockout
- Dribble and shoot at goal. Have enough goals (cones) so players are not standing around waiting to shoot.
- 1v1 to goals
- 2v2 to goals
- 3v3 to goals
- 4v4 to goals

In these last games, begin to teach the players about goal kicks, corner kicks and throw-ins.

SMALL-SIDED GAMES (To Enhance Learning and Emphasize Fun)

The following pages for suggested activities to enhance learning and make practices fun for kids. These games will assist in the development of technique and overall skills. It is important to structure practices with both an emphasis on the learning environment, and a place to have fun.

Please note that while these activities and games are suggested, coaches should always be looking for new ideas to enhance practices. We suggest taking notes at coaching clinics, clipping articles from publications about coaching youth and continually adding new methods to teach the game and maintain enjoyment.



DRIBBLING & TACKLING

(Tackling when match related and match condition stages.)

FUNDAMENTAL ACTIVITIES:

Pendulum:

Touch the ball from the inside of one foot to the inside of the other.

- Variation:
- Challenge the players to see how far apart their feet can go.
 - How quickly can the players touch the ball?
 - Every third touch, push the ball diagonally out with one foot and bring it back with the opposite foot.

- Coaching Points:
- Keeping feet shoulders width (unless otherwise stated).
 - Keep knees bent.
 - Low center of gravity.
 - Keep body over the ball.
 - Stay on the balls of your feet ("happy feet").
 - Look up as much as or as often as possible.

Zen Dribbling:

Each player has a partner, one player has a ball. Players hold hands. One player has a ball and closes his/her eyes. The partner guides the player around a confined area.

Follow the Leader:

In small groups of four or five, the players follow the leader while dribbling. This format can also be used for team races or relay races.

Red Light - Green Light:

Have the players in a straight line with a ball. Designate a finish line across the field. The coach shouts red light – stop or green light – go. Players that do not immediately stop (coach's decision) goes back even with the last person.

- Variation:
- Stop the ball with various body parts.
 - Coach uses a red shirt and a green shirt (visual cues).

- Coaching Points:
- Players must keep the ball close or accelerate if they push it further away.
 - When coach uses visual cues, keep the head up as often as possible.

Body Part Dribbling:

While dribbling within a confined space, stop the ball with various body parts, indicated by the coach.

- Variation:
- If players are too young for left and right, just use foot, elbow...
 - Change the size of the space.
 - Divide the players into groups and see which group can all stop the ball with the appropriate body part first.

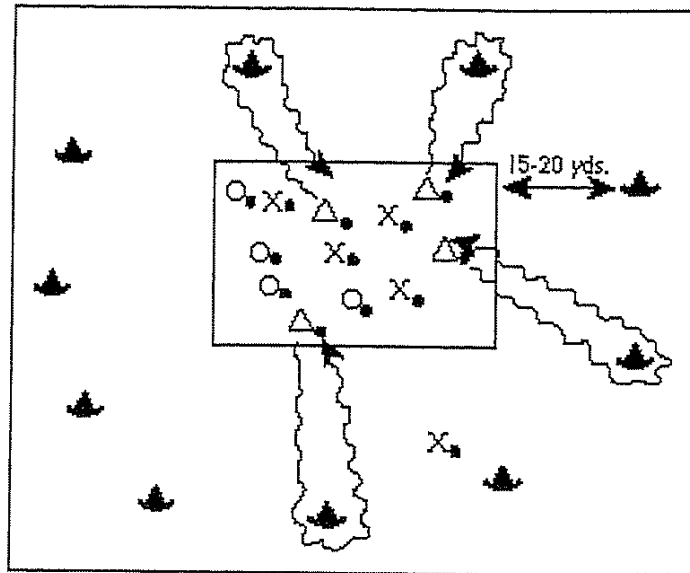
- Coaching Points:
- Keep the ball close, soft touches.
 - Keep your head up between touches.

Speed Dribbling:

Divide the players into 3 groups. Assign each group a number (1,2,3). Create a confined area with cone. Around the area, about 15-20 yards away, set about 10 cones. Begin play, all 3 groups are playing tag inside the area. When the coach calls a number, that team leaves the area and goes around one of the outside cones as quickly as possible.

- Variation:
- Change the distance of the outside cones.
 - Change the game played inside the confined space.
 - Restrict the number of touches a player may use to get around the outside cone and come back.

- Coaching Points:
- The first touch to break out from the confined space should be longer.
 - The player should be using the instep or the outside of the foot.
 - In between touches, players should be looking up.



Speed Dribbling

Tag:

In a confined area, all players with a ball except the designated "IT" player. The "IT" player tries to tag other players while all are dribbling.

Hospital Tag:

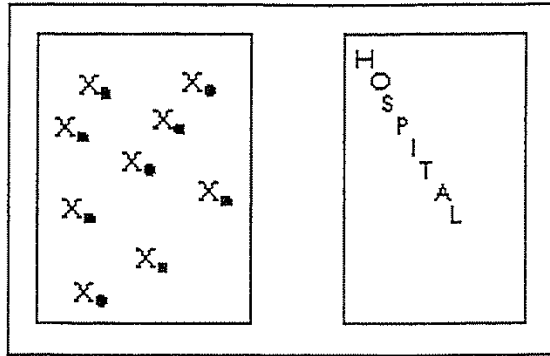
Each player dribbles the ball in a confined area. When the player is tagged by the player who is "IT", they must hold the body part touched. If a player is tagged twice, they must go to the hospital, perform a task (5-situps, 10 pendulums, etc.) and return to the game.

Variation:

- Size of Space
- Number of players "IT"
- Tagged three times before going to the hospital
- "IT" player(s) use ball

Coaching Points:

- Vision
- Change of speed and direction



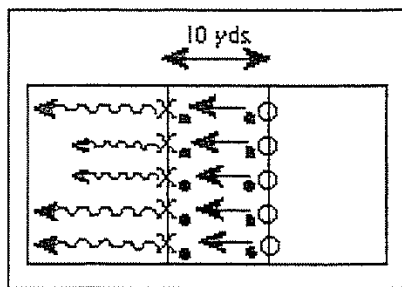
Hospital Tag

Crows and Cranes:

Set up the grid as shown below. Divide the team into two groups of X's and O's. When either team is called, they must dribble to the end line while being chased by the other team (without balls). The score is the number of players caught.

- Variation:
- Vary the size of the space
 - Vary the starting distance between the two teams
 - Place a defender in each end in front of the safety zone

- Coaching Points:
- Use coaching points for speed dribbling
 - Angle the dribble in front of the pursuing defender to cut off their path



Crows & Cranes

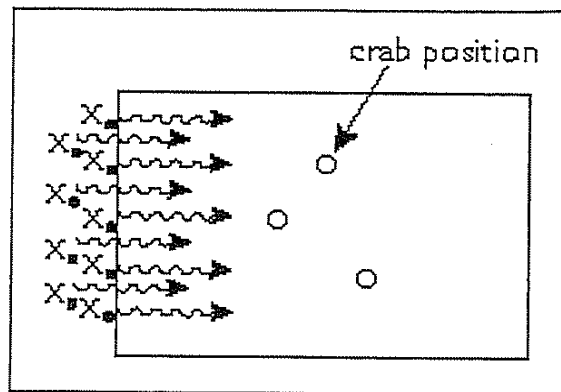
MATCH RELATED ACTIVITIES:

Crab Soccer:

Set up a rectangular grid (about 12 yds. by 20 yds.). Divide the team in half. One half are crabs, the other half are dribblers. Dribblers attempt to move from one end of the grid to the other. Crabs try to knock opponent's ball out of the grid. When ball is out, the dribbler becomes a crab. The last dribbler is the winner.

- Variation:
- Crabs try to knock opponents ball out of the area
 - Vary the length and/or width of the area

- Coaching Points:
- In tight spaces, dribblers should keep the ball close to their body
 - When space is available, push the ball into the space and get to it quickly



Crab Soccer

Sharks and Minnows:

Players line up on a line with soccer balls. A player in the middle of the defined area is the "shark". On the signal, players try to dribble across the area to the opposite line. If a player is caught by the shark, they become a shark.

- Variation:
- When the shark wins the ball, they must dribble out of the area before the minnow is caught

- Coaching Points:
- Same as hospital tag

Knockout:

Each player dribbles around a confined area (approximately 12 yds. by 12 yds.) and tries to knock other player's ball out of the confined area without losing possession of their ball. Players can return to the game after completing an assigned task by the coach (i.e. box the ball 30 times, dribble to a spot and back, etc.) If players can retrieve their own ball before it leaves the area, they keep playing.

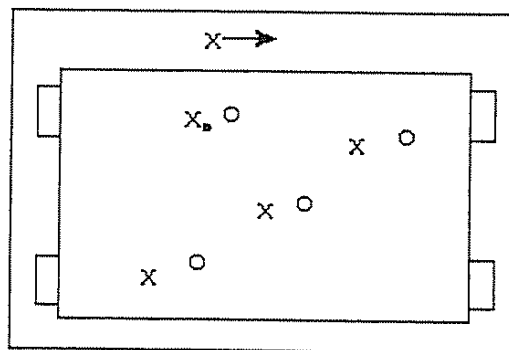
- Variation:
- Change the task to get back in the game
 - Have players knock out another player's ball with their ball
 - Play in teams

1v1 With Four Goals:

Divide the team into two teams that oppose each other (no more than 4 players per team). Each team defends two goals. Have the players get into pairs, one from each team. They can only mark each other, no help from teammates. A point for each player dribbling into one of their team's goal.

- Variation:
- Make the goals regulation and have goalkeepers for shooting
 - Have extra players stand in the goals for targets, to score a goal, pass to these targets

- Coaching Points:
- Emphasize defense or offense
 - When dribbling for a point, emphasize sealing off the defender once they're beaten
 - When passing to a target or shooting, how quickly can they make that play?
 - Players do not always have to get physically behind the defender to beat them with a pass or shoot



1v1 to Four Goals

PASSING & SHOOTING

(Striking the ball.)

FUNDAMENTAL ACTIVITIES:

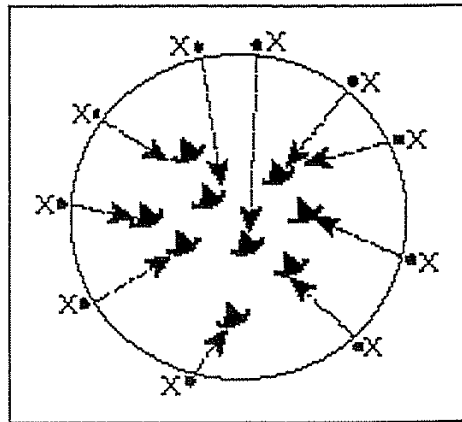
Crazy Cones:

Set up a circle about 20 yd. across. Set up cones randomly in the area. Each player needs a ball. On the signal, the players try to pass to a cone and knock it down. The player who knocks the most over wins. Players do not have to use their own ball. After passing, get the closest ball

and try again.

- Variation:
- Split the team into two groups and have competition
 - Ask them to use different surfaces of the foot
 - Use different feet

- Coaching Points:
- See technical notes



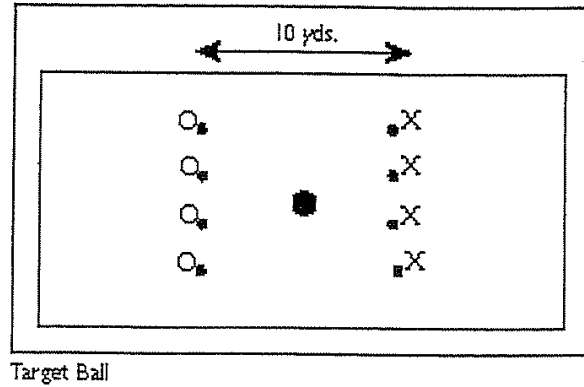
Crazy Cones

Target Ball:

After dividing the team in half, put each group ten yards apart in a line facing each other. A neutral ball is in the middle of the two lines. Each team tries to knock the ball over the opponent's line by passing/shooting their ball against the neutral ball

- Variation:
- Distance from the neutral ball
 - Size of the neutral ball
 - Number of neutral balls

- Coaching Points:
- See technical notes



Soccer Golf:

Set up a golf course. The tee could be a disc cone, the hole could be a stand up cone or flag. See how low a score you can get.

- Variation:
- Play as teams
 - Set up obstacles to go over or around

- Coaching Points:
- See technical notes for striking or passing

Reaction Shooting:

Divide your team into two, three or four groups (depending on the size of your team and the goals available). Each group stands in a line about twelve yards from the goal. The first player turns their back to the goal. The next player in line rolls the ball toward the goal and the first player turns and shoots into the net. Players count the number of goals in a specified time.

Relay Races:

Any type of relay race can be used and any type of pass can be used. The relay race format adds excitement and fun to learning the technique.

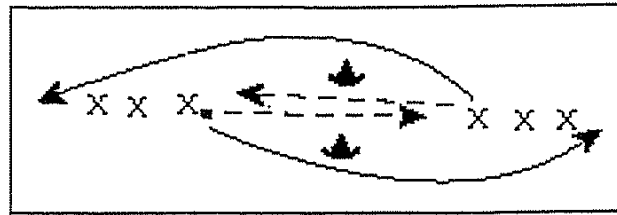
Between Cones:

Two lines of player, 10-12 yards apart. No more than 3 player in a line. Between the two lines, place two cones, 3 yards apart as a "gate". After a player passes the ball, follow the pass and go to the end of the opposite line. How many passes through the gate can the players make?

- Variation:
- Vary the width of the gate
 - Vary the distance between the two lines
 - Use two touch, one touch
 - Vary the surface of the foot used, left or right if needed

- Coaching Points:
- See technical notes for passing and receiving (if using more

than one touch)



Between Cones

Pac Man:

One player (Pac Man) has a soccer ball in a confined area. The remainder of the team tries to stay away from "Pac Man" who tries to hit the player's ball with their ball. If your ball is hit – go outside the area, perform 10 step-ups and rejoin the game.

- Variation:
- Number of "Pac Men"
 - "Pac Man" doesn't use a ball
 - Task to do when your ball is hit out

- Coaching Points:
- Vision
 - Techniques for shielding your ball
 - Techniques for passing

Toss and Receive:

Each player has a ball. On a signal, the player tosses the ball in the air and receives the ball with a certain part of the body (i.e. instep, thigh, chest...)

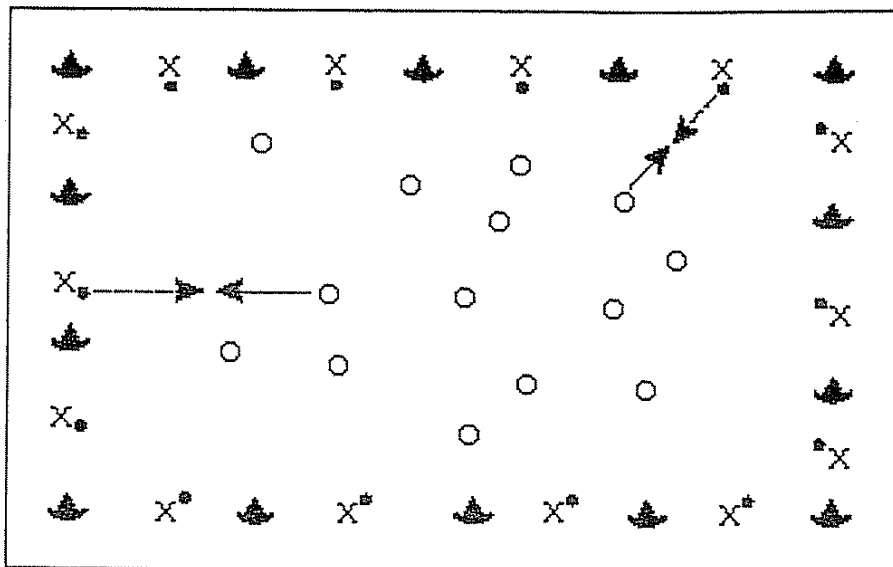
- Variation:
- Toss the ball in the air, do quick activity (sit down, stand up) and control the ball
 - Toss the ball for a partner
 - After tossing to a partner, apply pressure

- Coaching Points:
- Get in line of the flight of the ball
 - Decide which part of the body
 - Make the part of the body you will use soft
 - Bend knees and relax
 - Direct the ball in a certain direction

In a designated area, have half the players on the outside with a ball and half inside without a ball. Inside players check to an outside player who passes them the ball. The player on the inside receives the ball and plays it back to the same player on the outside who gave them the ball.

- Variation:
- Vary services to feet, chest, head...
 - Use throw-ins for services
 - Inside players return the ball to a different outside player

- Coaching Points:
- See technical notes
 - Try to receive the ball sideways on



Roxborough Square

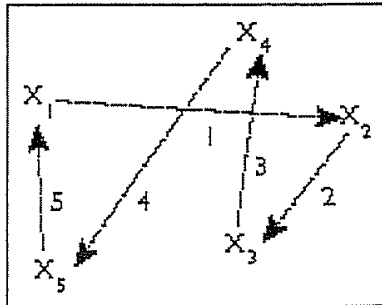
Sequence Passing:

Organize the team into groups of 5-7 players, and have two balls per group. Give each group an unstructured area to play. Number each player (1-7) and give the ball to number one. Player one passes the ball to player two who passes to player three, etc. The last player passes the ball back to number one.

- Variation:
- Balls on ground only
 - Balls in air only
 - Bend the passes
 - Have the player do a combination play with the next player and then find the third player with a pass (one wall passes

with two and then finds three with a pass, three wall passes with four and then finds five with a pass, etc.)

- Coaching Points:
- See technical notes
 - Can you see where to pass the ball before you have it?
 - Can you always see the other players in your group?

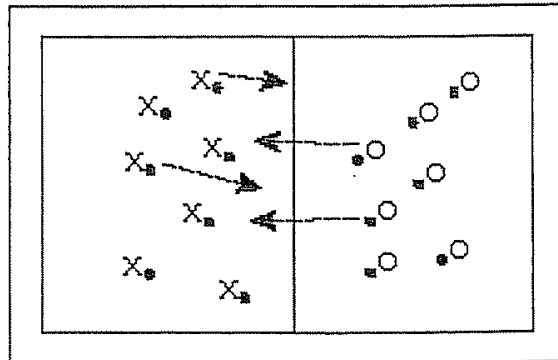


Sequence Passing

Keep Your Yard Clean:

Divide the players area in half. Each player with a ball in their team's half. Keep your yard clean by passing the ball into the other team's yard. Play for a designated length of time. Team with the least balls in their yard wins.

- Coaching Points:
- Technical notes for passing and shooting



Keep Your Yard Clean

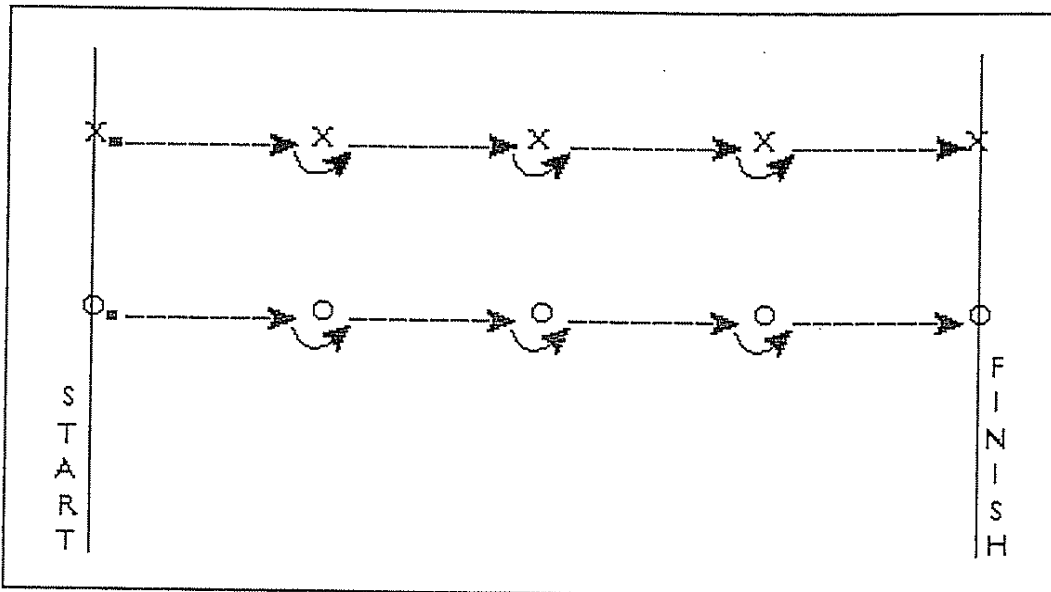
Receiving Relay:

Set players up into two lines. No more than four or five players per line. The first player in line passes the ball to the second player who must receive the ball and turn. After turning with the

ball, pass the ball to the next player and so on until the ball reaches the end of the line. The first line done is the winner.

- Variation:
- Vary the distance between players
 - Vary the services used
 - Vary the parts of the body receiving the ball
 - The line may travel by having the player who just passed the ball to assume a new position at the end of the line

- Coaching Points:
- See technical notes
 - Receive the ball sideways on whenever possible



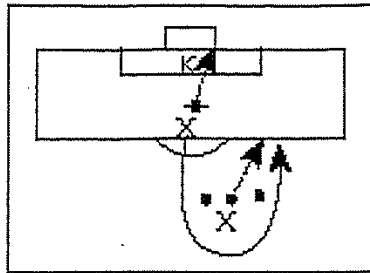
Receiving Relay

Around the Server:

This game is played until each player in the group goes through once (twice, etc.) The shooter starts with a penalty kick. Between each kick, the shooter runs around the server. That signals the ball should be served and shot immediately. Keep score by team or individual.

- Variation:
- Distance of the servers
 - Quality of the passes (rolling, bouncing, etc.)
 - Number of touches

- Coaching Points:
- Shooting techniques (see notes)



Around the Server

Short, Short, Long:

Players get into groups of 3. Two players close and one further away. The two play the ball back and forth and then one of them plays the ball to far player. The player who does not play the ball long runs to support the pass. Continue the pattern.

- Variation:
- Vary the distance of the long serve
 - Vary the technique used
 - If you have a group of 4, one serves long and two run to support

- Coaching Points:
- See techniques notes
 - When the player serving the ball long picks their head up to see the target, supporting player(s) should begin the run to support the long target



Short, Short, Long

MATCH RELATED ACTIVITIES:

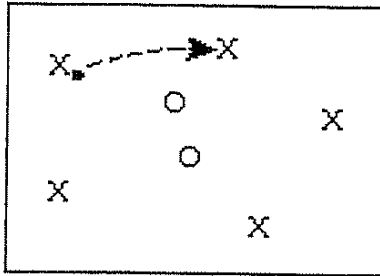
Monkey in the Middle:

One or two players are in the middle of a confined space. Outside players try to pass to each other. Inside players try to intercept the pass. One point for each pass and one point for each interception.

- Variation:
- Players that win the ball in the middle switch places with the player that lost the ball
 - Change the size and shape of the space they use

- Vary the numbers, inside and outside

Coaching Points: • See techniques notes



Monkey in the Middle

Keep Away Games

These games are great to work on passing. While the players work on passing, they are starting to understand the off the ball movements necessary to play the game.

- Variation:
- Space
 - Number of touches
 - Number of players (uneven numbers)

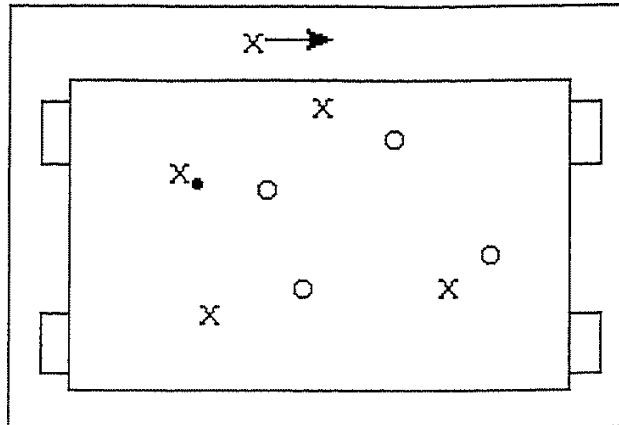
- Coaching Points:
- Positioning before the ball is played
 - Anticipating where to play the ball
 - Technical notes for passing and receiving

Four Goal Game:

Two teams play and each team has two goals to attack. Use a suitable playing area for the number of players.

- Variation:
- Size of the goals
 - Distance goals are apart
 - Use of goalkeepers

- Coaching Points:
- Various technical points
 - Positioning of supporting players (encouraging players to keep a shape, diamond, triangle, in their play)



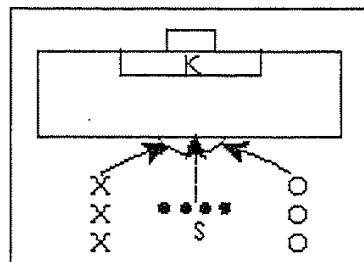
Four Goal Game

1v1 to Goal

Two lines face the goal about 20 yards away. No more than 3 players per line. The coach rolls a ball between the first two players. The first player to the ball shoots. Keep score by teams.

- Variation:
- Distance from goal
 - Distance lines are apart
 - Quality of the serve from coach
 - Angle to the goal

- Coaching Points:
- Use of the body to win possession of the ball
 - Taking the earliest opportunity to shoot
 - Defending principles



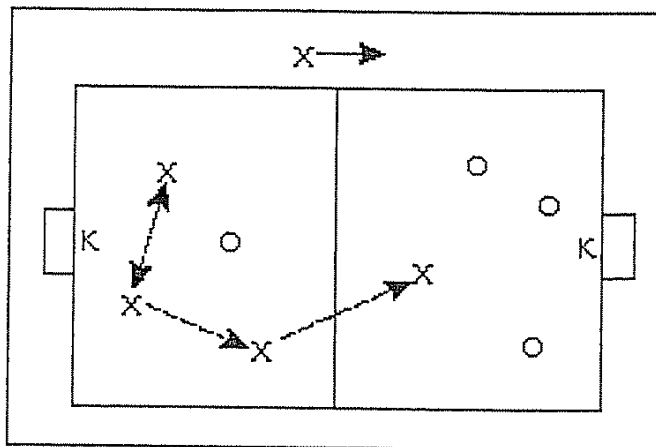
1v1 to Goal

Box on Box Shooting

Set up a field that is 18 yards by 36 yards and divide the team into four groups of four. Three defenders, a goalkeeper and an attacker play in each half of the field. The three defenders pass the ball around until they can pass it forward to the attacker and then they try and score. Play five minutes, keep score and then put in the two other teams.

- Variation:
- Have the single attacker lay the ball off to the supporting players
 - Require the defenders to begin behind the player in the attacking ½ of the field
 - The single attacking player may turn and shoot or use support

- Coaching Points:
- Pace of the pass laid off
 - Angle of the pass laid off
 - Deception of the pass laid off
 - Supporting players not too close to the player laying the ball off
 - Shooting technique (see notes)
 - Ability to find the target player



Box on Box Shooting

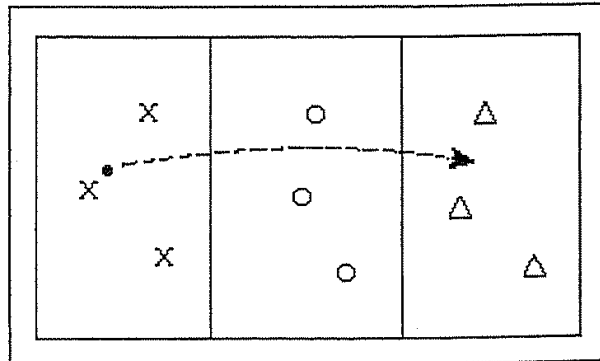
Middle Team:

Set up a field 20 x 30 yards and divide it into 3 equal sections. Divide the 9 players into 3 groups of 3. Put a group in each section. The two end groups try to keep the ball away from the middle group. If the ball is intercepted by the middle team or the ball goes out of bounds, the team who played the ball goes into the middle.

- Variation:
- Vary the size of the spaces
 - Adjust the numbers, make sure players get repetitions
 - Challenge the outside players to play through the middle instead of over

- Challenge the outside players to play over the middle instead of through

- Coaching Points:
- See technical notes
 - When playing through the middle, move the ball to get the middle group out of position before serving the ball



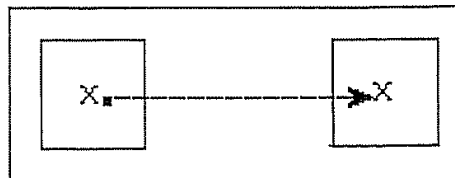
Middle Team

Grid Wars:

Place two areas of 10 x 10 yards about 10 yards apart. One player in each area. The ball is played back and forth. If the ball rolls out of your area or does not enter the area, the opponent gets a point.

- Variation:
- Vary the size of the area
 - Vary the distance between areas
 - Vary the kinds of serves (instep, outside, bending, etc.)

- Coaching Points:
- See technical notes



Grid Wars

NOTES:

