

20 POSSESSION DRILLS

by Coach Steve Parker



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20 Soccer Possession Drills

Keeping possession of the ball in soccer is very important. The longer a team can keep possession of the ball the more they will be able to wear down the defense and the better chance they'll have of scoring a goal.

There are two types of keeping possession of the ball: an individual player dribbling the ball and a team passing the ball to each other.

It's important that every player on the field is able to keep control of the dribble while they're running at full speed. It's also important that players are able to keep their heads-up so they can see defenders and their own teammates.

To keep possession of the ball as a team, players must know how to support the player with the ball. Players also need to know how to pass the ball, one-touch the ball, and trap the ball. All these things are very important. Finally, players need to be able to communicate with each other on the field so that they know what each other are doing.

To keep possession of the ball – both individually and as a team – there are many great soccer drills that should be run during practice.

The following 20 soccer possession drills will work on all the important aspects of keeping possession of the ball. Both individual dribbling skills and team skills will be highlighted in the following drills.

Dribbling in Space

What You Need: Half a soccer field, 4 cones

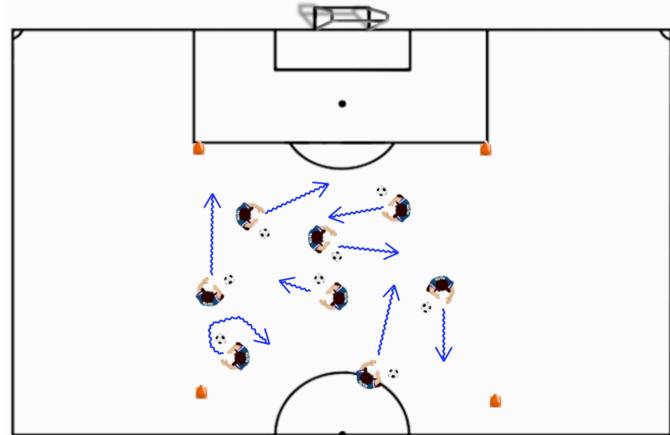
How This Drill Works:

This drill is great for younger players.

For this drill you will make a square with the 4 cones. The size of the square you make should depend on the number of players you have to go inside the square.

Players will be inside the square. They will each have a ball. The players need to dribble around inside the square without losing control of their ball and without running into each other. The players should be instructed to work on turning with the ball, speeding up with the ball, and making moves with the ball.

Players should have enough space to move around but they should be forced to be close enough to each other so that they need to watch where they're going.



Result:

It's important for players to keep their heads up while dribbling the ball. This drill will force them to do just that. Also, this drill will help players develop their moves and their ability to keep possession of the ball.

Dribble and Release

What You Need: Two lines of players facing each other

How This Drill Works:

Players will line-up in two lines that face each other. The front of each line should be about 15 yards apart. You will probably want to have more than one set of lines so that every player keeps moving.

The first player in one line will dribble as fast as possible toward the other line. When the player gets close to the other line that player will signal for the first player in the other line to start forward. Then a short pass will be made to the other player and the other player will then dribble the ball back toward the other line.

Players should communicate so that one player knows when the other player will give the ball up.



Result:

This is a great drill to teach keeping possession of the ball while dribbling quickly. This drill also helps teach players to communicate with each other.

Control the Volley

What You Need: Three players, Two balls

How This Drill Works:

There will be a player in the middle of two players. About ten yards should separate each of the players. The two players on the ends should each have a ball.

The player in the middle will step toward one player on the end. That player will serve the ball through the air to the player in the middle. The player has to volley the ball back to the server. Then the player in the middle turns and goes back toward the other player (on the other end) and repeats the process.



Result:

Part of keeping possession of the ball is being able to take a ball out of the air and volley it to a teammate. This drill allows players to practice volleying with all parts of their body.

Weak Foot Dribble

What You Need: Half a soccer field, 5 cones, Two lines of players

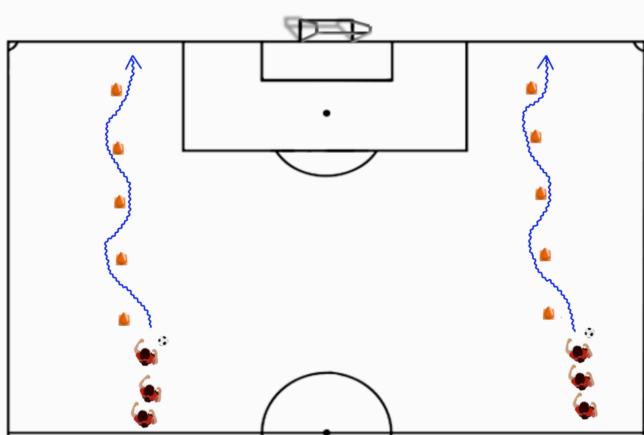
How This Drill Works:

Set-up 2 sets of 5 cones. The cones should be placed in a straight line. There should be about 5 yards between each cone.

Players will form a line about 5 yards away from each set of cones. Each player in the line should have a ball (or at least the first few players should).

The first player in each line will dribble in and out of the cones using only their weak foot. Once they get to the end, the players should sprint back to the end of the line while still dribbling only with their weak foot.

The next player in line should begin once the player in front is two cones into the drill. This way the drill keeps moving and players don't stand around too long.

**Result:**

Too often players (especially younger players) dribble almost exclusively with their dominant foot. However, to keep possession of the ball players need to be able to dribble with both feet. This drill forces players to get better with their weak foot which will help them keep possession of the ball in games.

Around the World

What You Need: Half a soccer field, 4 cones, A goal (and goalie if you choose)

How This Drill Works:

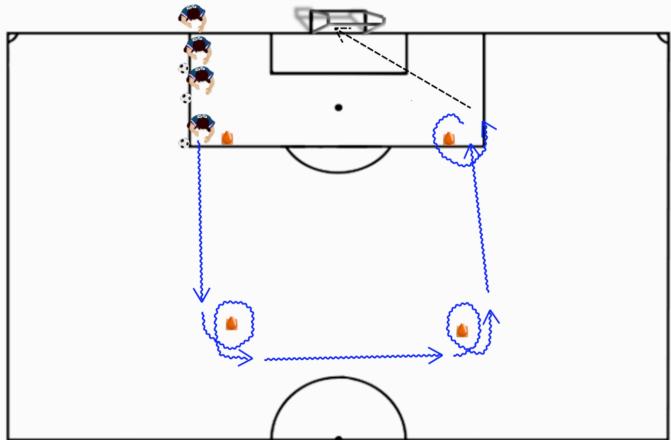
Set the 4 cones in a square. The square should be about 20 yards long and 20 yards wide. One end of the square should be on the 18.

This drill will begin at one of the cones on the 18. The first player in line will sprint to the next cone, circle around the cone, and then sprint to the next cone and circle again.

Once the player circles around the third cone (the other cone on the 18), that player should fire the ball into the goal.

To make it a little more challenging you can put a goalie in the net. Players shouldn't dribble in.

Rather they should take their shots from around the 18.

**Results:**

Players often need to change directions with the ball. This drill will help with that since players are required to dribble in three circles. This drill will also help players keep possession of the ball while dribbling quickly.

Dribbling with Speed

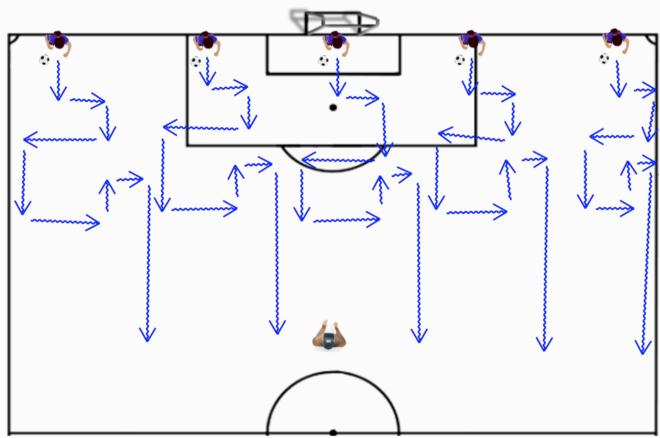
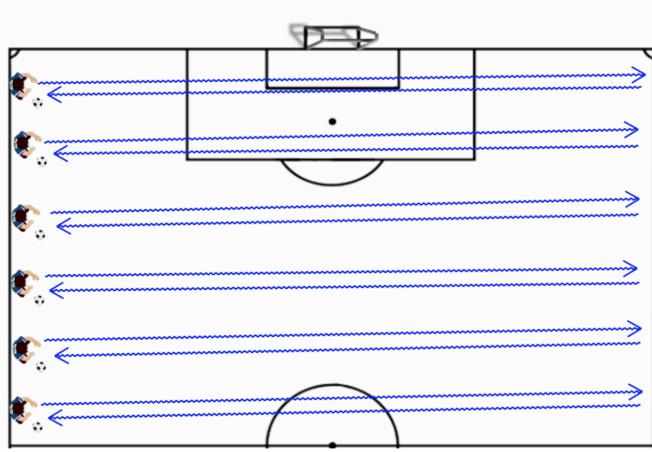
What You Need: A soccer field, A line of players with balls

How This Drill Works:

This is another basic drill but it is very good.

Players will begin on one sideline. Each player will have a ball. The players will sprint across the field to the other sideline and then they'll sprint back.

Players should concentrate on keeping their heads-up and running as fast as they can. Players should not kick the ball out in front. They must keep control of the ball and dribble.



Result:

This drill will teach players to move faster with the ball and to keep their heads up while dribbling.

Dribble Direction

What You Need: Half a soccer field, A line of players with balls

How This Drill Works:

Players should line-up along the end line at one end of the field. There should be about five yards between players. Each player needs to have a ball.

The coach will stand out near midfield. The coach will then signal for the players to dribble in a specific direction. So the coach might first point for the players to move forward then to the left, to the right, back, forward again, and so on. The players must keep their heads-up to see which way they are supposed to go and they must keep their dribble while looking at the coach the entire time.

Result:

To be able to keep possession of the ball and see other players on the field, dribblers must keep their heads up at all times. This drill will help the players learn to dribble and change directions while keeping their heads up.

4 Balls Wins

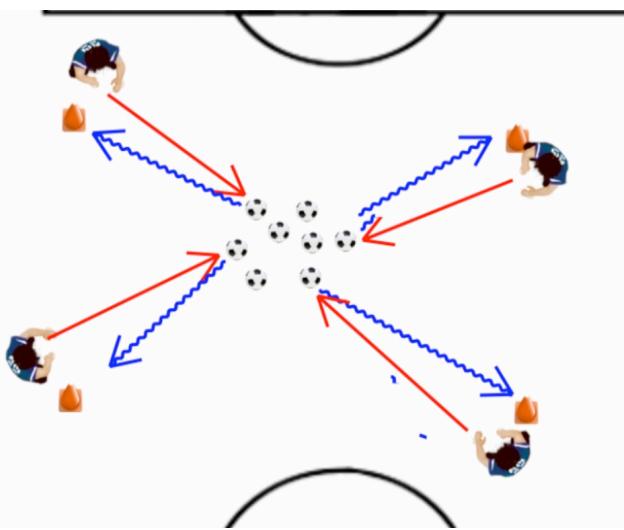
What You Need: Four players, Eight balls, Four cones

How This Drill Works:

This is a fun drill that will teach players to dribble with possession and speed.

Set-up four cones in a square with the sides being about 15 yards long. Set the 8 balls directly in the middle of the square.

One player will start at each cone. On the whistle players will sprint to the balls in the middle and then dribble the ball back to their cone. When the cones from the middle are gone then players should start stealing balls from other players' cones. The first player to have 4 balls at a cone wins.

**Result:**

This helps players learn to dribble with speed. It also teaches the players to keep their heads up so they know who has more balls. Finally, it makes players plan their next move so that they can take balls from those with three balls already at their cone.

Moving Gauntlet

What You Need: A soccer field, A team of players, Two balls

How This Drill Works:

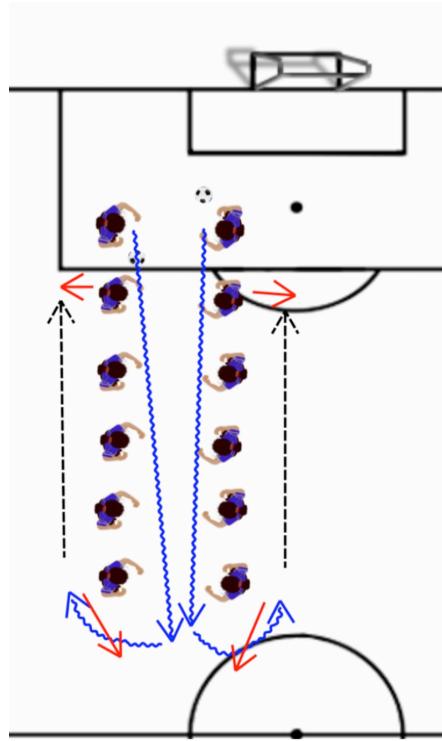
This drill will start at one end of the field and go all the way to the other end of the field. Players should form two lines and face each other. There should be a little more than a yard between the lines. The space between the lines will be a chute where players dribble through.

The first two players in the lines will have a ball and they will dribble down through the other players. The players forming the lines can't move forward but they can try to kick the ball away from the players dribbling through the chute. The player dribbling through must try to dribble straight through without allowing the

other players to kick the ball away.

One player should go first and then the other player should go once the first player is half way through the chute.

The players with the balls will finish the drill by curling to the outside and then passing back to the next two players at the beginning of the line. The passing players will then take their place at the end of the gauntlet. So the gauntlet will slowly move down the field. The drill doesn't end until the gauntlet reaches the other end of the field.

**Result:**

This drill will help players keep good control of the ball while being pressured by the opponent.

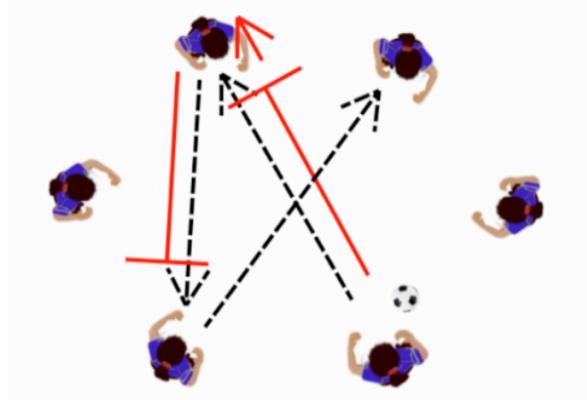
Circle Drill

What You Need: A ball

How This Drill Works:

This is a great possession drill that can be done anywhere as long as there's a ball.

Players will form circles with 6 players in each circle. One player will begin by passing the ball across the circle to another player. The passer will then run across and put pressure on the player who just received the ball. The player who received the ball must either one touch the ball to another player or trap the ball and pass to another player. Then that player goes to put pressure on the next player who is receiving the ball.



Result:

This drill helps players learn to keep possession by forcing players to make good traps and good passes. It also forces the players to make quick decisions just as they'll need to do in a game.

Keep Away

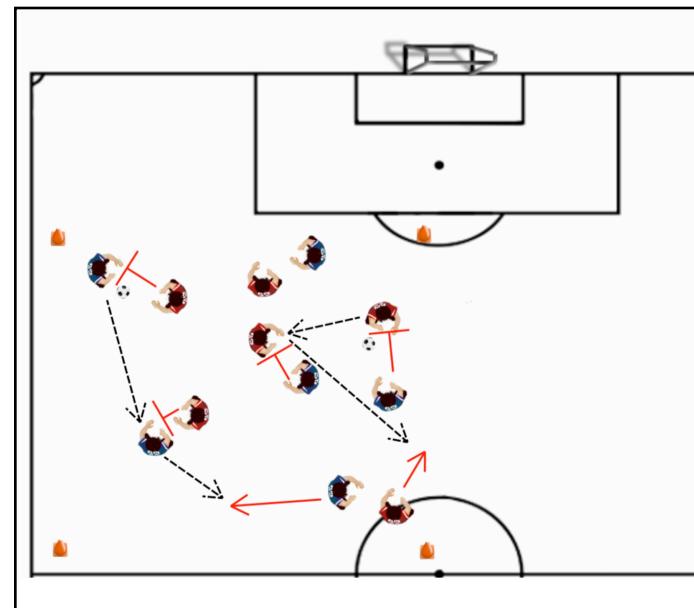
What You Need: Four cones, Two teams of players

How This Drill Works:

Form a small area with the 4 cones. A square with sides 25 yards in length should work. Divide players into two teams of six. Give each team one ball.

The goal is for each team to keep possession of their own ball and try to take away possession from the other team. Every time a team steals the ball that is a point. When a team reaches 5 points they win.

For more advanced games one or two more balls can be used.



Result:

This drill helps players learn to keep possession of the ball. Players will need to move and help each other out based on how the other team is moving. Also, players need to remember to try to steal the other teams' ball too. Therefore this is more complicated than a game situation so it will make things seem easier in the game.

4 Corners Go

What You Need: Four cones, Four teams of players, Balls

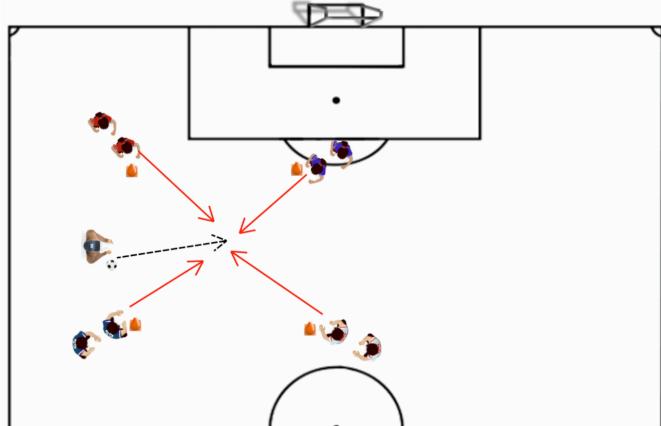
How This Drill Works:

The 4 cones should form a square that's 30 yards by 30 yards. Players should be divided into 4 teams. Each team should line-up at a separate cone (in the corner).

The coach will have a bunch of balls and will stand in the middle of one of the sides of the square. The coach will throw a ball into the middle of the square and yell "Go!"

Each player at the front of the line will sprint to get the ball (4 players – one from each team). The first player to the ball will try to keep possession for 5 seconds. The other players will try to steal the ball. When a player steals the ball then that player will try to keep possession for 5 seconds.

When a player keeps the ball for 5 seconds that team will get a point and the ball will be kicked back to the coach.



Result:

This drill is great because players must try to keep possession while facing three opponents. Players must learn to keep control of their dribble and they also must learn to shield the ball from their opponents.

5 v 2 Grid

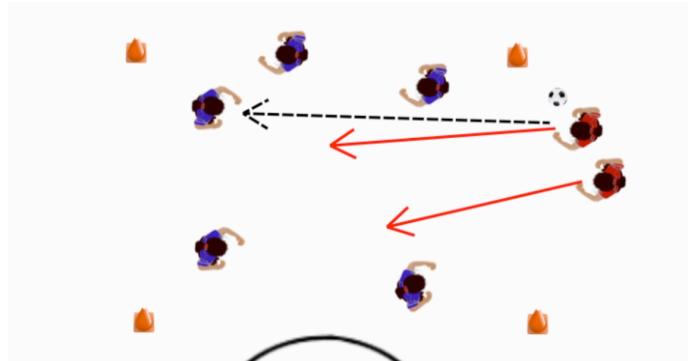
What You Need: Four cones, Defenders, 5 attackers

How This Drill Works:

The 4 cones should form a square that's about 12 yards by 12 yards.

5 attackers will be inside the cones (the grid). The rest of the players will pair up and be defenders. The first pair of defenders will pass the ball into the attackers and step inside the grid. The defenders will try to steal the ball or kick it out of the grid while the attackers will try to pass the ball around and keep possession.

Once the ball is stolen or kicked out then the defenders will go off and two new defenders will pass the ball in and step into the grid. The same five attackers will stay on.



Result:

The 5 attackers will get plenty of practice keeping possession of the ball. They will need to run to get open and they'll need to communicate. Therefore this drill will help with all of that.

Angle of Support

What You Need: Four cones

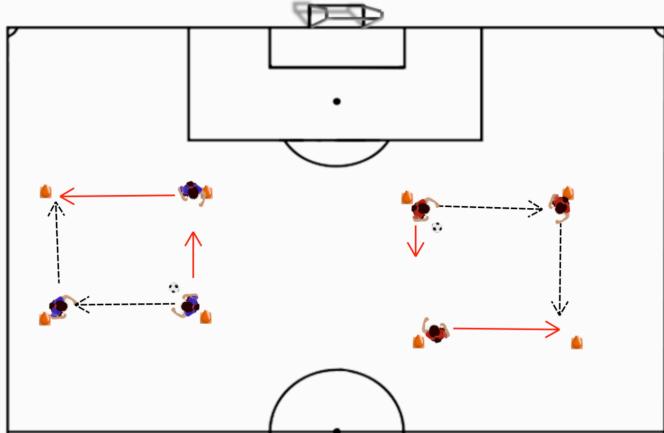
How This Drill Works:

This is a great drill for younger players.

Set the cones up in a square with each side being about ten yards in length. Three players will be inside the cones, one at each cone.

The ball will start with one player. The other two players must be at the cones next to the player with the ball. Once the pass is made, the other player must sprint to the other cone so that once again there are players on each cone next to the player with the ball.

To make this drill a little more challenging, a defender can be put inside the cones too.



Result:

Too often in games players fail to provide proper support to the player with the ball. This drill will teach them to always provide proper support so that possession is kept.

3 v 3 Plus 3

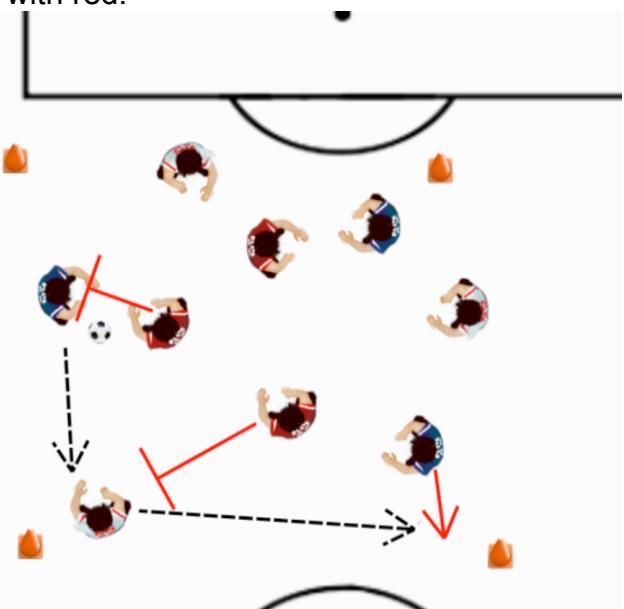
What You Need: Four cones, 3 teams of 3 players

How This Drill Works:

For this drill you should arrange the cones into a square that's about 20 yards by 20 yards.

Divide players into 3 teams. There will be three players from each team inside the cones. For example, you could have a team that's blue, white, and red.

To begin you could have the blue and white team with possession of the ball and the red team as defenders. The blue and white must pass the ball around and keep possession of it. The red team is trying to gain possession. Once the ball is stolen by red they then have possession and the team that lost the ball goes on defense. The other team will then have possession with red.



Result:

This is a great drill for teaching players how to move and communicate so that they keep possession of the ball. This drill will also help condition the defenders.

2 v 1 Possession Game

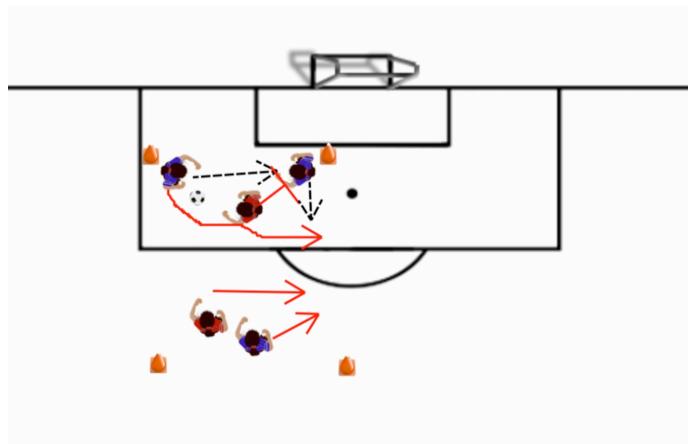
What You Need: 4 cones, 5 Players, A middle line

How This Drill Works:

Set the cones up so that they form a rectangle that's about 20 yards long and 10 yards wide. There should be a line running through the middle so that two sections are created that measure about 10x10.

Begin with two attacking players on one side and one attacking player on the other side. There should be one defender in each half.

The ball will begin with one of the two attacking players. These two players must pass the ball to each other 5 times. Then they have to look to pass the ball to the other attacker on the other side. Once that pass is made, one of the two attackers goes into the other half of the field and a 2v1 is created there. The process repeats itself.



Result:

This drill teaches players how to keep possession of the ball and how to look to pass the ball up the field. It also teaches players to make runs to get open and to communicate with each other.

Support Drill

What You Need: A full soccer field

How This Drill Works:

For this drill groups of three players will go down the field passing the ball and supporting each other. Each group of three players will have one ball.

Two players will begin on the end line and one of those players will have a ball. The third player will be about 10 yards up the field, even with the player that doesn't have the ball.

The player with the ball will pass to the other player on the end line (the player that is square). That player that just passed will then run up the field to be square with the other player who is already about 10 yards up the field.

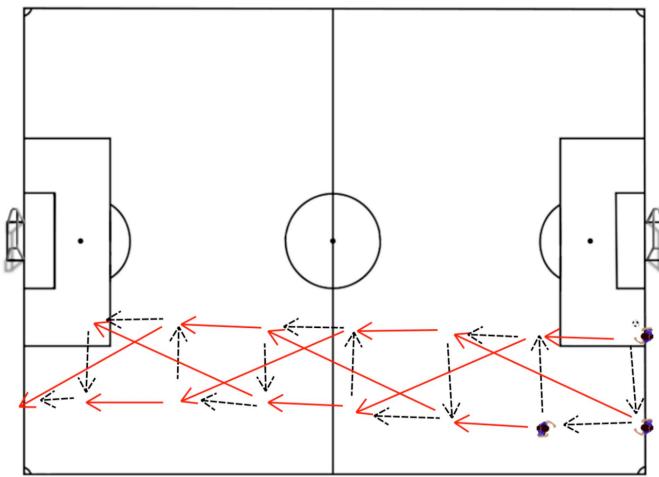
The player who just received the ball will pass the ball to the player who is even and up the field. Then that player who just passed the ball will run diagonally up the field so that he/she is 10 yards ahead of the ball.

As the player is running diagonally, the ball will be passed square to the player that originally started with the ball.

Basically a player will receive the ball and pass it to the player that is either square or up the field in support (whichever player is supposed to get the ball). Then that player will either run straight up the field to get square for the next pass or that player will run diagonally to lend support up field.

Passes should be crisp and the players receiving the pass should either one touch the ball to the next player or trap the ball and then make a crisp pass.

This drill will be run from end line to end line. Once a few passes are made, another group of three players should begin the same drill.



Result:

This drill is great for teaching players how to provide support to each other in order for the team to keep possession of the ball. Players will learn to run to open space and to always provide support to the player with the ball.

Checker Board

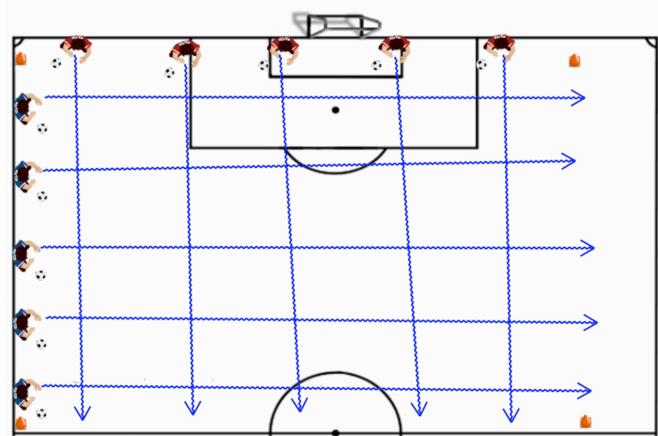
What You Need: Half a soccer field, Four cones, Two lines of players.

How This Drill Works:

This is a basic drill but it is a great teaching tool.

Put the cones in a large square that's about 40 yards by 40 yards. Then have players line-up even with the cones on two adjoining sides of the square.

On the whistle the players will dribble their ball to the opposite side of the square. Since there are two lines the players will have to watch-out for each other as they cross the square.



Result:

This drill teaches players to keep their heads up as they dribble and it also teaches players to keep control of their dribble.

You're It

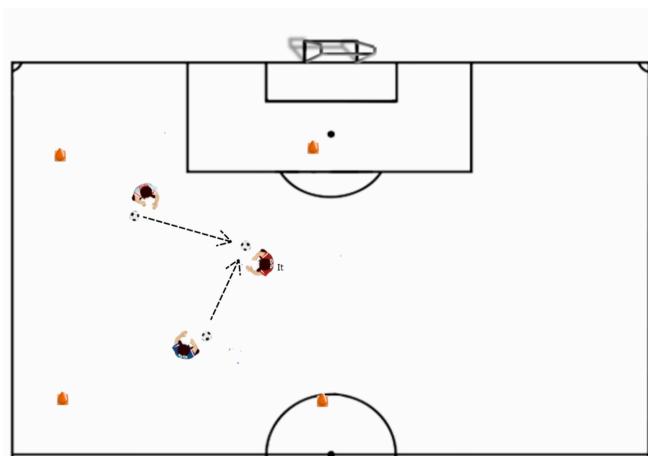
What You Need: Four cones, 3 players with balls

How This Drill Works:

Set the cones up in a square that is about 10 yards by 10 yards. Three players will be outside the square, each with a ball.

The coach will call out one of the player's names and that player will be "it".

All 3 players will step inside the square and the 2 players who aren't it will try to kick their balls into the ball of the player who is "it". After 1 minute the players come out of the square and a new player is it.



Result:

This drill teaches players to keep control of the ball and to shield the ball from the opponents.



Circle the Cone

What You Need: 1 cone

How This Drill Works:

For this drill you need one cone, two players, and a ball. Set one player about 15 yards from the cone. Another player should stand with the ball right next to the cone.

The player with the ball will pass to the other player. Then the player who just passed the ball will circle the cone and get a crisp return pass. The player should receive the ball and kick it back and then repeat the process several times.

Result:

This drill will help teach players how to receive the ball on the move and how to trap and make good passes. It will also help with footwork and conditioning.



Recommended Resource

The diagrams included in this ebook were created in 3 mega-easy steps using the incredible Soccer Blueprint software. To get the full story (and learn how to create stunning animated, drills, plays, even entire playbooks in 5 minutes or less), go to:

www.SoccerBlueprint.com